Workshop Proposal for Attending to Early Modern Women 2015
Category: Commemorations

Reclaiming and Commemorating Early Modern Women: Interdisciplinary Approaches

Our workshop seeks to demonstrate and to open discussion about interdisciplinary methodologies for reclamation and commemoration of real and fictional early modern women who have been variously represented, misrepresented or elided across time. Our subjects represent three distinct women and groups of women: first, the Kadınlar Sultanattı, or the Sultanate of Women, during the mid-16th century when a series of concubines in the imperial harem exerted considerable control over the Ottoman Empire; and, Catalina de Oviedo, a fictional character in Miguel de Cervantes’ lesser known work, La gran sultana Catalina de Oviedo (1615). The second project focuses on female characters in Cervantes’ novel, Don Quixote, who break free from spatial, literary, corporal and social confinement, and who instead obtain their own freedom; exercise strength and power without deviant ends; present as whole persons with developed characters, and who are described as being both sexual and spiritual. Third, Kateri Tekakwitha (Iroquis-Algonquian 1656/57) is claimed and commemorated by different tribes, nations, and groups, for different purposes, and variously represented in biographies, shrines, statuary and paintings; yet at the same time, Kateri Tekakwitha is notably absent from American Indian literature and popular media that often commemorates the lives of important American Indians. Workshop participants will address various ways we sift through representations across time to see anew and commemorate early modern women.

Workshop Panelists
Jessica Boll, Assistant Professor of Spanish, Carroll University, Waukesha, WI
Commanding Concubines: Historic and Literary Women of Imperial Influence

Carolyn Barry, M.A. Spanish, Ph.D. Candidate in Linguistics, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee
The Entrapment of the Woman in Cervantes’ Don Quixote

Deirdre Keenan, Professor of English, Carroll University
Claiming Kateri Tekakwitha
THE LIFE AND TIMES
OF
KATERI TEKAKWITHA,

The Lily of the Mohawks.

1656-1680.

BY
ELLEN H. WALWORTH,

AUTHOR OF "AN OLD WORLD, AS SEEN THROUGH YOUNG EYES"

BUFFALO:
PETER PAUL & BROTHER.
1891.

Copyright, 1890,
By Ellen H. Walworth.

[Excerpt describing her appearance]
This, in general, is the costume of the merry group with Tekakwitha at the spring. The upper garment, however, is a kind of tunic or simple overdress; nor can it be said that all are equally neat in their appearance. Some have their dark, straight hair tied loosely back and hanging down, or else with wampum braided in it. A few are clothed in foreign stuff, bought from the Dutch for beaver-skins and worn in shapeless pieces hung about them with savage carelessness. On their dark arms the sunlight flashes back from heavily beaded wrist and arm bands, begged or borrowed from their more industrious companions. Not like theirs is Tekakwitha's costume. It is made of deer and moose skins,—all of native make, and stitched together by a practised hand, as every one of the pretty squaws well knew. Her needle was a small bone from the ankle of the deer, her thread the sinews of the same light-footed animal, whose brain she mixed with moss and used to tan the skins and make the soft brown leather which she shaped so deftly into tunic, mocassins, and leggings. Her own skirt was scarce so richly worked with quills of the porcupine as that of her adopted sister there beside her, though both were made by Tekakwitha's hands.

[Excerpt from her mother's life as a captured among the Mohawks returning from a raid with prisoners.] Then the crowd eagerly watched the progress of the tortures on the scaffold, after which the prisoners were handed over, bound hand and foot, to the tender mercies of the children. These juvenile savages amused themselves by putting red-hot coals on the naked flesh of the captives, and torment them in every way their mischief-loving brains could devise. Thus early did the warrior's son begin his education.

But this side of the Indian nature is too horrible to dwell on; let it pass. At times the Iroquois were like incarnate devils; and yet each tale of frightful cruelty that history preserves for us brings with it some redeeming trait, some act of kindness or humanity done in the face of savage enmity. There were always a

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few among them ready like Pocahontas to avert the threatened blow or to relieve the sufferers whenever it was possible. One of these in days gone by had administered to Jogues; and one of these in days now soon to come will prove to be our Tekakwitha.

[Excerpt describing her death, with quote from Chauchetière]

"When they felt certain that all was over, her eulogy was spoken in the cabin, to encourage others to imitate her. What her father confessor said, together with what they had seen, made them look upon her body as a precious relic. The simplicity of the Indians caused them to do more than there was need for on this occasion, as, for instance, to kiss her hands; to keep as a relic whatever had belonged to her; to pass the evening and the rest of the night near her; to watch her face, which changed little by little in less than a quarter of an hour. It inspired devotion, although her soul was separated from it. It appeared more beautiful than it had ever done when she was living. It gave joy, and fortified each one of them in the faith he had embraced. It was a new argument: for belief with which God favored the Indians to give them a relish for the faith!"

Thus died Kateri Tekakwitha, on Wednesday, April 17, 1680. She was twenty-four years of age.

The change in her countenance after death, mentioned by Chauchetière, is described at some length by Cholenec. He recalls the fact that when Kateri was four years old she was attacked by the small-pox, and that some marks of it were left on her face. It had been much more disfigured, however, by her austerities and by her last illness. "But this face," says Cholenec, "thus emaciated and marked, changed all at once, about a quarter of an hour after her death; and it became in an instant so beautiful and so fair that, having perceived it at once (for I was in prayer near her), I gave a great cry, so much was I seized with astonishment, and I had the Father called, who was working on the repository for Thursday morning. He ran to see it at once, and with him all the Indians, at the news of this prodigy, which we had leisure to contemplate until her burial. I must admit frankly," her confessor continues, "that the first thought which came to me was that Catherine might have indeed entered at that moment into heaven, and that on her virginal body was reflected in advance a small ray of the glory which was dawning on her soul!"

In the month of June, 1888, the author, having travelled by the ferry-boat from Montreal to La Prairie, and thence driven a few miles westward along the river-bank, was fortunate enough to stand once again by the grave of Tekakwitha. [73] There, in addition to the new cross, which stood firm and erect within the little enclosure, a large granite monument was to be seen lying close beside it, partially unboxed and ready to be placed upon the grave. It had been sent to Canada from the land of Tekakwitha's birth. It has since been set in place, and protected by a strong canopy and enclosure of wood. The initials of the two donors of this substantial token are carved on a lower corner of the monumental stone. It is a solid piece of Barre granite, in the shape of a sarcophagus,—six feet six inches long, two feet ten inches wide, two feet six inches high. On the top a cross is carved, and the following inscription in the Iroquois language:—

KATERI TEKAKWITHA.
Apr. 17, 1680.
Onkwe Onwe-ke Katsitsiio Teiotsitsianekaron.[74]

The French translation is the exact interpretation given by M. Cuq, who composed the Iroquois inscription. He says that Onkwe Onwe means literally, "The true men," thus the Indians designate all who belong to their own race. Katsitsiou means "beautiful flower," and is here applied to
Tekakwitha, the Lily of the Mohawks. This title, given to her by the English, is altogether foreign to the Iroquois language, as they have no distinctive word for Lily (nothing more definite than "white flower"); and Mohawks is a name they dislike, because it was first given to them by their enemies; they prefer, therefore, their own term, Caniengan. Tekakwitha was a Canienga and an Iroquois, but she was also, on her mother's side, an Algonquin. Hence it is that the general name which applies to the whole red race is used in the inscription,—Onkwe Onwe! All "true men" are indeed akin to this beautiful flower that bloomed in our Mohawk Valley.


The Tekakwitha story was a standard hagiographic narrative, remarkable not so much for its form as for its subject, a colonized "savage" cast in the role of the saintly figure. It had first been committed to paper by two French Jesuits who had known her well and who became convinced after her death in 1680 that she was a saint. Born in an Iroquois village in the Mohawk valley in 1656, Tekakwitha was a sickly and reclusive orphan who converted to Catholicism as an adolescent, taking the baptismal name "Catherine." After suffering persecution at the hands of her "pagan" fellow-villagers, she fled to the Jesuit mission of Sault St Louis (Kahnawake), near Montreal, and there she joined a group of young Iroquois women who had renounced sex and marriage in favor of a life of religious perfection. Tekakwitha's penance (fasting, self-flagellation, sleep deprivation, etc.) were particularly severe, her dreams and visions exceptionally illuminating. She died at the age of 24 and, beginning almost immediately after her death, he became the object of a cult among Native and French-Canadian Catholics.

The Tekakwitha story was published in French in 1711, then subsequently translated into other European languages. Appealing to exotic tastes, but conforming to the familiar conventions of the hagiographic genre, this Indian _ulta sanctorum_ found a substantial audience in Catholic Europe and Latin America from the eighteenth century down to the present. However, until the 1880's the United States seems to have been comparatively untouched. To readers in other parts of the world, Tekakwitha had been represented as an Iroquois, as a Native, and as a _child_ of the New World, but the only attempts to nationalize her image had been Canadian and French. Then, suddenly, about the time of the Baltimore council, it was discovered that this holy Indian had been born in the state of New York and was therefore, in effect, a deceased citizen of the United States. Historically-minded Jesuits and local clergy of the Albany region were the original promoters of this post-mortem natualization, but before long, Tekakwitha had been thoroughly Americanized and was being put forward by the United States bishops as a candidate for beatification.

... Nation-states and rigid borders had no place in the ancient traditions of either the Iroquois peoples or the Catholic Church and, in that light, Clarence Walworth's cooperation with the French Canadian clergy and his contribution to commemorating the time-place of Tekakwitha seem perfectly appropriate. And yet, there was something fundamentally national about the modern cult of the "Lily of the Mohawk." The United States bishops were interested in promoting her beatification only to the degree that she could be enlisted as an _American_ Catholic symbol. It is clear that the French-Canadian Church understood this as a project of appropriation, and accordingly its co-operation was less than whole-hearted.

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Canonization of seven Blessed, 21 October 2012, Homily of Benedict [excerpt]³
Kateri impresses us by the action of grace in her life in spite of the absence of external help and by the courage of her vocation, so unusual in her culture. In her, faith and culture enrich each other! May her example help us to live where we are, loving Jesus without denying who we are. Saint Kateri, Protectress of Canada and the first native American saint, we entrust to you the renewal of the faith in the first nations and in all of North America! May God bless the first nations!

Pope Benedict XVI credited Kateri with a new miracle. The pope decided that when Catholics prayed to her in 2006, she in turn lobbied God to spare the life a 6-year-old American Indian boy, Jake Finkbonner, who was being ravaged by a flesh-eating bacterial disease. Benedict is by no means solely responsible for sugarcoating Kateri, though. The Catholic Church’s saints are almost inherently kitsch. They are real people who’ve been turned into statues and miniaturized so they can be sold in the gift shop. Kateri is hardly the first saint whose bio has been conveniently tweaked.

“Eleven-year-old boy’s survival of flesh-eating bacteria declared a miracle by pope as American Indian woman credited with saving him is approved for sainthood,” Daily Mail Reporter. [excerpt]⁵
Jake was only five when he cut his lip during the last minute of a Boys & Girls Club basketball game on February 11, 2006. . . And there, on the surface of the hoop, was Strep A bacteria, which causes a deadly disease known as necrotizing fasciitis, otherwise known as a flesh-eating bacteria that that most patients have a 50-50 chance of surviving. . . Then, on Jake’s ninth day in hospital, he took a sudden turn for the better. [Fr. Jake]Sauer told the website a relic of Tekakwitha was brought to his bedside, placed on a pillow next to his head. His health continued to improve. About eight weeks later, Jake was cleared to go home. . . Mrs Finkbonner wrote: ‘We do not discredit the doctors who helped our son. We know that without them, our son would not have survived. This investigation took place by an panel of priests, doctors and lawyers from the Catholic church. They interviewed us along with the doctors who treated Jake,’ she added. These are the same doctors who have stated that they could not explain why Jake lived. They did everything humanly possible for him and cannot explain why he survived.'

³ Canonization of seven Blessed, 21 October 2012, Homily of Benedict XVI


⁵ [Jake Finkbonner] Daily Mail Reporter. Updated: 04:40 EST, 21 December 2011
http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2076891/Jake-Finkbonners-survival-flesh-eating-bacteria-declared-miracle-pope.html#ixzz3R9u4puDa
Images

Top row:
--Statue Kateri Tekakwitha, Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Santa Fe, NM. Wikipedia.
--Close-up, Turquoise bracelet, Cathedral Basilica of St. Francis of Assisi, Santa Fe, NM. Wikipedia.

Second Row:
--“Luke praying the Glcry Be prayer.....it is the prayer we learned this past week and he prayed it so reverently, I know his prayers were heard.”
--“This rosary is amazing. It is made out of slices of wood along with beads. It was very unique.”
--Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha Model of Bravery, Rev. L. Lovesik, S.V.D.
hhttps://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/236x/50/d7/39/50d7394cf3b3254600871ee9fa35c67t.jpg

Third Row
--“Kaa ‘tanor’on Saint keteri Tekawitha, Flower of the Algonquins, Lily of the Mohawks http://www.kateritckawitha.org/kateri/KateriT2.jpg

Fourth Row
--“The National Shrine of the Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha”
http://communion.stblogs.org/B%20Kateri%20Tekakwitha.jpg
--Blessed Kateri Tekakwitha by Lower Brule Sioux artist, Alfreda Beartrack. Akta Lakota Cultural Museum Center
http://aktalakota.life.org/images/content/pagebuilder/Blessed_Kateri_Tekakwitha.jpg
-- A statue at the National Kateri Tekakwitha Shrine in Fonda, N.Y.
--Saint Kateri Tekakwitha Parish Peshawbestown, MI, Grand Traverse Band of the Ottawa and Chippewa Indians Reservation.
http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/b/bf/Kateri_Tekakwitha_Church_Peshawbestown_Michgan.jpg
Challenging Confinement: Cervantes' *La gran sultana doña Catalina de Oviedo*

Cervantes' *La gran sultana doña Catalina de Oviedo* (1615) centers upon the fictional female character of Catalina de Oviedo, a Spanish, Christian captive who, in turn, captures the heart of the Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. Enamoured by her beauty, the Grand Turk offers her infinite power over the Empire in return for her hand in marriage and ultimately grants her the freedom to maintain her religion. Although spatially confined to the imperial harem, Catalina is conceded both agency and authority. While the seralgio was often a virtual tomb – a "dead" end – for the women within its confines, Catalina ultimately destabilizes the power dynamic of this emblematic space as Cervantes challenges the very idea of confinement.

*[Clara, another Spanish, Christian captive in the harem:]*

- "*...bring me to the harem, / sepulcher of my desires*" (74)

*[Catalina:]*

- "*I am Christian, / and I won't accept a surname, / as mine is Oviedo, / noble, distinguished and Christian*" (39)

*[the Sultan, to Catalina:]*

- "*Of the kingdoms that I possess, / that are almost infinite, / all of their jurisdiction / I see surrendered to you; / already my great dominion, / that has made me a great man, / by law and by right / are now yours more than mine*" (28)

- "*Free, condemn, rescue, / absolve, get rid of, grant mercy, / this and more, lady, you can*" (29)

- "*As my slave, at one point / I could enjoy you now; / but I want to make you a lady*" (41)

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7 “*Soy cristiana, / y no admito sobrenombre, / porque es el mío de Oviedo, / hidalgo, ilustre y cristiano*”

8 “*De los reinos que poseo, / que casi infinitos son, / toda su jurisdicción / rendida a la tuya veo; / ya mis grandes señoríos, / que grande señor me han hecho, / por justicia / y por derecho / son ya tuyos más que míos*”

9 “*Suelta, condena, rescata, / absuelve, quita, haz mercedes, / que esto y más, señora, puedes*”
- “Whether you’re a Turk or a Christian, it doesn’t matter to me at all”\textsuperscript{12} (28)
- “Live to your liking”\textsuperscript{12} (40)
- “You are not mine, you are yours”\textsuperscript{13} (42)
- “I will give you the possession / of my soul this afternoon, / and that of my body, that burns / in flames of your love”\textsuperscript{14} (40)

- “humbling myself at your feet, I raise you to my head. / Equals we are now”\textsuperscript{15} (29)

\[\text{the Sultan, to his eunuch, Mamí:}\]
- “the captives give to the Sultaness in my presence the obedience of the seraglio”\textsuperscript{16} (42)

\[\text{[Mamí:]}\]
- “[I am] in the service of Mr. Oviedo”\textsuperscript{17} (57)

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As unlikely as the story of Catalina may seem, her situation parallels history. The only legal wife of famed Ottoman ruler Süleyman the Magnificent was, in fact, a Christian slave. Captured by Crimean Tatars during one of their many raids of present-day Ukraine, Haseki Hürrem, “Roxana” or “Roxelana” as she became known historically in the West, was eventually brought to Istanbul in the first half of the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and selected for the Sultan’s harem as a result of her beauty. Her influence over the Sultan quickly became legendary as she was freed from captivity and made his legal wife – the first time in Ottoman history that a captive was made official wife of the Sultan. Like Catalina, Roxana exerted remarkable control over both the Sultan and his territories, advising him on matters of state, foreign

\textsuperscript{12} “Como a mi esclava, en un punto / pudiera gozarte ahora; / mas quiero hacerte señora”

\textsuperscript{13} “¡Bien seas turca o seas cristiana, / a mi no me importa cosa”

\textsuperscript{14} “Vive tú a tu parecer”

\textsuperscript{15} “No eres mía, tuya eres”

\textsuperscript{16} “Daréte la posesión / de mi alma aquesta tarde, / y la de mi cuerpo, que arde/ en llamas de tu afición”

\textsuperscript{17} “humillándome a tus pies, te levanto a mi cabeza. / iguales estamos ya”

\textsuperscript{18} “den en mi presencia a Sultana la obediencia del serrallo las cautivas”

\textsuperscript{19} “[estoy] en el servicio del señor Oviedo”
affairs and international politics. It was under Süleyman the Magnificent that the Ottoman state became a world empire, and Roxana was a significant force behind the throne.

In addition to his fame as a military figure, Süleyman was also a great poet who wrote under the pseudonym of Muhibbi. While his poems are considerably diverse in both mood and content matter, many are inspired by his love for Roxana.

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[Poem, “My very own queen, my everything,” written by Süleyman of Roxana:]

- “My very own queen, my everything, / my beloved, my bright moon; / My intimate companion, my one and all, / sovereign of all beauties, my sultan. / My life, the gift I own, my be-all, / my elixir of Paradise, my Eden, / My spring, my joy, my glittering day, / my exquisite one who smiles on and on. / My sheer delight, my revelry, my feast, / my torch, my sunshine, my sun in heaven; / My orange, my pomegranate, / the flaming candle that lights up my pavilion. / My plant, my candy, my treasure who gives / no sorrow but the world’s purest pleasure; / Dearest, my turtledove, my all, / the ruler of my heart’s Egyptian dominion. / My Istanbul, my Karaman, and all the / Anatolian lands that are mine; / My Bedakhshan and my Kipchak territories, / my Baghdad and my Khorasan. / My darling with that lovely hair, brows curved like a bow, / eyes that ravish: I am ill. / If I die, yours is the guilt. Help, I beg you, / my love from a different religion. / I am at your door to glorify you. / Singing your praises, I go on and on: / My heart is filled with sorrow, my eyes with tears. / I am the Lover—this joy is mine.”

[Mami’s description of Catalina in La gran sultana:]

- “She is as beautiful as in the closed garden / the half-opened and fresh rose / whom the sun has not touched; / or like the serene dawn, / full of [varieties of] pearls, / upon leaving the clear Orient; / or like the sun at the West, / with the reflections that order. / Nature robbed / the best of each thing/ in order to form this specimen, / and as such, made her beautiful/ above human beauty. / [Nature] took from Heaven two stars, / that he put in the beautiful lights / of her extremely beautiful eyes, / with which from love the spoils / are increased, as it lives in her. / The whole and the parts
are/ corresponding in such a way, / that it shows me the reason/ that in the parts in the whole / resides perfection.”^{18} (20)

Jean-Léon Gérôme, “The Harem Pool”
(1876)

John Fredrick Lewis, “The Harem”
(1850)

^{18} “Es tan hermosa / como en el jardín cerrado / la entreabierta y fresca rosa / a quien el sol no ha tocado; / o como el alba serena, / de aljófar y perlas llena, / al salir del claro Oriente; / o como sol al Poniente, / con los reflejos que ordena. / Robó la Naturaleza / lo mejor de cada cosa / para formar esta pieza, / y así, la sacó hermosa / sobre la humana belleza. / Quitó al Cielo dos estrellas, / que puso en las luces bellas / de sus bellísimos ojos, / con que de amor los despojos / se aumentan, pues vive en ella. / El todo y sus partes son / correspondientes de modo, / que me muestra la razón / que en las partes en el todo / asiste la perfección.”
The Confinement of Women in *Don Quixote*
Spatial & Social Confinement
[Barry]

On the medieval portrayal of women being locked in a tower, shut away in the house, silent, valued for her physical attributes and chastity:

“Son tantas las que demuestran que la mujer de su casa pudo ser un tipo de perfección en otros siglos” – Arenal
There are many [literary works] that demonstrate that the “woman in her house” was a type of perfection in past centuries.

“Así como la naturaleza hizo a las mujeres para que, encerradas guardasen la casa, así las obligó a que cerrasen la boca” – Fray Luis de León
Just as nature made women to be shut away in their homes, it obliges them to shut their mouths.

“This ‘Woman’, like Bakhtin’s classical body, is rigidly finished: her signs are the enclosed body, the closed mouth, the locked house.” – Rivera

“During the Middle Ages... female portraits centered almost exclusively on highly detailed physical characteristics that followed a descending order from hair to forehead, to eyes, nose, and so on, and then went on the description of clothing. In Spanish literature we find this static physical description in *Santa María Egiptiaca*, in the portrait of the ideal lady lover in the *Book of Good Love*.” - Sánchez and Saint-Saens

Images: In Medieval courtly love, showing “Lady Minne” = Lady of his thoughts
On the imaginary ideals of medieval women in Don Quixote:

In Don Quixote, we see that the only woman in the entire book that satisfies all of these spatial & social confinements is Dulcinea del Toboso. However, she does not actually exist. Dulcinea is an imaginary person, locked away only in the mind of Don Quixote.

“Límpias, pues, sus armas, hecho del morrón celada, puesto nombre a su rocín, y confirmándose a sí mismo, se ció a entender que no le faltaba otra cosa, sino buscar una dama de quien enamorarse, porque el caballero andante sin amores, era árbol sin hojas y sin fruto, y cuerpo sin alma. Decíase él: si yo por malos de mis pecados, por por mi buena suerte, me encuentro por ahí con algún gigante, como de ordinario les acontece a los caballeros andantes, y le derribo de un encuentro, o le parto por mitad del cuerpo, o finalmente, le venzo y le rindo, ¿no será bien tener a quién enviarle presentado, y que entre y se hínque de rodillas ante mi dulce señora, y diga con voz humilde y rendida: yo señora, soy el gigante Caraculiambro, señor de la insula Malindrania, a quien venció en singular batalla el jamás como se debe alabado caballero D. Quijote de la Mancha, el cual me mandó que me presentase ante la vuestra merced, para que la vuestra grandeza disponga de mí a su talante? ¡Oh, cómo se holgó nuestro buen caballero, cuando hubo hecho este discurso, y más cuando halló a quién dar nombre de su damal! Y fue, a lo que se cree, que en un lugar cerca del suyo había una moza labradora de muy buen parecer, de quien él un tiempo anduvo enamorado, aunque según se entiende, ella jamás lo supo ni se dió cita de ello. Llamábáse Aldonza Lorenzo, y a esta le pareció ser bien darle título de señora de sus pensamientos; y buscándole nombre que no desdijese mucho del suyo, y que tirase y se encaminase al de princesa y gran señora, vino a llamarla DULCINEA DEL TOBOSO, porque era natural del Toboso, nombre a su parecer músico y peregrino y significativo, como todos los demás que a él y a sus cosas había puesto.” – Don Quixote I, Capítulo I

“So then, his armour being furished, his morion turned into a helmet, his hack christened, and he himself confirmed, he came to the conclusion that nothing more was needed now but to look out for a lady to be in love with; for a knight-errant without love was like a tree without leaves or fruit, or a body without a soul. As he said to himself: 'If, for my sins, or by my good fortune, I come across some giant hereabouts, a common occurrence with knights-errant, and overthrow him in one onslaught, or cleave him asunder to the waist, or, in short, vanquish and subdue him, will it not be well to have some one I may send him to as a present, that he may come in and fall on his knees before my sweet lady, and in a humble, submissive voice say, 'I am the giant Caraculiambro, lord of the island of Malindrania, vanquished in single combat by the never sufficiently extolled knight Don Quixote of La Mancha, who has commanded me to present myself before your Grace, that your Highness dispose of me at your pleasure?" Oh, how our good gentleman enjoyed the delivery of this speech, especially when he had thought of some one to call his Lady! There was, so the story goes, in a village near his own a very good-looking farm-girl with whom he had been at one time in love, though, so far as is known, she never knew it nor gave a thought to the matter. Her name was Aldonza Lorenzo, and upon her he thought fit to confer the title of Lady of his Thoughts; and after some search for a name which should not be out of harmony with her own, and should suggest and indicate that of a princess and great lady, he decided upon calling her Dulcinea del Toboso--she being of El Toboso--a name, to his mind, musical, uncommon, and significant, like all those he had already bestowed upon himself and the things belonging to him.” – Chapter I
On overcoming physical attributes and spatial boundaries in *Don Quixote*:
The first female non-static protagonist in *Don Quixote* is Marcela, who asserts her freedom by escaping social confinesments (physical beauty and the attention of men) and achieves her liberation by breaking spatial confinesments (living in nature, away from society). Shattering the idea woman's beauty obliges her to give her love to any admirer (confine in a bound agreement of attraction).

“No vengo, oh Ambrosio, a ninguna cosa de las que has dicho, respondió Marcela, sino a volver por mí misma, y a dar a entender cuán fuera de razón van todos aquellos que de sus penas y de la muerte de Grisóstomo me culpan. Y así ruego a todos los que aquí estás me estéis atentos, que no será menester mucho tiempo ni gastar muchas palabras para persuadir una verdad a los discretos. Hízome el cielo, según vosotros decís, hermosa, y de tal manera, que sin ser poderosas a otra cosa, a que me améis os mueve mi hermosura, y por el amor que me mostráis decís y aun queréis que esté yo obligada a amaros. Yo conozco con el natural entendimiento que Dios me ha dado, que todo lo hermoso es amable; mas no alcanzo que por razón de eser amado, esté obligado lo que es amado por hermoso a amar a quien le ama; y más que podría acontecer que el amador de lo hermoso fuese feo, y siendo lo feo digno de ser aborrecido, cae muy mal el decir quiérete por hermosa, hazme de amar aunque sea feo. Pero puesto caso que corran igualmente las hermosuras, no por eso han de correr iguales los deseos, que no todas las hermosuras enamoran, que algunas alegran la vista y no rinden la voluntad; que si todas las bellezas enamoran y rindiesen, sería un andar las voluntades confusas y descaminadas sin saber en cuál habían de parar, porque siendo infinitos los sujetos hermosos, infinitos habían de ser los deseos; y según yo he oído decir, el verdadero amor no se divide, y ha de ser voluntario y no forzoso. Siendo esto así, como yo creo que lo es, ¿por qué queréis que rinda mi voluntad por fuerza, obligada no más de que decís que me queréis bien? Sino, decidme: si como el cielo me hizo hermosa me hiciera fea, ¿fuera justo que me quejara de vosotros porque no me amabades? Cuanto más que habéis de considerar que yo no escogí la hermosura que tengo, que tal cual es, el cielo me la dio de gracia sin yo pedirla ni escogella; y así como la vóbora no merece ser culpada por la ponzoña que tiene, puesto que con ella mata, por habérsele dado naturaleza, tampoco yo me remezco ser repudiada por ser hermosa; que la hermosura en la mujer honesta es como el fuego apariado, o como la espada aguda, que ni él quema, ni ella corta a quien a ellos no se acerca. La honra y las virtudes son adornos del alma, sin las cuales el cuerpo, aunque lo sea, no debe parecer hermoso; pues si la honestidad es una de las virtudes que al cuerpo y alma más adornan y hermoscan, ¿por qué ha de perder la que es amada por hermosa, por corresponder a la intención de aquél que por solo su gusto con todas sus fuerzas e industrias procura que la pierda? Yo nací libre, y para poder libre escogí la soledad de los campos; los árboles destas montañas son mi compañia, las claras aguas destos arroyos mis espejos; con los árboles y con las aguas comunico mis pensamientos y hermosura. Fuego soy apartado, y espada puesta lejos”. – Capítulo XIV

"I come not, Ambrosio, for any of the purposes thou hast named," replied Marcela, “but to defend myself and to prove how unreasonable are all those who blame me for their sorrow and for Chrysostom’s death; and therefore I ask all of you that are here to give me your attention, for will not take much time or many words to bring the truth home to persons of sense. Heaven has made me, so you say, beautiful, and so much so that in spite of yourselves my beauty leads you to love me; and for the love you show me you say, and even urge, that I am bound to love you. By that natural understanding which God has given me I know that everything beautiful attracts love, but I cannot see how, by reason of being loved, that which is loved for its beauty is bound to love that which loves it; besides, it may happen that the lover of that which is beautiful may be ugly, and ugliness being detestable, it is very absurd to say, "I love thee because thou art beautiful, thou must love me though I be ugly." But supposing the beauty equai on both sides, it does not follow
that the inclinations must be therefore alike, for it is not every beauty that excites love, some but pleasing the eye without winning the affection; and if every sort of beauty excited love and won the heart, the will would wander vaguely to and fro unable to make choice of any; for as there is an infinity of beautiful objects there must be an infinity of inclinations, and true love, I have heard it said, is indivisible, and must be voluntary and not compelled. If this be so, as I believe it to be, why do you desire me to bend my will by force, for no other reason but that you say you love me? Nay—tell me—had Heaven made me ugly, as it has made me beautiful, could I with justice complain of you for not loving me? Moreover, you must remember that the beauty I possess was no choice of mine, for, be it what it may, Heaven of its bounty gave it me without my asking or choosing it; and as the viper, though it kills with it, does not deserve to be blamed for the poison it carries, as it is a gift of nature, neither do I deserve reproach for being beautiful; for beauty in a modest woman is like fire at a distance or a sharp sword; the one does not burn, the other does not cut, those who do not come too near. Honour and virtue are the ornaments of the mind, without which the body, though it be so, has no right to pass for beautiful; but if modesty is one of the virtues that specially lend a grace and charm to mind and body, why should she who is loved for her beauty part with it to gratify one who for his pleasure alone strives with all his might and energy to rob her of it? I was born free, and that I might live in freedom I chose the solitude of the fields; in the trees of the mountains I find society, the clear waters of the brooks are my mirrors, and to the trees and waters I make known my thoughts and charms. I am a fire afar off, a sword laid aside." — Chapter 14

On the gender role-reversal of confinement in Don Quixote:
The Moorish beauty, Zoraida, falls in love with a captive man, who she has never met, based only on physical attraction. She helps him escape incarceration by her own free will (defying her family’s expectations and social boundaries). She desires to convert to Christianity, with the baptized name “María”, archetype of all that is holy and good. After sending gold to the captive, she writes him a letter, telling him that she wants to run away with him, have him as her husband, and convert to Christianity:

“Todo lo que va aquí en romance, sin faltar letra, es lo que contiene este papel morisco; y hase de advertir que adonde cíce Lela Marién quiere decir Nuestra Señora la Virgen María”.

Leímos el papel, y decía así:

Cuando yo era niña, tenía mi padre una esclava, la cual en mi lengua me mostró la zalá cristianesca, y me dijo muchas cosas de Lela Marién. La cristiana murió, y yo sé que no fue al fuego, sino con Alá, porque después la vi dos veces, y me dijo que me fuese a tierra de cristianos a ver a Lela Marién, que me querría mucho. No sé yo cómo vaya: muchos cristianos he visto por esta ventana, y ninguno me ha parecido caballero sino tú. Yo soy muy hermosa y muchacha, y tengo muchos dineros que llevar contigo. Mi roqua tía si puedes hacer cómo nos vais, y séis allá mi marido, sí quisiéres, y si no quisiéres, no se me dará nada, que Lela Marién me dará con quien me case”. — Capítulo XL

"All that is here in Spanish is what the Moorish paper contains, and you must bear in mind that when it says 'Lela Marien' it means 'Our Lady the Virgin Mary'."

We read the paper and it ran thus:

"When I was a child my father had a slave who taught me to pray the Christian prayer in my own language, and told me many things about Lela Marien. The Christian died, and I know that she did not go to the fire, but to Allah, because since then I have seen her twice, and she told me to go to the land of the Christians to see Lela Marien, who had great love for me.
I know not how to go. I have seen many Christians, but except thyself none has seemed to me to be a gentleman. I am young and beautiful, and have plenty of money to take with me. See if thou canst contrive how we may go, and if thou wilt thou shalt be my husband there, and if thou wilt not it will not distress me, for Leila Marien will find me some one to marry me.” — Chapter 40

Then, after asserting her intentions, Zoraida breaks Muslim spatial confinements, by going outside into the garden, showing the “unveiling” of the woman. After which, she escapes to Spain and realizes her goal of becoming a ‘free’, Christian woman. This passage details her ‘unveiling’:

Preguntóme, por el consiguiente, si era hombre de rescate o no, y que cuánto pedía mi amo por mí. Estando en todas estas preguntas y respuestas, salió de la casa del jardín la bella Zoraida, la cual ya había mucho que me había visto; y, como las moras en ninguna manera hacen melindre de mostrarse a los cristianos, ni tampoco se esquivan, como ya he dicho, no se le dio nada de venir adonde su padre conmigo estaba; antes, luego cuando su padre vio que venía, y de espicio, la llamó y mandó que llegase.

Demasiada cosa sería decir yo agora la mucha hermosura, la gentileza, el gallardo y rico adorno con que mi querida Zoraida se mostró a mis ojos”. — Capítulo 41

"While these questions and answers were proceeding, the fair Zoraida, who had already perceived me some time before, came out of the house in the garden, and as Moorish women are by no means particular about letting themselves be seen by Christians, or, as I have said before, at all coy, she had no hesitation in coming to where her father stood with me; moreover her father, seeing her approaching slowly, called to her to come. It would be beyond my power now to describe to you the great beauty, the high-bred air, the brilliant attire of my beloved Zoraida as she presented herself before my eyes.” — Chapter 41

Other role-reversals that break social confinement of women in Don Quixote:

Dorotea: Dresses as a man to escape the confines of her home and run away to solitude. She is also portrayed as having higher intellect than a man, by indulging the eccentric Don Quixote, as he believes her to be the illustrious Princess Micomicona. The following scene describes Don Quixote and crew approaching what they believe to be a young man; however, he has very dainty feet and alabaster skin:

“Todas estas razones oyeron y percibieron el cura y los que con él estaban, y por parecerles, como ello era, que allí junto las decían, se levantaron a buscar el dueño, y no hubieron andado veinte pasos, cuando detrás de un peñasco vieron, sentado al pie de un fresno, a un mozo vestido como labrador, al cual, por tener inclinado el rostro, a causa de que se lavaba los pies en el arroyo que por allí corría, no se le pudieron ver por entonces. Y ellos llegaron con tanto silencio que dél no fueron sentidos, ni él estaba a otra cosa atento que a lavarse los pies, que eran tales, que no parecían sino dos pedazos de blanco cristal que entre las otras piedras del arroyo se habían nacido. Suspendióles la blancura y belleza de los pies, pareciéndoles que no estaban hechos a pisar terrones, ni a andar tras el arado y los bueyes, como mostraba el hábito de su dueño; y así, viendo que no habían sido sentidos, el cura, que iba delante, hizo señas a los otros dos que se agazapasen o escondiesen detrás de
unos pedazos de peña que allí había, y así lo hicieron todos, mirando con atención lo que el mozo hacía; el cual traía puesto un capotillo pardo de dos haldas, muy ceñido al cuerpo con una toalla blanca. Traía, ansí mismo, unos calzones y polainas de paño pardo, y en la cabeza una montera parda. Tenía las polainas levantadas hasta la mitad de la pierna, que, sin duda alguna, de blanco alabastro parecía." – Capítulo 38

“All this was heard distinctly by the curate and those with him, and as it seemed to them to be uttered close by, as indeed it was, they got up to look for the speaker, and before they had gone twenty paces they discovered behind a rock, seated at the foot of an ash tree, a youth in the dress of a peasant, whose face they were unable at the moment to see as he was leaning forward, bathing his feet in the brook that flowed past. They approached so silently that he did not perceive them, being fully occupied in bathing his feet, which were so fair that they looked like two pieces of shining crystal brought forth among the other stones of the brook. The whiteness and beauty of these feet struck them with surprise, for they did not seem to have been made to crush clods or to follow the plough and the oxen as their owner’s dress suggested; and so, finding they had not been noticed, the curate, who was in front, made a sign to the other two to conceal themselves behind some fragments of rock that lay there; which they did, observing closely what the youth was about. He had on a loose double-skirted dark brown jacket bound tight to his body with a white cloth; he wore besides breeches and gaiters of brown cloth, and on his head a brown montera; and he had the gaiters turned up as far as the middle of the leg, which verily seemed to be of pure alabaster.” – Chapter 38

Breaking literary confinement of beauty, chastity, and goodness in Don Quixote:

Not all good, kind-hearted, female characters in Don Quixote are described as being physically beautiful and chaste. Maritornes, an extremely homely-looking prostitute, shows that she is pure of heart by buying wine with her own money for Sancho. Don Quixote, in his eccentric illusions, esteems her as a noble lady of the inn. In previous literary works, a female protagonist who is physically ugly is usually portrayed as a witch or evil in nature. Unchaste women were portrayed as deviants. Strong female characters were often portrayed in such light. Cervantes does not condemn women or confine them to these literary norms – they are treated as well-rounded individuals. In the prologue of Don Quixote, Cervantes references other literary works in which ‘undesirable’ or ‘strong’ female characters were written as inherently evil:

“...si de mujeres rameras, ahí está el obispo de Mondoñedo, que os prestará a Lamia, Laida y Flora, cuya anotación os dará gran crédito; si de crueles, Ovidio os entregará a Medea; si de encantadoras y hechiceras, Homero tiene a Calipso y Virgilio a Circe...” - Prólogo

“If with loose women, there is the Bishop of Mondoñedo, who will give you the loan of Lamia, Laida, and Flora, any reference to whom will bring you great credit; if with hard-hearted ones, Ovid will furnish you with Medea; if with witches or enchantresses, Homer has Calypso, and Virgil Circe...” – Prologue