



Department of

LATINA/LATINO STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN



Latina/Latino Studies Workshop

Wednesday, October 28, 3:30-5:00pm
1207 W. Oregon, Room 133, Urbana

Prof. Rolando J. Romero

Department of Latina/Latino Studies

“The Lingchi and the Ethics of the Gaze”

The lingchi, or the death by a thousand cuts (a form of public punishment banned in China in 1905, in which the body of the live victim is publicly sliced and dismembered), became the subject of *Farabeuf or the Chronicle of an Instant* a 1965 novel by Mexican writer Salvador Elizondo (1932-2006). This *nouveau roman*, considered one of the most important novels written in Mexico in the last half of the 20th century, focuses on a Louis Hubert Farabeuf (1841-1910) a French surgeon author of a medical treaty on amputations. A photograph of the victim of the lingchi becomes the core upon which Elizondo layers different levels of meaning and interpretation: from his own theory of the novel, to the place of Mexico on contemporary world literature, to his disquisitions--following Georges Bataille--on the relationship of eroticism to art, to the distinction between pain and pleasure, to the nature of ideographic writing itself. In light of the 50-year anniversary of the publication, what are we to make of the novel, especially given current notions of post-feminism? What does an ethnic post-colonial reading contribute to both our understanding of the novel, and to the “western” concepts of art itself?



Jimmie Durham, *Malinche*.