

**“*La Malinche*: A Critical Analysis of Gender, Sexuality, and *Mestizaje* in Early 16<sup>th</sup> Century Mexico”**

*Abstract:* In “*La Malinche*: A Critical Analysis of Gender, Sexuality, and *Mestizaje* in Early 16<sup>th</sup> Century Mexico,” Lizeth Gutierrez uses sources from early sixteenth century Mexico to further push Gloria Anzaldúa’s theory of *mestizaje*. Gutierrez’s work aims to redefine Anzaldúa’s *mestizaje* by exposing the complexities of language and culture through the figure of *La Malinche*. The first part of the paper explores the gender ideologies of the Aztecs as told by Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún in the *Florentine Codex* (mid-1540’s through the 1570’s). Through the interrogation of gender paradigms, the second part of her paper analyzes Hernán Cortés (1520’s), Bernal Diaz del Castillo (1520’s) and Sahagún’s (mid-1540’s through the 1570’s) writings to argue *mestizaje* as a cultural category, rather than a racial one by exposing *La Malinche*’s straddling of languages and crossing of cultural boundaries as a way to take power. *La Malinche*’s behavior reveals that *mestizaje* is not based on a biological construct. She is the *mestiza* figure and does not have to have European ancestry to be that.