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Oral Presentation 3.3

LAS MUJERES DE ORO (GOLDEN GIRLS)

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First published in 1605, at the height of the Golden Age of Spain, Part I of Miguel de Cervantes Saavedra's *Don Quixote de la Mancha* dared to challenge the overall relevancy of revering traditional literary ties in the creation of fiction. Instead of conforming to the literary requirements that the Middle Ages and Antiquity imposed on contemporary literature, Cervantes attempted to shake the stereotypes and expectations often present in this literary genre. Directing his attack on the widely popular books of chivalry, this Golden Age writer has his protagonist Don Quixote de la Mancha stumbling into the trap of categorizing all the women that he encounters as mere "damsels-in-distress," since the books of chivalry of this misguided Spaniard dictate that all women become powerless when faced with a problematic situation. After encountering the characters Marcela, Dorotea and Camila, however, the reader discovers that these women, through their creative and intelligent speeches and actions, possess the necessary power to successfully resolve their own problems. To break from the literary norm that all women are damsels-in-distress, Miguel de Cervantes presents these extraordinary women as independent and capable of overcoming the obstacles in their lives without requiring the intervention of a knight in shining armor.