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**Madness and Creativity in Postmodern Latin American Female Fiction**  
**a Case Study: *Delirium* by Laura Restrepo**

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## **Dedication**

A special feeling of gratitude to my precious parents, who have been my source of inspiration. They gave me strength when I thought of giving up, and continually provide their moral, spiritual, emotional and financial support.

To my dear husband, for his care, moral support, help and continuous encouragement.

To my sisters and my only brother for their endless support and love.

To my beloved son Mohammed Baha Eddine.

**Boughambouz Umene Kelthoum**

## Dedication

A special feeling of gratitude to my parents.

To the strongest and most gentle woman; my tender mother, who has been my first teacher.

To my father the man who stood in my back, supporting and encouraging me to believe in myself.

To my brother and sisters who have always been there for me.

To my little nephew Nazim.

To the soul of my grandmother.

**Litim Ahlem**

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## Abstract

The "she" has always been oppressed, traumatized, and marginalized in the patriarchal societies. Fortunately, this woeful fact motivated women to raise their positions and eliminate this inequality. They were and still always resisting to promote their subjectivity, and to break the expectations imposed by the "he" community, and the oppressive regimes. The study of this research paper is built upon a close reading of the twentieth century Latin American female writers. Women writers expressed a sort of literary themes like myths, sexuality, and madness. Madness is the most eminent theme in female works that led to literary creativity. This study tends to correlate the two lopsided concepts of madness and creativity; by highlighting and analyzing their significance in raising the standards of literary works. The theme of our analysis entails us to adapt the psychoanalysis and feminism theories. Laura Restrepo's *Delirium* is taken as the selected novel to anatomize the female insane malady, and the social chaos in the Colombian society during the postmodern period. This project is a thematic and stylistic study that dissects madness and creativity. Our aim is to present their repercussion in the novel of *Delirium*.

**Key Words:** Madness, Creativity, Postmodernism, Feminism, Latin American Fiction, Colombian Society, Laura Restrepo, *Delirium*.

## Résumé

La «elle» a toujours été opprimée, traumatisée et marginalisée dans les sociétés patriarcales. Malheureusement, ce fait déplorable a motivé les femmes à élever leurs positions et à éliminer cette inégalité. Ils ont résisté et ont toujours résistent pour promouvoir leur subjectivité et pour briser les attentes imposées par la communauté «il» et les régimes oppressifs. L'étude de ce document de recherche repose sur une lecture attentive des femmes écrivaines Latino-Américaines du XXe siècle. Les femmes écrivaines ont exprimé une sorte de thèmes littéraires comme les mythes, la sexualité et la folie. La folie est le thème le plus éminent des œuvres féminines qui ont conduit à la créativité littéraire. Cette étude tend à corrélér les deux concepts déséquilibrés de la folie et de la créativité; en mettant en évidence et en analysant leur importance pour relever les normes des œuvres littéraires. Le thème de notre analyse nous conduit à adapter les théories de la psychanalyse et du féminisme. *Délire* de Laura Restrepo est considéré comme le roman choisi pour anatomiser la maladie folle féminine et le chaos social dans la société colombienne pendant la période postmoderne. Ce projet est une étude thématique et stylistique qui dissèque la folie et la créativité. Notre objectif est de présenter leur répercussion dans le roman de *Délire*.

Mots Clés: Folie, Créativité, Postmodernisme, Féminisme, Fiction latino-américaine, Société Colombienne, Laura Restrepo, *Délire*.

## الملخص

لطالما كانت "هي" مظلومة، مضطهدة، ومهمشة في وسط المجتمع الذكري. هذا الواقع الأليم حفز النساء من أجل رفع مكانتهن والتخلص من عدم المساواة. لقد كانوا ومازالوا يسعون لتطوير ذاتيتهن من أجل كسر الحواجز والقوانين التي فرضتها عليهم منظومة "هو" والأنظمة القمعية. دراسة هذا البحث مبنية على روايات أمريكا اللاتينية في القرن العشرين. الروايات عبرن عن ذاتهن باستعمال أفكار أدبية مثل الأساطير، الجنس والجنون. الجنون هو واحد من أهم الموضوعات الأدبية التي تميزت بها الأعمال النسائية في ذلك الوقت والتي أدت بهن إلى الإبداع الأدبي. تميل هذه الدراسة إلى الربط بين مفهومين غير متوازيين وهما الجنون و الإبداع، من خلال إبراز وتحليل أهميتهما في رفع معايير الأعمال الأدبية. موضوع دراستنا حثنا على تبني نظرية التحليل النفسي والنظرية النسوية. هذيان لورا ريستريبو هي الرواية المختارة لدراسة الحالة فهي تعالج مرض الجنون النسائي و الفوضى في المجتمع الكولومبي خلال فترة ما بعد الحداثة. هذا المشروع هو عبارة عن دراسة موضوعية أسلوبية تتناول الجنون والإبداع، و تهدف إلى عرض تداعياتهم في رواية هذيان.

كلمات مفتاحية: الجنون، الإبداع، ما بعد الحداثة، النظرية النسوية، روايات أمريكا اللاتينية، المجتمع الكولومبي، لورا ريستريبو، هذيان .

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## Introduction

Women in Latin America have always been identified as weak and subservient to men. They fought for equality, and to eliminate male oppression. One of the most important aspects of the fight for their liberation is writing. Through writing, women have been able to revive their roles in society and claim their identities. The contribution of women in the literary forum and political life is taken into consideration in the history of Latin America. By the latter half of the nineteenth century, a significant number of female writers studied the issue of women's rights; regarding civil status, family, and participation in the literary life.

In her book: *The Power Of Words: Feminism in Latin American Literature*, Karolina Matyka affirms that any discussion of Latin American feminism must tackle the cultural, political, and literary achievements of women. In the seventeenth-century, women have been differentiated as outstanding poets, novelists, painters, and musicians. However, Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz is the first female writer. Sor Juana was a nun, who was born and raised in Mexico. The story of her life is a mixture of tension between education, religious beliefs, intellectual freedom, and male domination. All these factors kept silencing female voices for a long time.

Female writers are consistently insisting on using different styles, techniques, and themes to prove their victory over male dominance. Madness is one of the themes or literary devices used by women to show their literary power. Madness was defined by Lillian Feder in her book which is entitled *Madness in Literature* according to different lenses. It was religiously conceived as a persecution. Politically and socially, madness was a tool to affirm inequality and discrimination. Medically, it is a mental disorder; and aesthetically, madness is used to mirror society. Briefly, madness is a sort of overtaking traditional norms. Throughout history, madness perceived women as powerless and submissive. It has always been pertained to women. However, female writers could overcome these obstacles, and turn the equation of madness to their favor. Gina Ponce de Leon in her book: *Twenty-First century Latin American*

*Narrative and Postmodern Feminism* mentions that madness was used by female writers as a tool to build their positions in a male dominant society. She argues that madness is a central literary device that highlights cultural impositions, and exposes critical sociopolitical issues in Latin America. Latin American feminist writings participated in raising awareness about women rights movements. Female writers gained estimation for their works. Gabriela Mistral is the first Chilean novelist to be appreciated and win the Nobel Prize of literature in 1945. Female writers like Cristina Peri Rossi, Sandra Cisneros, and Elena Poniatowska helped in rediscovering female identity through their literary works which were widely evaluated.

It is important to explain the history of madness which started from the Greek and Roman time. From the fourteenth century until the seventeenth century, mental disorders such as hallucination, madness, schizophrenia and rage have constantly reflected society. Madness as a theme was used to describe the human condition. *Orestes* and *The Bacchae* are among the classical tragedies in which hallucinations and rage were embodied in characters. In the nineteenth century, women were everyday cleaning, cooking, and taking care of their children. So, hysteria became accepted for women as it relieved them from household duties. Fiction of that time used madness as a theme to rebel against the patriarchal society which oppressed them. This soothed the way for women to search their identities, and break the constraints of society. However, in the twentieth century there was a flow of literary works which glorify the state of women through madness in Latin America. Female literary narratives acquired estimation by time in the literary field. They were searching for women's identity developing a new trend of feminism.

During the postmodern era, the intersection of madness and feminism resulted in a variety of literary works. Some of these masterpieces are *Recuerdos del Porvenir*, *Balum Canaan*, *Se llama Sabina y Tiene*, *Los Cabellos Colorados*, and the poetry of Alfonsina Storni. The intelligence of using madness at the level of characters and events is referred to as creativity. Associating madness with creativity first appeared in literature in the 1970s. However, the

idea of relating madness with genius is much older. There are many studies which associate mental disorders and creativity.

Many researchers sought to uncover the mental disorders within creative people such as scientists writers. Moreover, many recent researches argue that creativity exhibits even normal people. In order to study the relationship between madness and creativity; there are many studies which focus on this topic. Sanchez Blake and Laura Kanost in their book which is entitled *Latin American Women and the Literature of Madness* examine in details the narratives of madness to signify the Latin American women's affairs, and to reflect their positions in society. Sanchez Blake and Laura Kanost introduce their book through six leading Latin American novels which share madness as the core theme. The book arranges from six chapters. The first chapter examines the novel of *The Ship of Fools* which is written by Cristina Peri Rossi. The second chapter studies Lya Luft's novel *Exile*. Diamela Eltit and Paz Errazuriz's *Soul's Infarct* is the focus of the third chapter. The fourth chapter exhibits Cristina Rivera Garza's *No One Will See Me Cry*. The fifth chapter comments the novel of *Delirium* by Laura Restrepo which is the selected story of our research. The sixth and last chapter rewrites Irene Vilar's life story. Throughout these chapters, madness is studied as a symbolic form, a theme, or as a literary device to defend women rights.

This research is meant to dissect the lopsided concepts of madness and creativity. Madness as a theme in Latin American female fiction works is correlated with Creativity which is the literary incarnation of this theme and the successful result. Laura Restrepo's *Delirium* is our framework in which madness and creativity are evident. In Restrepo's novel, madness is processed as a literary device that corresponds with psychoanalytic and feminist theories.

Laura Restrepo is a Colombian author who always writes for love, mystery, and relationship to catch the reader's interest. She intertwines social struggle and women's suffering to depict the Colombian society which is harmed by war and corruption. She creates

her own style "report style", hence, she uses history and investigative journalism. *Delirium* is one of Restrepo's masterpieces which is awarded the Premio Alfaguara de Novella at the same year of its publishing in 2004, and the 2006 Grinzane Cavour prize in Italy. It was shortlisted as well for the prestigious Prix du Meilleur livre étranger in France for the best translated fiction. Restrepo deeply describes the Colombian society; where madness and social chaos widely spread through a fluid narration. Furthermore, from the title of the novel *Delirium*, the reader could capture the core subjects of the story.

The trauma in which Latin American women experienced the male dominance spurred them to use madness to attain literary creativity. Being different, creative, and independent are the Latin American female writers' targets. They aimed to show that creativity was not only associated with men, also women could produce and create pioneer pieces. In the twentieth century, globalization and modernity have great deal in understanding Latin American works. The need to discover new horizons of literature in Latin America required translation like in the novel of *Delirium* which is translated into over than twenty languages.

The present study is divided into three chapters. The first Chapter is the Theoretical part of the Study. The different parts on which the research consists are anatomized. We depend on feminism and Latin American fiction during the postmodern era. Our present study starts with defining psychoanalysis as a theory, and giving its impact on fiction. Then, we move to dismantling madness as both a mental disorder, and a literary device used by Latin American female writers to reach high levels of creativity. Creativity is analyzed as a concept and a process, and elucidated in the Latin American fiction. The correlation of madness and creativity is the core of our study which is evident in the next two chapters.

The second chapter is the projection of the first chapter. It represents the Colombian society during the heyday of drug trade that reflected the corruption of Colombia after 1960s in all the domains. This historical structure is a part of the setting of *Delirium* which is written by Laura Restrepo. This chapter begins with presenting Restrepo's life story, her most

prominent works, and her style of writing. It also shows the power of madness through characters and events. Then, the decay of the Colombian society is tackled through four leading postmodern techniques to show the allegory of society compared to Colombia. The last aspect in this chapter is to show females power to impose themselves through the novel's female characters.

The third chapter focuses on creativity in the novel through the author's style. This chapter initiates the summary of *Delirium*, and the writing style used by the author. It exposes as well many elements that build the story to uncover the hidden aspects of Colombian society. It ends with correlating madness and creativity which is a successful trial by female writers to picture their positioning in society.

## Chapter One: A Theoretical Overview and Dismantlable Study

*No great genius was without a mixture of insanity*

*-Aristotle-*

During the postmodern era, Latin American female issues like: stereotypes, marginalization, oppression, and patriarchy have been intensively discussed. Women fought to gain their freedom in a male dominant society. One of the tools used by females to defend their identities is writing. Writing empowers women. It shows their identities, and liberates their minds. Our first chapter is going to be a dismantling chapter. The different parts of our dissertation topic will be well presented, and explained. Postmodernism, Feminism, and Latin American fiction are the basis of our research. We define psychoanalysis, and explain its significance in literature. We move to madness; which is a psychoanalytic topic well applied in Latin American female works. We explain its role in both psychoanalytic and literary fields. We focus as well on creativity, and its involvement in literature.

### 1. Psychoanalysis

#### 1.1. Definition of psychoanalysis:

Sigmund Freud is one of the contributors in psychoanalytic trend. He exposed himself to the self-analysis. He collected, analyzed, and synthesized concepts, and ideas from both theoretical perspectives and clinical directions. Freud has experimented many obstacles in psychoanalysis by collaborating with eminent scholars such as: Carl Jung, Alfred Alder, Sandron Ferengi, William Riech, and others. Their aim was to celebrate applied psychoanalysis in many fields such as literature, sociology, anthropology, and even in religion and mythology. The diversity of the sources and definitions of psychoanalysis today created a problem which is no longer clearly defined to the general public. Otherwise, psychoanalysis is a method of experimenting and investigating the unconscious mind from the application of

clinical experiments and methods. Barry says "Psychoanalysis itself is a form of therapy which aims to cure mental disorder by investigating the interaction of conscious and unconscious elements in the mind" (Barry 96). The discipline of psychoanalysis consecrates to the study of mental disturbance and soul diseases profoundly. It is not a simple branch of medicine, but also a therapy which is applied in literature. It helps to understand philosophy, culture, and religion; through analyzing both social and individual tendencies by using such aspects of psychoanalysis.

### **1.2. Aspects of Psychoanalysis :**

There are two main prejudices against psychoanalysis that should be well explained. Carl Jung in his book which is entitled: *Freud and Psychoanalysis* discussed these prejudices. The first prejudice is that psychoanalysis is a profound and perplexing form of anamnesis. It is evident that an anamnesis is considered as the statements of the patient's family. In addition to the conscious reply of the patient himself when he is asked by the psychologist. However, this patient's history must not be mixed with analysis as there is no relation between them. The second prejudice is that psychoanalysis is a method of suggestion. In other words, systematic teaching is embedded in the patient, and it affects mental healing. The analyst works hard to make his patient uses his common sense to accommodate him for an independent life. Hence, the psychoanalyst uses four main therapeutic principles or ways to deal with his patient (Jung 230- 231).

According to Amy Wenzel in her book which is entitled: *The SAGE Encyclopedia of Abnormal and Clinical Psychology*; the first psychoanalytic aspect used by Freud is hypnosis. It was founded by the French neurologist Jean- Martin Charcot to show and cure hysterical neurosis; where a temporary paralysis of different body parts happens. The Viennese neurologist Josef Breuer was able to treat a young girl through hypnosis. Freud also used this technique. He discovered that it is unreliable as it does not help in reducing neurotic problems. It is both opposed and useless in most cases; because there is a psychological force

that blocks this process most of the time. This force could be the relationship between the doctor and the patient. Many patients cannot talk freely because it is difficult for them to build a solid bridge with their doctors; which obstructs the success of the therapy (Wenzel 23).

Another tool is evident when the psychoanalyst listens to the patient's conscious problems and conflicts. He notes down either for advice or for the sake of treatment. However, neurotic patient's problems cannot be solved through advice or persuasion as they make no difference. The effect of this therapeutic method is as little as that of hypnosis, which are already seen as both opposed and useless. However, many patients cannot talk freely because they feel uncomfortable to tell the analyst. Otherwise, they doubt the efficiency of the hypnosis. Whether consciously or unconsciously, sometimes, it is pointless to use this method which leads the therapist to ask about the previous life of the patient.

In his book which is entitled *The Theory of Psychoanalysis*, Carl Jung says: " I am perfectly well-acquainted with hypnotic suggestion, and with Duboi's method of persuasion, but I do not use these methods, on account of their relative inadequacy for the same reason, I do not use the direct "ré-éducation de la volonté" as the psychoanalytic method gives me better results" (Jung 96). Carl Jung does not believe in using both methods of hypnosis and persuasion. The main reason is that they are not successful all the time as some people could easily be hypnotized whereas others could not.

In her book which is entitled *The Sage Encyclopedia of Abnormal and Clinical Psychology* Amy Wenzel asserts that Freud replaced the hypnosis therapy with Free association experiment. This would elicit the main tendencies of the patient through talking and saying whatever he or she wants, no matter how trivial the thoughts are. This would lead to reveal hidden unconscious problems. Again, this process would not be helpful all the time for the reason that patients do not feel anything but less or more ordinary. It is mentioned in

*Theory of Art and Literature* that the third tool which is dreams can be considered as an outcome of the patient's attempt to reveal his sub consciousness. This is the core in Psychoanalysis. It is a psychic product, and the focal point of unconsciousness. The interpretation of dreams and their meanings have always been existing through oneiromancy. The dream is considered as a tool to free the patient from limitations of the sub consciousness. In other cases, it is seen as a fantasy that is not forced, but easily told without considering any backgrounds, since it looks so trivial to the extent that it expresses nothing. The psychoanalyst uses the dreams to gather data about his patient, in order to be familiar with his hidden problem. They work together to find a solution. However, there are many cases where the patient does not dream at all or ceased to dream because he has conscious concerns that should be first solved. Otherwise, this would hinder the process of treatment. Sometimes the analysis of dreams is not helpful. It leads the psychoanalyst to depend on the patient's fantasies. Fantasy is the fourth psychoanalytic aspect. Every human over occupied with his fantasies believes in its sweetness, is not conscious about its invalidity. Whereas, in reality fantasies are important to the therapeutic process as it has great impact on the patient. The patient or the neurotic uses his fantasies to escape real life difficulties and even simple daily tasks. As a result, the libido is invested or directed towards patient's inner life through fantasies. Psychoanalysis focuses on these fantasies to restore the libido, which is the worthy part of fantasies to the conscious self and the duties. This can only be done through extracting fantasies into the light of the day as Freud says "a dreamer in broad day light" with the libido. Fantasies stop after a while which means that there is no libido and the patient goes back to his real life (126-134).

### **1.3. Psychoanalysis and literature**

Looking back to psychoanalysis, we find that it exists only in the human psyche and culture where, the concepts and theories of psychoanalysis are not clear. Furthermore, the concepts and theories influenced by the tradition of psychoanalysis begun by Sigmund Freud.

He applied psychoanalysis in literary works. First, in fairy tales such as; Fyodor Dostoevsky, William Shakespeare, Miguel de Cervantes and many others. Freud's first literary text where he made his Psychoanalytic discoveries was in W. Jensen's *Gradiva*. It is a text which takes place in the classic series, and where Freud shows his theories on dreams, life, fantasy, and repression. After *Gradiva*, Freud expended another commentary in literature which deals with the "psychogenesis of creative process, creative writers, and daydreaming". It is a theory of creativity and aesthetics that focused on Freud's interest of art and literature (Freud 36).

#### **1.4. Psychoanalytic Theory and Criticism :**

Psychoanalysis is a highly studied field that had a large influence on all other domains. It is stated in *The Origin and Development of Psychoanalytic Theory* that Psychoanalytical theory is the supposition of such concepts and phases that were originated by Freud since 1877. Psychoanalytic theory experienced four phases by the founder Sigmund Freud. These steps are: history, anatomy research, neurological, and psychological research, which discover the unconscious. Finally, the three major models of psychic apparatus as well as the theory of anxiety and defense mechanisms are as well developed by Sigmund Freud (58-60).

It is mentioned in *Defining Psychoanalysis and its Criticism* that the psychoanalytic theory took a step towards criticism when it was embodied in different social problems. It focused mainly on people's lives that are already pictured in literature. After all, literature is a reflection of life. According to Francois Melterz in his poetic plays *Pipe Dreams*, he represented what Freud calls " literature here exists for the purpose of manifesting almost in spite of itself , a psychoanalytic truth" (Melterz. 128). Sigmund Freud enriched the field of psychoanalysis along with Carl Gustav Jung and Jacque Lacan. In short, it is found that unresolved needs, inner drives, the unconscious and motives from childhood have great impact on our lives. It is mentioned that psychoanalytic criticism is the application of some techniques of psychoanalysis on the studied literary work. Guerin discussed that "of all critical approaches to literature, this has been one of the most controversial, the most abused,

and least appreciated" (qtd. in *Defining Psychoanalysis* 21). In other words, literature is misapplied because of its psychoanalytic complexity. Also, it is least appreciated due to one can never determine the real intention of the writer or his psychological state (21-22).

Freud's theories about the "unconscious" and the ones which are related to sexual behavior may seem limited and superficial. His aim is to understand the complex human psyche that was neglected by other theorists. According to Guerin "the foundation of Freud's contribution to modern psychology is his emphasis on the unconscious aspects of the human psyche" (qtd. in *Defining Psychoanalysis* 22). It is important to mention that the concept of the unconscious was not first mentioned by Freud. It was by chance that he brought this idea to the field of psychoanalysis. A major concern in literary field such as the Greek mythology that tells stories of mentally disturbed characters. The realm of psychology in literature was discovered by writers as Proust, Thomas Stearns Eliot through applying devices of symbolism, metaphors, allusions, and many other psychoanalytic influences. Psychoanalytic criticism is old as it was used in William Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, Sophocles' *Oedipus Rex*, and in Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein*. However, Freud was credited for his psychological defense mechanisms like the Oedipus complex that connotes the emotions of the unconscious wishes to possess his mother, and consider his father as an enemy. Carl Jung as well, developed the Electra complex which is related to girls. There was a strong debate between both psychoanalysts because Freud insists that his Oedipal complex can be applicable to both boys and girls (23-24).

This discussion results in the idea that psychoanalysis has always been a major concern in literature. Nevertheless, in order to better understand psychoanalysis, important ideas should be explained. The most significant are "the Id, Ego, and Superego" which are found by Freud. According to Freud the "Id" is the first source of all unconscious psychic energy. It represents the human being instincts. Singh defines the "Id" saying that " it contains everything that is inherited, that is present at birth, that is laid down in the constitution, above all, therefore, the

instincts which originate from the somatic organization and which find a first physical expression here (in the Id) in forms unknown to us" (qtd. in *Defining Psychoanalysis* 26). In other words, Singh defined the "Id" as the part of the human brain that aspires to do whatever he wants. It also consists of inherited things like our innate behaviors, regardless of their being right or wrong (24).

The "Ego" is the moderator between the "Id" and the "Superego". It is the sound of logic and rationality. It shows that following our Id or desire is not always the right choice to do. It is said that "Whereas the Id is governed solely by the pleasure principle, the Ego is governed by the reality principle" (27). The Ego helps the person to balance himself between his instincts and the reason. The Superego is known as the morality principle as it is driven by a strong moral unconsciously. Both Id and Superego are extremely contrary but the Ego is there to make an equation between them (26-27).

#### **1.4.1. Introduction to Madness**

People are always wondering about the mad persons .The answer of these questions was both unreachable and eminently desirable. Why do some people get sick?, Why do some people get well?, What is the meaning of an illness?, What causes it to come?, and how is it healed?. These questions are seductive when it comes to any kind of illness. Since, as mortal creatures we are all threatened of not being well as Lisa Kron points out in her play which is entitled *Well*:

There are out there who are sick, there are people there who are taking care of someone who's sick, we can't jerk them around.

They want to know: why are some people sick and other people get well? I know they do, questions like that are very seductive, because it would be so much easier if we could answer them.

But we can't answer them. (Kron np)

We may not understand everything about how the body grasps what has gone wrong , and

thus we start to answer questions about cause and treatment . When it comes to the mind diseases, it is much harder to grasp the apparent malfunction. So, these questions burn with a special intensity for issues of mental illness, being simply denied or become visible answers. We have sought to comprehend mental disorder through culturally and historically varied set of supplement stories. This would create meanings to offset the troubling power of these questions: why this illness? Why this person? What has happened and what can be done?. The scholars of the twentieth-century in American Literature examined the stories and engendered questions of disability studies. They have been investigating the historically specific representations of other minds. The deviant mind yields series of particular representational patterns and strategies. Madness invites certain kinds of metaphors that motivate certain kinds of narrative. This has likely been true as long as there have been metaphors and narratives. However, during the twentieth century, when so many ideas about cause and treatment have been contested, and revised; the literary discourses of madness have evolved with special swiftness (Donestelly 121). Within that evolution, writers and readers as well as doctors, politicians, and other influential figures have jointly participated in constructing representations, and understanding the distress that explains the moment of their construction. In her experience with what she prefers to call manic, depressive disorder and symptoms of dementia are examined today in psychology, medicine, and sociology. However, they were and still present and important in art, religion, ethics, and epistemology. Madness is a real manifestation of the "soul". It is a variable concept that, from antiquity to the twentieth-century, covered approximately what came to be known after Freud's question: the Unconscious Part of the Human Mind. Only time will tell how much better students of the psyche can look at the future. After reading this sobering re-creation of yesterday's madness, and the ineffective attempts of humanity to treat it by amputation, projections, prejudices, and segregation (Donestelly 120-125).

### 1.4.2. Madness in Psychology

Michel Foucault gave help concerning madness development. His fulfillment was expressive in the era of the cultural history which was delineated from the Middle Ages to the Enlightenment. The historical review of the documents that required the same meanings of mental illness, the entity of being unreason, and the suitable social view. In another sense, the author represented the re-creation of the negative part of the aforementioned concept to be vanished. This happened due to the extending consciousness by various historical books. These books mainly mentioned that psychiatry had a positive relevance to the mental disorders and behavioral conditions that conceived the past on the light of the present. Foucault presented in his book which is entitled *Madness and Civilization* the fatal role of history to enrich and unfold the new entrance of research's investigations. A group of psychologists and psychics conflicted about madness in that it is a spiritual/mental disease of the brain. The psychologists of the twentieth-century can understand and diagnose. However, they are capable to know and to explain the reasons. Most specialists of madness accept that what is contained within the column of madness is regarded as a form of illness, and usually is considered as a medical term. Some psychologists fully accept that madness is a brain disease. However, because the term may be vague, its application of wiggle room to psychologists who are unsure whether madness is a physical disease. Nevertheless, "mental illness" is an illness in some sense (Foucault 16-20). This ambiguous quality of illness provides confusion in the representation of the historical facts. Andrew Scull in a rebuttal to a psychiatrist offence that he sculled considers madness "merely a literary or philosophical concept". He states that:

If I am less inclined than Dr. Cammer to concede that the definition of madness as illness is a pre-social "natural" feature of the universe, and instead regard the boundaries of what constitutes insanity as brittle and greatly influenced by social factors that is not at all the same thing as the assertion that mental illness is some of

literary or philosophical conceit. (Scull 378-388)

Human beings experienced and suffered from extreme kinds of mental psychic disturbance such as; Delusions, Mania, and other forms of strange and bizarre behaviors. These thoughts spread in the society and such mental disorders changed, developed, and continued to designate the mental disease which later penetrated to other fields.

### 1.4.3. The Elucidation of Madness in Literature

When someone hears that a person is mad, he or she fears and draws a muzzy image of a human being with dirty clothes, tousle hair, and not fixed eyes. Simon Cross says in his book which is entitled *Mediating Madness*: "we think we know what madness looks like" the discolored and "savage" face and clothed hyena "figure of Bertha Mason ( Brontë 213-220) or it looks like their eyes of Septimus Smith , with their" look of the apprehension " in them which makes complete strangers apprehensive too (woolf14) or it looks like the windows and walls covered with tinfoil to "scramble the signal", as Peter and Agnes revamp their mortal room in the play *Bug* (Peter and Agnes 84). Many critics, philosophers, and scholars headed for examining and approaching the gap of madness in literature from different angles. In the book which is entitled *Feldman's writing on madness*“, it is claimed that madness has been retrained in social philosophy and cultural history. Madness was a voiceless subject which is discussed in literary field by theorists and critics such as Foucault “ throughout our cultural history the madness that has been socially , politically and philosophically repressed has motherless made itself heard , has survived as a speaking subject only in and throughout literary texts ( Feldman 15). Unlike Feldman, Allen Thiher “*Revels in Madness*” showed the development and representation of madness in literature from Ancient Greece to Modern time. Lillian Feder studies the representation of madness in relation to society. All different studies led to one idea that madness is a permanent theme. This means that madness has always been existent, and avowed as a literary theme in order to show the reflection of madness in literary writings. Those psychological experiences which are represented with

strange language and action designate the mad characters. Mad character is not imposed in all the characters. This character represents the family and society's values, attitudes, traditions, and violence. Madness within literature appeared and was conducted by William Shakespeare and Miguel de Cervantes to the modern fiction. It followed the history of literature in order to show a mad fictional character, or to analyze the relationship between madness and aesthetics values. Madness was used to depict the image of mad characters. The reader could profit knowledge about the narration of madness, and could deeply analyze the characters. He could as well uncover the surroundings of the author's life.

## **2. Creativity**

### **2.1. Creativity: a Concept or a Process**

Where does creativity come from? What makes creative people? Is there any way to be creative?. People tried to answer these questions in order to understand the process of creativity. They came to an agreement that creativity is the ability to produce an original work of high quality characterized by novelty. Creative work should be contemporary, generative and influential (Barantes-Vidal 59-60). In order to understand how the process of creativity does happen, we should look further into the models of creativity which explain the method in which creativity exists. The first model is the unconsciousness, because it is the appropriate place to realize creativity. Henri Poincare, a mathematician, is familiar with such an experience. He says: "the idea came to me, without anything in my former thoughts seeming to have paved way for it". He reasserts that the mathematical problem finds the creative solution through consciousness. In the conscious mind, the individual can feel restricted and should be more logic and serious. This is one of the examples of psychodynamic models of creativity.

### **2.2. Creativity in Literature and Fiction**

Literature is a part of the society's heritage throughout generations, to keep them in touch

with moral virtues as well as to produce creative pieces of poetry, drama, plays, and prose. A creative writing is the writing that transfuses the normal boundaries of simple piece of writing, and writes it in an original style. The creative writing is divided into fiction and poetry. Creativity penetrated earlier into literary field. However, it did not find much interest, and it was associated only with science and artistic disciplines. The author of a creative work has specific characteristics which indicate if his creativity is innate not acquired as many psychologists and linguists claimed. Salvador Dali in his famous quote states: "have no fear of perfection, you'll never reach it" (Dali np). It is something donated from God. In order to distinguish whether the literary work is creative or not, there are such features which are; novelty, appropriation, generative, and influential. The creative literary work should be something new and never seen or heard before, appropriate and generative ideas, products and things in order to reach a higher status of creativity. Creativity may be seen as the author's ability to mix between the exact reality and the fictional image. The inspiration within the author's work, and the ability to collect and amalgamate different sources of literary works, especially with the traditional work and choosing complex subjects of fantasy is also a sign of creativity.

### **3. Postmodernism**

#### **3.1. Questioning Postmodernism**

This term depicts a form of literature that is marked by features of post Second World War. Literature that uses fragmentation, paradox, unreliable narrators, ...etc. It is a reaction against Enlightenment as well as a distinction between genre, forms of writing, and storytelling. Critics and scholars disagree about the term of postmodernism itself as there are multiple concepts, and its implications change from one critic to another. The contradiction of postmodernism is revealed from a set of meanings in the dictionary:

The term is a number of trends or movements in the arts and literature developing in the 1970's in reaction to or rejection of

the dogma, principles, or practices of established Modernism, especially a movement in architecture and the decorative arts running counter to the practice and influence of the International Style and encouraging the use of elements from historical vernacular styles and often playful illusion, decoration, and complexity. ("Postmodernism")

Postmodernism appeared as a reaction to modernism principles. It encouraged using new styles and elements that depend mainly on traditional forms. Postmodernism was also defined in Merriam-Webster dictionary as "of, relating to, or being any of various movements in reaction to modernism that are typically characterized by a return to traditional materials and forms (as in architecture) or by ironic self-reference and absurdity (as in literature)" ("Postmodernism"). Postmodernism as a movement was first applied on architecture and art; then it moved to literature.

### **3.2. Postmodernism as a Theory**

Elaati in his article which is entitled *Postmodernism Theory* explains that Postmodernism as a theory appeared in complex political circumstances. It demonstrated after the end of the Second World War, and the emergence of philosophies such as; Surrealism, existentialism, and absurdism. The deconstruction resulted in the movement from Modernism to Postmodernism. The philosophy of Postmodernism relied on questioning, undermining and nihilism, intertextuality, disorder, and non-compatibility. It came as a reaction to structural linguistics domination, exploitation and alienation. It also has been targeted to undermine western philosophy monopoly on the means of production. It criticizes the logos and logic through questioning mechanism, dispersion, and disassembly (Elaati 01-02).

### **3.3. Postmodernism in Literature**

According to Elaati, Postmodernism first appeared in the field of painting, architecture,

and civil engineering. Then, it moved towards literature, philosophy, art, technology, and the rest of other sciences. Unlike Modernism, Postmodernism depends on a compilation of intellectual, artistic, aesthetic, and moral elements. It mainly focuses on dual criticism of analysis in the humanities as well as comprehensive explanatory theories. It relies as well on the notion that the truth is relative and not absolute. In other words, Postmodernism's essence is that it is impossible to attain the truth. Postmodernism denies the Representation idea due to the difference in culture and point of view. In addition, Postmodernism has a new vision towards time and place as it neglects the importance of history (03).

### **3.4. Aspects of Postmodernism**

Postmodernism is further distinguished from modernism through its rejection of modernism's grand narratives and aspects. Ammar Rezaei explains in his article which is entitled *Post- Modernism features in English Literature* that the first aspect is pastiche. It means to paste together ideas from previous writings to create new styles. Intertextuality is another well-known aspect of modern literary work, and it is related to metafiction. The latter is a creative transformation of a text in different linguistic and cultural contexts. Temporal distortion is a postmodern aspect that uses narrative techniques and non-linear timelines in a story. Minimalism refers to the use of common characters and events. In addition to maximalism, which is a disarrayed, elongated, and elaborated writing. Another element is magical realism or presenting unrealistic events without clarifying facts. The last aspect is reader involvement that helps to include the reader in the vortex of events (Rezaei 18-19).

### **4. Feminism**

The term Feminism has French origins. It was defined according to Cambridge Online Dictionary as: "The belief that women should be allowed the same rights, power, and opportunities as men and be treated in the same way, or the set of activities intended to achieve this state" ("Feminism"). In other words, Feminism is used to describe the set of

cultural, political, or economic ideologies that target the equality between men and women. It gained its fame within the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century.

#### **4.1. Feminism as a Political Movement**

The Russian Popov in his article which is entitled *Feminism as a Political Ideology* discusses feminism in the political field as it has always been related to Enlightenment and French Revolution. At the beginning of Feminist movement women did not have the right to vote, to access education, or even to work. However, by the end of the nineteenth-century, it was mentioned in Lain Mc Lean's *The Concise Oxford Dictionary of Politics* that women got their independence and had access to education as well as public life. They gained the right to vote. They obtained as well outstanding political positions. Feminism fought for women and insisted on emancipating them in all spheres of public life, and opposed pointedly the patriarchy (qtd. in Popov 180). Roger Eatwell and Anthony Wright stated in: *Contemporary Political Ideologies* that gender inequality is the main characteristic that distinguishes Feminism from other political ideologies, which makes it dynamic not static. Moreover, after the Second World War, Betty Friedan who wrote: *The Feminine Mystique* had a large influence that resulted in the foundation of National Organization for Women in 1966. This organization aimed to use law in the political process to fight discrimination. It was barely related to Equal Rights Amendment in the US constitution. In the twentieth-century, feminism had a great advancement in defending women's rights. Although women succeeded in acquiring posts in education, employment, and suffrage; their equality has not been achieved yet even in developed countries. The target is the same, and the objectives are there to be made (Eatwell 206-225).

Throughout its emergence, Feminism experienced three main waves. The first and longest wave that lasted from 1848 to 1920 is about the attitude of treating women by men. Manoj Kumar Yadav and Meenakshi Yadav Sharma mentioned in their article which is entitled *Aspects of Feminist Writing: A presentation of Common Issues* that in the beginning of

feminist criticism, males underestimated females even in literature and writing. Women were encouraged by the Equal Rights Amendments in 1923. Many female writers' works such as, Marry Ellman's *Thinking About Women* (1968), Kate Millet's *Sexual Politics* (1969), and Germaine Greer's: *The Female Eunuch* (1970), were successful in showing European Society's patriarchy. Then, after the Second World War, they shifted to the Second wave of Feminism which exactly began in 1960s and 1970s. This phase marked the increasing consideration of female writers as well as the creation of Gynocriticism that was evident in Elaine Showalter's book *A Literature for Their Own* (1977). Showalter's work included aspects like the examination of female writers, how female characters are portrayed, and most of all exploring a canon of literature written by women. In other words, feminist criticism started during this second wave. The Third wave of Feminism began in 1990. It concentrated on female individual identity especially queer and non-white women, besides renewing the writing language and diverse strains of feminist activity (Kumar Yadav and Yadav Sharma 60).

#### **4.2. Feminism in Literature**

Martina Halířová claimed in her research which is entitled *The Development of Feminism in English Literature of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries* that at the beginning of Feminism Movement, precisely in the nineteenth century, female writers such as Charlotte Bronte and many others were writing under pseudonyms as they were afraid to use their real names. Their writings tackled society problems. For this reason, they used male pseudonyms because males were respected, and to avoid society's prejudices. Feminism was percolated through literature. The rising of sexual freedom had great impact on writers during nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In addition to the subordination that led women to build their own positions, and fight males. In the second half of the nineteenth century, women had rights for education, vote, and marriage retrained women, and resulted in the appearance of the New Woman. This new image of women shows their power and ability to be as strong as men. The latter focused

on writing and expressing their ambitions. She was a mirror of the actual society. The beginning of the twentieth century brought a new literary style that is Modernism, where writers became more natural and had wider freedom to express sexual thoughts. During that period, female writings focused on middle class white women and the queer culture. Sandra Cisneros, Gabriela Mistral, Cristina Peri Rossi, and Carmen Boullosa were among the most famous writers during the Latin American Feminist Movement. Their ideas had huge influence on the development of female literature (Halířová 15-18).

### 5. Latin American Fiction

The landmark emergence of Latin American literature came about 1950s and 1960s. It was and still well appreciated in the history of literature. This kind of literature is old, and has a rich and complex tradition of literary production. It is asserted in *The Revelation of Latin American Literature* that "the Boom" and "New Novel" are considered as two main concepts in any debate of modern Latin American fiction. The Boom took place during 1960s. During that time, literary activity increased among Latin American writers. The main reason of this detonation was the excessive production and availability of innovative and experimental novels. Whereas the "New Novel" shows that fiction was well introduced both before and after the Boom (11).

New novel's definition would be complicated to probe Latin American literature. We would consider the evolution of the new novel's growth during 1940s and the 1950s. As well as reaching its highest levels in the success of Boom in the 1960s. Considering the New Novel and the Boom, Philip Swanson who is a professor of Hispanic Studies at the university of Sheffield stated in his book which is entitled *Latin American fiction: A short introduction* that "the new novel may have been an evolving trend since the 1940s or earlier, but the Boom was really (as the word "Boom" implies) a finite burst of commercial activity" (qtd. in *The Revelation* 11-12). In other words, while the New Novel developed throughout time, the Boom was related to the sudden uprising in literary activity (12).

The chronology of Latin American Boom is quite complex. In order to well understand it, the light should be shed on the climax of the New Narrative. Philippe Swanson in his book which is entitled: *Landmarks in Modern Latin American Fiction* (1990) perceives: " The new novel can be seen as a reaction against and rejection of the assumptions and forms of traditional realism" (qtd. In *The Revelation* 12). At the very first beginning, Latin American literary scope was exclusively limited to the national literature of South and Central America, Mexico, Cuba, Puerto Rico, and parts of the West Indies. Nevertheless, many writers were ready to originate a new kind of literature that images lives and interests of Latin Americans. Actually, there were the "Big Four" or the major pre Boom writers who paved the way for the Boom. These writers are; Carlos Fuentes, Julio Cortazar, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Mario Vargas Llosa. In 1960s, prose and fiction became more famous than poetry. This motivated these writers to develop the Boom. This way integrating modernist narrative techniques such as magical realism that became a common feature in the works of many Latin American writers during the second half of the twentieth century. Regardless of Brazilian literature which is foremost written in Portuguese, most of Latin American literature is Spanish, and it is well-known as Spanish American or "Hispanic- American literature" (12-15).

The Boom is the movement that displayed Latin American's famous international literature during 1960s. This term of the Boom refers to the outbreaking increase in the popularity of Latin American fiction during the 1960s. However, this concept has been criticized as it is on one hand used in literary history to sort out the substantial features of many Latin American works in the literary field. While on the other hand, as a deep rooted phenomenon in the literary field. This Boom was implied as an international profile and a universal renown. Latin American works shifted into a new step when novels and short story collections were enormously published as they were of exceptional quality, marked by highly innovative and experimental forms (13-15).

Generally, the Boom according to Ronald Christ in the forward to Jose Donoso's *The*

*Boom in Spanish American literature, A personal history* refers to "sudden flowering of writers in the sixties, who won a greater deal of attention because they began, almost at once, to be translated into foreign languages and to put Latin America. With some kind of unity on the international literary map from the first time" (qtd. in *The Revelation* 21). This idea affirms the preceding notion concerning the development of Latin American literary field which made it famous. Briefly, Jose Donoso represents the Boom in his own way as there was an increase of writers who translated their Latin American works to make their country and works both universal and celebrated (21-22).

### **5.1. Latin American Female Fiction**

Karolina Matyka- Dabrowski in her research which is entitled: *The Power of Words: Feminism in Latin American Literature* explains that from the very early beginnings, women in Latin America were suffering from male persecution in economic, political, and social fields. The wide spread of stereotypes say that women should be obedient and calm, and their fight for equality was worthless. However, many Latin American female writers could break that class gender through writing about the violence that women suffered from within their houses. And how they had to be silent and satisfied. So, writing was one of the weapons used to defend women's rights in patriarchal society as well as searching female identity and self-value. (Matyka-Dabrowski 02). Many Latin American authors like: Sandra Cisneros, Cristina Peri Rossi, and Elena Poniatowska were able to show their creativity in literature. Debra Blake in her book which is entitled: *Chicana Sexuality and Gender: Cultural Refiguring in Literature, Oral history, and art* states that these authors were able to "make meaning of their worlds and the complexities, contradictions, and varied experiences that characterize their existence" (Blake 01). In other words, these female writers were successful in liberating themselves from intricacies of the society and show female identities.

#### **5.1.1. Searching Female Identity through Machismo**

Machismo is synthesized as a term which expresses masculinity in the Latin American

culture, and it has been widely used in gender studies. For this reason, Karolina Matyka-Dabrowski mentioned that Machismo has been a subject of study to deduce its impact on gender roles. Nevertheless, they came to an agreement that Machismo is a cultural phenomenon which every person defines individually. Karolina explained that Machismo is a combination of behaviors used by men to impose their presence and force on women even around men. In this regard, Dr Richard G. Parker who is a professor of sociomedical sciences and anthropology at the state university of Rio de Janeiro views Machismo as "the single most important or most deeply rooted feature of sexual culture in Latin America" (qtd. in Matyka Dabrowski 02). Dr Parker discusses the term of Machismo and tends to show males as dominant "expansive and almost uncontrollable" figures. Whereas, women are more passive and submissive "objects of male control" (03). This equation shows "respect" as the basis of marriage with a hierarchal power structure. Parker gives an example about the society's expectations from both genders. This example is about women who abstain from any sexual activity before marriage, and keep loyal to their husbands. Through their marriage, they are obliged to follow the image of La Virgen de Guadalupe and be *amas de la casa*<sup>(1)</sup> taking care of their husbands and children. While males are supposed to be free and start sexual activity during their early adolescence years, and have many partners before and even after marriage. This would satisfy their desires and show their manliness among women and peers as "the man of the house" (02-04).

### 5.1.2. Culture of Violence

The concept of Machismo in its negative meaning is the whole control of a man over his family, to show his masculinity and strength during the women's liberation movement in the 1960s and 1970s. It had a bad influence on children who are taught that in order to be powerful, they must be violent.

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<sup>1</sup> Amas de la casa: homemakers. *The Power of Words*, 2017. 03

They even witnessed these acts of violence in their households, and considered this behavior as acceptable. They would even re-apply it on their own wives. However, men had difficulties to express their feelings of anxiety or even to show their masculinity through violence. This created a dangerous and toxic environment for their families and women emotionally, physically, or even sexually. However, it is important to mention that the feminist movement in Latin America has joined the political field to fight the concept of Machismo, and go beyond the patriarchal boundaries that limited women's rights (04-06).

### 5.1.3. Feminism VS Machismo in Latin American Fiction

Women in Latin American history have been regarded as "active in both family and social domain and political life. However, most of their political identity continued to be related to their nurturing role. This gave them specific ingress into politics, and allowed them a power base that is limited due to gender relations. Despite these obstacles, women have been able to achieve great success and leave their print in politics that had an impact on the evolution of citizenship. Their encounter to the patriarchal society caused them oppression. This led many feminist women to concentrate on increasing women's consciousness to their rights. Actually, the success of the movement was in its unity of power. Women fought against stereotypical gender roles to improve legislation, and obtain protection and equality. The spark was seen in Mexico, Argentina, and Colombia (Matyka-Dabrowski 06-07).

- **Mexico**

There were two major phenomena that affected and raised violence in Mexico which are; femicide, that is defined in Cambridge Dictionary as "the crime of killing a woman or women; an occasion when this happens, and the current military situation" ("femicide"). This subject was widely discussed and used as a literary theme. As an example, in 2014 the prose-writer and poet Alicia Gaspar de Alba wrote: *Desert Blood: the Juárez Murders*. The book focuses

mainly on the effects of patriarchy and gender identity. In addition, it studies the political shift in the movement, not just social or artistic one. Briefly, since the 1990s, Mexico has witnessed an increase in non- governmental organizations (NGOs). The creation of these organizations refashioned organization of female movement, especially in rural areas where women do not get any chance in economic or political fields (07-08).

- **Argentina :**

The brutal sexual abuse of both Chiara Paéz and Lucia Perez who were cruelly raped and killed caused an explosion among women. This led to their starting NiUna Menos movement that Malena and Lenta mentioned in their book which is entitled *Feminism in Argentina* (08-09). This movement was international one not only in Argentina. However, their voices have been finally heard as the president of the National Council of Women, Fabiana Tunez and the president of Argentina, Mauricio Macri found a plan. This plan can be useful to protect women from violence through using technologies like: ankle monitors on offenders, and cell phone tracking. As well as the development of an application to call the police without actually dialing any numbers. All these procedures are supposed to be implemented within 2019 to fight back and protect women (08-09).

- **Columbia**

The military conflict between the Colombian government and the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia had its impact on women. Sexual violence had affected women during that time. However, they could make their voices audible through civil society involvement though they had minimal presence. Simeon Tegel wrote an article in USA Today newspaper which is entitled *Colombia Cracks Down on a Horrific Wave of Acid Attacks Against Women* to describe the state of women in Colombia .Women kept falling as victims to acid attacks as a result of their suffering from men rooted misogynistic attitudes as well as higher degrees of violence. Their suffering ended when the president Juan Manuel Santos promoted the

legislation. He signed a law that punishes anyone uses any kind of clinical agent to physically harm another person, with a sentence of 12 years behind bars (09-10).

- **Sor Juana Ines de La Cruz**

Female cultural achievements were included in Latin American feminist discussions. In the seventeenth-century, women have perceived themselves as outstanding poets, novelists, painters, and musicians. Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz was the first published feminist in the new world. Sor Juana was a seventeenth-century nun who was born and raised in Mexico. Her life story is a prominent conflict between education, religious beliefs, intellectual freedom, and male oppression that has been and still silencing female voices. Her struggle which started at a very early age when she was obliged to carry on her studies in secret especially, when she entered the convent because writing was considered worthless and a mockery of God. However, she continued fighting for intellectual freedom in alliance with the Bishop of the Puebla until 1690s. The Bishop published Juana's critique of a famous sermon without her release, with a letter signed using a pseudonym "Sor Filotea de La Ccruz". He was blaming and punishing her for her intellectualism. This led Sor Juana to create her masterpiece *Respuesta a Sor Filotea* which defends women's rights to educational access. Juana contended that studying and writing permitted her to perform her duties towards God. She stated in her letter which is entitled: *Answer by The Poet to the Most Illustrious Sister Filotea de La Cruz*: "How without logic, could I be apprised of the general and specific way in which the Holy Scripture is written?" (qtd. in Matyka –Dabrowski 12). Her book liberated women's desires because the author tells her own life, and the challenges she faced during her trip. Briefly, Sor Juana's work allowed the emergence of many female authors and artists in the future (10-13).

## **5.2. Representing Female Religious and Historical Figures :**

New representations of women in Latin American culture including literature were

introduced when, women used writing to liberate themselves and redefine their identities. Debra Blake in her book *In Chicana Sexuality and Gender: Cultural Refiguring in Literature, Oral History and Art 2008* focuses on Mexican female cultural symbols: La Malinche, la Llorona, and la Virgen de Guadalupe; and how they are being redefined. Through these three figures, women can comprehend that they shift into a new phase of eliminating patriarchal ideals.

- **La Malinche**

The historical female figure Malintzin Tenepal who is referred to as La Malinche helped in the Spanish conquest of Mexico in the 1500s. She was an interpreter, a scapegoat, and one of the most condemned figures in the Chicano culture. Although she was a positive character, she was considered as a traitor. Later on, La Malinche name was restored and reviewed by Chicana and Mexican writers as a cultural and gender scapegoat as well as a historical subject agent (Matyka-Dabrowski 14-15).

- **La Llorona**

The figure of la Llorona or the “weeping woman” represents the disgraceful ghost used to discipline children’s night behavior. The colonial version of La Llorona shows her as a victim of male infidelity who was desperate enough to dump her children and become doomed for the rest of her life. The main aim of this story is to dominate women behavior, and show female power imperfection (15-16).

- **La Virgen de Guadalupe**

This image stands in contrast to La Malinche and la Llorona. This figure started as a negative picture of Mexican Catholic women as she represents “blind devotion”. Then, it moved in the 1960s to be a part of the female literary movement that promoted the picture of women (16-17).

## 6. Postmodern Latin American Female Fiction

Throughout the past two decades, many studies focused on females in postmodern Latin American female fiction. The international theories of gender helped in the development of Latin American feminist literary theory. It as well highlighted the creative works of women from marginalized groups. Starting from 1990, there was a huge deal of interest on revitalizing the canon, the political role of feminist literary criticism and female language. Nancy LaGreca is one of the scholars whose concerns were about female texts that paved the way for studying sexuality, power, gender, and language as well as reconstructing the canon during the last few decades. These studies evolved from criticizing women's reality to patriarchy dissolution through writing. This affected even the political field especially within the third wave of feminism.

Nancy LaGreca in her book which is entitled *Feminist Literary Criticism of Latin American Women's Writing: Context, Approaches and Analysis of the 1990s and early 2000s* focuses on female works that had great impact on patriarchal literary history. She even notes that the development of feminist literary criticism in the last three decades has undergone through four defining stages. The first stage is the portrayal of women critique in male literary texts, as well as the rediscovery and analysis of women literary texts. The second phase in which analyses aimed to highlight women's role. The third phase deconstructs the gender symbolic system, and estimate female works by eradicating the gender gap in the creativity of texts. Finally, sociohistorical contexts search where early feminists can be detected to apply feminist literary analyses on the literary contexts (LaGreca 379-382).

### 6.1. Language Problems and Foreign Theory

Recent studies discuss the applicability of foreign theory to Latin American literature. They also search the application of patriarchal language to express feminist issues. Amy Kaminsky and Debra Castillo are two leading writers who have well explored the idea of foreign theory and the use of language. Debra Castillo in her book which is entitled: *Talking Back: Toward a Latin American Feminist Literary Critique* discusses the components of the

successful literary product. She supports using the foreign theory in order to develop Latin American literary studies. This would result in a more equal intellectual and social community, because patriarchy is a huge obstacle for women. Castillo's works improved Latin American literature as she identifies and defines some literary strategies in women's writing. In her book which is entitled: *Talking Back* she presents the theses strategies to smooth the critique of patriarchy. Also, appropriation, or how North American literature perceives Latin American literature. In addition to cultivation of superficiality, that is conveying a social message within traditional romantic frame. Another strategy is negation or the rejection of marginalization, and writing from marginal position. Subjunctive mood or using deconstruction to double voice a text. (qtd. in LaGreca 382-385)

Nancy LaGreca appreciates Castillo's works and thinks that her strategies were useful for contemporary women's writing, especially silence and cultivation of superficiality. The use of these strategies was evident in women's writing because their messages were encoded to avoid censorship (LaGreca 383-384).

Kaminsky shares Castillo's opinion about the underdevelopment of Latin American feminist critique. In her book: *Reading the Body Politic: Feminist Criticism and Latin American Women Writers*, Amy Kaminsky's objective is to study the relationship between language, the semantics of patriarchy, and the importance of gender and sexuality in women's writing. She reconstructs the word "feminista" because masculine discourse has related feminism with lesbianism in order to undermine this movement. Her main interest is language as it is the pillar of feminist critics who seek to correct oppression (LaGreca 385).

By revisiting feminist writings, it would be obvious that the use of patriarchal language would not correlate Latin American feminism and the colonizer. Amy Kaminsky again mentioned that: "Latin American political and literary theorists... have been painfully conscious of the struggle to create a language that is not subservient to a colonial past and

neocolonial present" (Kaminsky 10). Kaminsky affirms the idea that Latin American language was created beyond colonial and neocolonial struggles.

Both Castillo and Kaminky recommend foreign theory conditioned by checking if it is convenient to the scholarly project. Their works facilitate communication in international feminist community of scholars through applying foreign theory. This would shed the light on the symbolic meaning in works of Latin American female authors, reforming the canon, rebuilding a new generation of female writers, and revisiting identities of feminist critics. Postmodern Latin American female fiction has caught contemporary society's attention. They re-invented themselves and rediscovered new perspectives of human psyche and human existence (LaGreca 382-397).

## Chapter Two: Restrepo's Imagery of the Study's Icons

*Madness is that territory where not only  
people but also societies become lost.*

*-Laura Restrepo-*

From 1960s, the Colombian society has suffered from military activities and corruptive drug trade. This situation was the outcome of political, economic, and social struggles. This historical frame is the basis of Laura Restrepo's *Delirium*. Laura Restrepo is a prominent Colombian author who was born in 1950 in Bogota. She moved from one country to another because of her father's job. As a result, she could not finish her studies and get a diploma. However, her literary creativity enabled her to get many prizes and diplomas, which made her father proud of her. She has noticeable works as she started writing in a very early age. Her works were translated into over than twenty languages around the world. Restrepo got a variety of literary works arranging from; *Historia de una entusiasmo*, or *History of Enthusiasm* that she wrote in 1997, to *La isla de la Pasion* or *the Isle of Passion* that was edited in 1989. She as well wrote *Leopardo al sol* or *Leopard in the Sun* in 1993, and *Dulce compania* or *Angel of Galilea* in 1995. In addition, Restrepo published *La Novia Oscura* which means *The Dark Bride* in 1999. In 2002, she wrote *La multitud errante* or *A Tale of the Dispossessed*, and *Olor a rosas invisibles* or *The Scent of Invisible Roses*. Restrepo wrote and published *Delirio* or *Delirium* in 2004, and *Desmasiados héroes* or *Too Many Heroes* in 2009. Her last Spanish work is *Hot Sur* was published in 2013. As she was an activist and journalist, she participated in and witnessed the seditious periods in Latin America caused by the Cuban Revolution. She was mainly interested in portraying political events. Her style of writing rejects "magical realism". Instead, it is a mixture of reality and fiction. This is the essence of her Spanish masterpiece *Delirium* that was published in 2004. It won the Premio

Alfaguara, and Grimzane Cavour Prize successively in 2004 and 2006, and was translated to English by Natasha Wimmer in 2007. Restrepo's *Delirium* depicts the plight of Colombian society that was traumatized by the violent acts of Pablo Escobar. Over the story, madness controls the main character Agustina. This state of disorder had its repercussion on the other characters. In this chapter, Laura Restrepo's novel *Delirium* is carefully examined.

The first aim of this chapter is to give a glimpse of the Colombian society, especially after 1960, where corruption was predominant enough to impact Colombia. The second aim is to tackle madness within characters and events of *Delirium*, the project of this chapter. The third aim is to shed the light on four leading postmodern techniques; to present the human mind fraction compared to the collapse of Colombian society, which is an allegory in itself. The fourth focus is to show how females could impose themselves under patriarchy rule.

### **1. Introduction to Colombian Society**

Latin America experienced many changes during the postmodern era. Colombia is the fifth largest country in Latin America that was largely influenced, especially, during turbulent times. Colombia is the homeland of killing, massacre, dispossession, guerilla movements, and drug trade that started within the beginning of the 1960s. The historian Hobsbawm describes Colombia in the book which is entitled: *Evil Hour in Colombia* by Forrest Hylton saying "I discovered a country in which the failure to make a social revolution had made violence the constant, universal, and omnipresent core of public life"(qtd. in Hobsbawm 15). These illegal acts have quickly spread in Colombia through mafia lords. Pablo Escobar, a narco-terrorist, and a famous criminal figure in Colombia. He had an opportunity to exercise his criminality that created a new layer of psychic alienation. These acts swayed most domains including literary field. Narco-literature is a kind of literature that was found by Elmer Mendoza. He is an eminent novelist in contemporary literature who developed this literary kind to describe the situation of society at the time. Narco- literature is a blend of fiction and realities of drug culture.

In her novel *Delirium*, Laura Restrepo depicted the Colombian society which was affected by post-colonial ideologies of "Europeanization". This term was mainly used by José Antonio Figueroa in his dissertation: *Magic Realism "Vallenato" and political violence in the Colombian Caribbean*. Restrepo in her novel *Delirium* well illustrated the image of Colombian society as Aguilar describes it: "a country... Split from top to bottom by a mountain range, the highways,... and they are seized every day by the army, the paramilitaries, or the guerillas, who kidnap you, kill you, or assault you with grenades..." (*Delirium* 29). This quote indicates the decay of Colombian society by force majeure.

The novel of *Delirium* studies madness from a female perspective. Her aim is to tackle the diverse types of madness at the level of individual and society. In addition, Restrepo delivers different types of madness; from the individual to society, and from country to the continent. The dilemma is visible in the context of events and characters.

## **2. Madness: a Thematic Study**

### **2.1. Reciprocal Delirium Within Characters**

#### **2.1.1. Descendant Madness Through Generations**

- **Agustina**

She is a mad woman and the daughter of a prominent drug family. She is as well the wife of Aguilar, an ex university professor who sells dog food at present. She is the story's axis, on which the story is built. In her childhood, Agustina finds out her ability to predict the future or *el don de los ojos*<sup>(2)</sup>. This gift of clairvoyance that arises only in time of danger has widely been used in literature. It links the supernatural view, or "the Second Sight", with the source of retribution. This is precisely what happens in the novel. Agustina anticipates the danger that might affect her brother Bichi.

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<sup>2</sup> *el don de los ojos*: the second sight. *Delirium*, 2004. 01

In order to protect him, Agustina innovates a strange ritual that includes both purification through water with the meditation of secret photographs. It is evident from the first paragraph that Agustina's second sight caused her problems. Her husband Aguilar says: "Agustina is always predicting some catastrophe; I've tried to make her see reason, but she won't be swayed, since she was little she's had what she calls the Gift of Sight, or the ability to see the future, and God knows the trouble that's caused" (Delirium 01). Although this section is told from the perspective of Aguilar, Agustina's husband, "the Second Sight" (01) is shown as an attribute. However, her powers evolve from detecting family's future to revealing other's secrets. She uncovered the secret of Midas and the crime that took place in his aerobics center. In addition, Agustina discovered during her childhood, that she had two weaknesses. The first is that the external world is a permanent danger to her powers. And her father is the only source of both protection and authority, as she loves and fears him altogether. The second weak spot for Agustina's powers is blood.

Some things are beyond the control of my sight, says Agustina, because they're stronger than my gift of seeing. Not even the secret photographs of Aunt Sofi have the power to control these things, and all of them. It's the blood that disturbs me most. She means the Spilled Blood. Which overwhelms her each time it escapes from where it should be, which is inside of people. (144)

Agustina had three incidents from which she could understand the threat that blood has over her powers. The first incident or "the First Call" as she says is when she was cutting her little brother's fingernails, and clipped a small piece of his fingertip. In that day, it was the first time they met something red and warm oozing out, which is blood. The second incident was when Agustina witnessed the death of a poor man at the front door of her family's house. The sight of the blood coming out slowly from his body made her aware of her weakness towards

blood. Water can control the will of the blood that is spilled. So, water is an essential clue in her mental disorder's problem. "The Third Call" was when she had her period while she was swimming at the pool at Gai Repos, in Sasaima. The Spilled Blood from her body and hearing the word "hemorrhaging" made her certain that "the Gift of Sight" is weak when confronted with the power of blood. Agustina's childhood paved the way for understanding her delirious state as she later becomes a fragile heiress with psychic disposition. Carmenza Kline stated in her book: *Agustina y el Delirio* that: "Agustina's mental insanity is the product of three factors: "the intrinsic (genetic and inherited aspects), the extrinsic (the physical, geographic, sociocultural and physical environment), and the inner world (the affective, emotional and behavior process)" (Kline 116-117). Kline's main remark is that Agustina's illness is the result of her family's past, along with circumstantial and environmental situations.

In her adulthood, Agustina's loss of sanity develops and affects the people around her when reporting her past life, so we can deduce what brought her fall. One morning, she herself confessed to her husband Aguilar that "the lies that were making her crazy" (Delirium 36). The novel also shows how Agustina's state of delirium is spawned among the other characters. Agustina's family has the biggest portion in her madness because of secrecy and falsehood. In a hidden way, Agustina reaches a stage of mixing up facts and imagination. Finally, this results in her state of madness.

In other words, there are many elements which resulted in Agustina's insanity in her adulthood. Starting from her childhood memories that was affected by values of Colombian society like corruption, and falsehood. Finally, reaching the genetic and inherited aspects. It is noticed that Agustina's breakdown is not the first case in her family's history, or the first that she has become mad. She states: "Look, Aguilar, Aunt Sofi tells me, madness is contagious, like the flu, and when one person in a family has it, everyone catches it in turn, there's a chain reaction that no one can escape except those who've been vaccinated, and I'm one of those"

(35). Aunt Sofi's words show that her niece's disorder maybe inherited from one of her family's members, even her grandfather.

- **Nicolas Portulinus**

He is Agustina's mad grandfather and maybe the person from which Agustina inherited her mental insanity. He is one of the narrators of the story, from a third person perspective along with his wife Blanca Portulinus. Laura Restrepo describes his own struggle with madness to understand the past of Agustina, which in turn explains her current behavior. Nicolas is a German talented musician who makes new music by inspirations that comes to him in dreams. He presents visible- invisible and real / hyperreal. He is an immigrant whose character is much close to Agustina's character. Restrepo draws a kind of family bonds between Agustina and her grandfather. Starting from the point when Nicolas Portulinus was trying to liberate his sister Ilse who was diagnosed of "quiet madness" (224), and was tied because she cannot control her sexual impulse. Agustina also was trying to defend her homosexual brother Bichi, from her homophobic father Carlos Vicente. In addition, the age difference between Nicolas and his wife Blanca, is nearly the same between Agustina and her husband Aguilar. This would lead to the result that Nicolas's madness maybe transferred to his granddaughter, Agustina, whereas his homosexual behavior shifted to his grandson Bichi.

Both reciprocal and contrary events including time, space and individuals describe Portulinus's malady of delusion that, obstructs him from seeing the real world as it is. Portulinus who lives in Germany and Sasaima successively, is completely confused. He loves and hates his wife. He is also disarranged by his sexual orientation towards Abelito, his student who is turned into Farax in his imagination. In addition, his confusion between the Sweet River of Sasaima and the Rhine River in Germany. This becomes a permanent reminder of both his country and sister. Ilse, whose drowning incident in the Rhine River driven by her dementia state was imprinted in Portulinus's memory. As a result, Portulinus's mental breakdown led him to throw himself into the Sweet River. His daughter Eugenia feels

guilty for being responsible of her father's death. She is convinced by her mother Blanca, that her father is alive, and returned to his homeland Germany. Counter to her father, Eugenia adapts the technique of displacing the unreal for the real. In this way, she keeps her marital life (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 143-144)

- **Eugenia Londono**

She is Agustina's mother and, the wife of Carlos Vicente. Her flawless marital relationship is thought to be as one of the reasons that gave rise to Agustina's delirium and Bichi's homosexuality. She has developed a self-deception ability from the death of her father. This potency, also entitled the phantom syndrome, appears highly within the crisis of Bichi's disclosure of the photographs. This incident reveals the clandestine relationship between her husband Carlos Vicente and her sister Sofi. Eugenia is one of the sane characters in the novel. However, she suffers from several phobias. She adopts fear towards sexual things. This is evident in her reproachful look to her daughter, Agustina, when she had her first period while swimming at the pool. Restrepo says: "and sounded in the reproachful look my mother gave me, how many times have I seen her face twist at the things I do or say or the things that happen to me. It's an expression of such disgust, and this time it was because the Spilled Blood came out of me..." (Delirium151). She may also suffer from the phantom of Ilse as she rejects her sexual compulsions. Another phobia is felt when she surrenders the services of her maid, Aminta, simply because she is pregnant. This leads her sister Sofi to comment her sexuality's horror.

Eugenia was insulted by couples who kissed in the park, to the extent that she complained because the police wouldn't prevent them from doing that in public, that being anything having to do with sexuality, with sensuality, two things that she always refused to name, reducing them to a that uttered with a grimace as if merely mentioning them soiled her mouth. (226)

Eugenia is extremely sensitive towards such sexual behaviors. Also, the common thing between Eugenia and her husband is their obsession with appearances. However, she is disturbed by her daughter's husband, Aguilar, who is totally the opposite. He is regarded as a "manteco" for being socially unpresentable (Hughes Davies. Par. 04-08-12).

### 2.1.2. Madness vs. Sane Characters

- **Aguilar**

He is Agustina's partner. His love for his wife persists even during her mental breakdown. He abandoned his ex-job as a professor of literature at university. Then, he became a Purina dog food seller, so he can take care of Agustina. Aguilar is one of the narrative voices who tell the story as well as the sane detective of his wife's malady. Aguilar was shocked when he suddenly found his wife in a hotel room completely insane. He later discovers that he knew very little things about Agustina. This makes him in a position of uncovering her family's history of insanity along with her childhood.

In his journey for the truth, he meets Anita, who is a girl that works in the Wellington hotel. At some point, he feels both attracted to Anita's beauty, and yearns to his ex-wife and the mother of his two boys, Marta Elena. However, he quickly drops them out of his mind when his wife Agustina comes back to him. Aguilar who accused his wife secretly, later on discovered that she is innocent. But, he is disturbed by her old misdeed with Midas McAlister (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 144- 146).

- **Midas McAlister**

He is the fourth main sane narrator and Agustina's ex-lover. He is a money launderer who works for the famous drug lord Pablo Escobar. He is the junction between him and Agustina's father. He is depicted as an intelligent person who worked hard in an illegal way to earn money. Since his childhood, Midas went through short roads to become rich at the end. Midas is smart and helpful. He was the reason behind the prosperity of Agustina's family. Primarily,

he was called Midas as he gets a high percentage of profits. "you know there's a reason they call me Midas, which is that everything I touch turns to gold,..." (*Delirium* 32). Although he left Agustina after making her pregnant, he is still socially connected to her family to preserve the business relations. During his childhood, Midas feels socially inferiorized to the Londono's family. Later, he collects unlawful fortune. He possessed an aerobics center. But, he lost all his wealth when he insulted Pablo Escobar through his female relatives whom he did not welcome in his club. Another reason that led him to disappear suddenly, and hide in his mother's plain house was the discreet murder of a prostitute in his center. Midas brought Agustina to the center to help him prove his innocence. Agustina shouts making a scandal, which resulted in the perplexity of the situation. It is important to mention that the bridge between Midas McAlister and Agustina's family is her brother Joaco (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 140-143; Hughes Davies. par 07-08-11).

- **Joaco Londono**

He is Agustina's elder brother. He resembles his father Carlos Vicente. His father wished to give him his name, but he could not as he was absent in the christening time. So, his God parents called him after the Virgin Mary's father, Joaquin. Thinking in this way, he will be better protected. They even refused Carlos Vicente as a name because it is not Christian. Joaco is much like his mother in adapting facts according to the situation. This is evident when his brother, Bichi reveals the photographs of his father and Aunt Sofi in front of all the family. His mother denies her husband's adultery and attributes Joaco the pictures of his aunt. She orders him not to use his father's camera again. Joaco simply obeys her and ignores the fact of the photographs (Hughes Davies. Par 06-07).

- **Carlos Vicente Londono Junior or'' Bichi''**

He is the younger brother of Agustina and her closest person. He is the person with whom Agustina celebrates her rituals. She works hard to protect him from their father. However, she

remains unsuccessful. Bichi's relationship with his father is unsolvable. Though he was named after him, his father adopts a violent attitude towards his homosexual behavior in a conservative machista society.

Bichi's turning point was when he left home with his aunt Sofi. This happened because he denounced his father's violence, and displayed a group of pictures that proves his father's adultery with Aunt Sofi. Though his departure announces him as a faggot, it has a big portion in keeping his family's salvation (Hughes Davies. Par 09-10).

- **Carlos Vicente Londono Senior**

He is Agustina's dead father and the ruler of the Londono family. He is a philately and amateur of photography. His relationship with his sister-in-law Sofi tears and disperses the family. It also has a big part in driving Agustina crazy. He shows jealousy towards Agustina through refusing most of her boyfriends. Since he is not convinced of his wife's beauty, he has a relation with Sofi. He even hangs around with her during holidays, when his wife and kids went in vocation. Both of them never care about appearances as long as they love each other (Hughes Davies. Par 03- 07-09).

- **Aunt Sofi**

She is Agustina's rejected aunt and her father's mistress. She had a clandestine relationship with her sister's husband Carlos Vicente Londono. However, she left home to Mexico after revealing her secret relation. Then, she reappears suddenly after Agustina's breakdown. She strives to help her niece to overtake her mental crisis. She even seems valuable in assisting Aguilar to understand his wife's obscure past. Her behaviors do not seem inherited nor from her father neither her mother Blanca (Hughes Davies. Par 03-09).

- **Blanca Portulinus**

Agustina's grandmother and Nicolas's wife. Her husband Portulinus is much older than her. The arrival of the student Abelito or Farax created jealousy because of Nicolas's

appreciation of him. Nevertheless, after the fatal suicide of Nicolas, Blanca develops simulation ability. She tells her daughters that their father went back to his homeland Germany. Deception and pretence which are transferred to her daughter Eugenia may result indirectly in Agustina's illness (Hughes Davies.

Par 01-03).

- **Spider Salazar**

He is Midas's fellow. He also was one of Pablo Escobar's men. He had an accident at the Las Lomas Polo Club. He was completely drunk when he rode a horse that threw him away. Then, he went to a hospital in Houston where he had four operations. Finally, he ended up suffering of a paraplegic and impotence. He had a bet with Midas McAlister in his health club. This resulted in the horrible death of a prostitute (Hughes Davies 12).

- **Anita**

She is a charming girl who works as a receptionist in the Wellington hotel. Aguilar asks for her help to resolve the mystery of his wife's malady. At times, there was a mutual attraction between them. Nevertheless, Aguilar's love and loyalty to his wife deprives him from cheating on her (Hughes Davies 13).

## **2.2. Manifestation of Madness in the Context of Events**

Laura Restrepo's novel depends on the concept of madness. Starting from the title *Delirium*, which is already a physical ailment. Then, the lunatic contagion of dementia that appears in characters and events. Finally, reaching an obscure end. Madness has been defined in various situations by characters in the course of events. Jose Saramago reviewing the novel said: "*Delirium* is one of the finest novels written in recent memory. Restrepo has a total mastery over what she writes, an astonishing but absolute mastery. Yes, there's violence, narcotraffic, madness, perhaps even love itself as a form of total madness. The important thing

is that we're talking about a truly great novel, of a kind that you seldom encounter anymore" (Saramago np). Saramago's words reveal his fascination by the novel. Precisely, how did Restrepo mix between many unbalanced themes.

Penetrating through the novel, there are many signs of delirium. It varied according to the character's situations and way of thinking. "a challenge in her eyes that filled me with fear, something disturbing, an excessive vibration that brought to mind the word delirium. Agustina was possessed by some *delirium* that simmered inside her with a slow, shudder" (Delirium 29). Agustina's mental breakdown had widely affected Aguilar. He defined the state of madness that overwhelmed his wife many times. His frame of mind whether miserable, lost or longing to his wife, determined the definition of madness.

Madness is a compendium of unpleasant things: for example, it's pandemic, it's hateful, and it's tortuous. It contains a large component of unreality and maybe that's why it's theatrical, and I'm also on the verge of believing that it's defined by an absence of humor, and that's why it's so melodramatic. (105)

Agustina experienced many incidents in the journey of her life. This makes it difficult to predict the responsible of her malady.

In her childhood, she is in charge along with her brother for a secret mission. Their ritual celebration and photographs' meditation is thought to be a remedy for Bichi's disregard. In fact, these acts transmit deep messages of madness. Rituals that depend on washing their bodies, dressing themselves in a very weird way, ordering the discreet photographs, and concludes by repeating the oath of never divulging their secret. Otherwise, Agustina will lose her power, and her family will be dispersed. These rituals express a symbol of connection between madness and literature. As well as power of possession while she is herself possessed by madness (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 138- 140).

In her adulthood, the continuity of falsehood, pretence, and deception among her family's

members, and the announcement of Bichi's return outrage Agustina's delusional state. The memories of her childhood drive her into a second phase of rituals. Dressing, filling the house with water cups, looking at the album photo, and her obsession with her father's visit are the remnants of her delirium.

It is important to mention that there is a synchronization of madness between Agustina and her grandfather. As Portulinus seeks to save his sister Ilse from the throes of her sexual urges by sustaining her, Agustina also tries to protect her homosexual brother Bichi from their father.

Portulinus suffered from losing his sister Ilse. He experienced a very hard period during his childhood. This paved the way to his madness. His ability to form a family and compose music in his delirious state is in itself a great achievement. The surrounding circumstances of his sister's suicide in the Rhine River, and living near the Sweet River, made him confused. In addition to his confusion between his love and hatred for Blanca, and his feelings towards Abelito in reality and Farax in dreams that carry a state of dementia. Driven by insanity, caused by confusion, Portulinus commits suicide. He is not able to cope with reality (Hughes Davies par 01-11).

### **3. Relationship Between Madness and Postmodernism**

Postmodernism generally refers to the various changes and state of chaos that took place after the Second World War. This period brought a new wave of writing in the literary field. Postmodern female writers focused mainly on using madness as an examination for the individual's disordered psychology. Female writers used an amalgam of literary techniques to raise the critical level in their works. They employed fragmentation in narrative along with the writer's playfulness of words. They even were absurd enough to make mad persons the heroes of their novels. In addition, female writers created a kind of allegory through questioning society in novels' characters. Briefly, they examined the interference between human psychology and postmodern conditions.

### 3.1. Absurd Incarnation of Madness

In her novel, Restrepo depicts an image of ridiculous, illogical, and lost society. However, these aspects rejoice the modernity which made them enter in a vortex of mental disturbance and social instability. Laura embodied this absurdity in Agustina's character, who lost her mind because of the tangle between the past and present. She was aware of the social insignificance and she could not control her frame. The absurdity evinced in the mad behavior of Agustina in her strange ritual, which was practiced with her brother Bichi. Agustina's absurdity shows in behaviors such as setting up pots of water around the house to cleanse it, or even her rejection for Aguilar. "And even in her house. Agustina got angry because I wanted to take a cloth and dry the rug that she'd soaked, the pots of water she sets around the apartment" (*Delirium* 6). Aguilar describes the absurd behavior which his wife exhibited. The language is disheveled, in order to describe the state of madness that the characters had reached (Dorado-Fields).

### 3.2. Allegorical Representation of Madness

In her novel *Delirium*, Laura Restrepo depicts the story of a woman who suffers from a mental breakdown. Agustina's "Gift of Sight" offers many metaphors. Restrepo was skilled to portray the unstable past of Agustina. This past is thought to be an allegory of the Colombian society. Restrepo presents the allegory of madness as a literary motif through the dichotomies of reason /unreason, real/ unreal and hyperreal, true/false, and ethical/unethical.

The stagehands have carried everything away and now the curtain has fallen. Even Pablo is a ghost, the whole country itself is ghostly, and if it wasn't for the bombs and the bursts of machine-gun fire that echo in the distance, the tremors reaching me here, I'd swear that the place called Colombia had Stopped existing long ago. (*Delirium* 305)

In *Delirium*, the depiction of madness is recognized negatively as an allegory of national violence. On the other hand, it is positive as it liberates Agustina from the constraints of male

dominance. Restrepo fights madness that overwhelmed the country and the continent as a whole. In addition, the violence that was the result of not being able to encounter the reality. Madness is considered as a tool of conveying the real situation of the Colombian society (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 26).

### **3.3. Stream of Consciousness: a Panacea to Delirious Territories**

Like many postmodern writers, Laura Restrepo embraces certain postmodern techniques of narration that characterize the style of writing of that time. Specifically, a literary device of sarcasm and shallowness in order to designate the person's doubtful about his life and himself. Restrepo's use of stream of consciousness is spontaneous and aboriginal.

Laura embodied delirium from four different perspectives: Aguilar, Agustina, Midas, and Portulinus. The voices change from first to third person. In the first reading, the readers cannot capture who is the narrator of the story. In this stage, a monotonous reading is an obligation. Consequently, Laura's target of using this literary device is to portray the Colombian society's chaos. In addition to the influence of modernity on the individual and society. Thus, she blends multiple voices to superimpose the segments of the story, in order to anatomize feminist characters as well as to assemble the puzzle of chaotic society. Frequently, the other Latin American female writers use this literary technique to show their creativity and to celebrate madness in their writings (Wright np).

### **3.4. Intersection between Fragmentation and Madness**

Women undertook the mission of connecting literature and the rigorous past of females. Women authors were concerned in using madness as a literary device. Laura Restrepo's novel illustrates her rejection of magical realism that has long overburdened Latin American writings. She even displayed this objection through one of the novel's characters. Aguilar is agitated "with the phenomenon calling itself magical realism, so fashionable at the time" (Delirium 127). It is an accurate sign about Restrepo's orientation towards new writing styles. In *Delirium*, Laura Restrepo uses a chaotic and disordered language. She mixes reality with

fiction. Her writing is fragmented at both levels of language and characters. She employs such technique on purpose to describe madness as an indication of Colombia's decay. There is much jugglery of words and narrative in this novel, even in names. "Agustina's" name in itself is an anagram. If we only shift one consonant away, it becomes "Angustia" or "anxiety". This explains her state of mind and her love for crosswords. In other words, the novel repeatedly moves between perspectives, points of view, and narrative voices. Aguilar, Agustina, her grandfather, her ex-lover, and again Aguilar. The voices jump from first to second to third person. Agustina's grandfather, Portulinus, suffers from hallucinations and premonitions. His state of mind is considered as a fragmentation. This brings the reader to wonder whether his frenzies are the result of living away of his country, or a childhood trauma. His life story is discontinuously told. At the beginning, we are faced with his state of delirium. Slowly, Laura reveals his childhood experience of sustaining his sister who ended committing suicide. Then, he flights to Colombia, leaving his reminiscence behind. Another fragmentation is felt in Restrepo's depiction of money warfare, drug violence, and fragmented modern self. Restrepo's movement between characters, events, and time shows the way in which the whole novel is fragmented (Jon).

#### **4. Feminism vs. Madness: Elimination of Male Oppression.**

Latin American female status experienced huge changes throughout the past centuries. The Suffragette movement was the first step through which women could impose themselves. Then, women independence was achieved progressively. Feminism was the movement under which women revolted for their freedom in different domains. Literature was one of the fields where women found a harbor to remove male dominance. They retrieved their rights through writing. Female writers succeeded and gained honorable status in Latin American society. Laura Restrepo is one of the most common writers to defend female rights, and show their feminine power. Madness is a tool in female writing that paved their way to successful lands.

In her novel *Delirium*, Laura Restrepo presents the power of Feminism through the five

female characters. She refers to the violence of the Colombian society, and its repercussion on women. The novel is told from four perspectives. However, madness finds its way in female characters in the novel. Agustina's narrative of madness was directed to escape patriarchal strains of male dominance. Although she is mentally unstable, Agustina was able to list her strong influence over the story. She expels her husband from the house once saying that she is expecting her dead father's visit, and many times because of her ritual celebration. Aguilar, who is culturally superior, surrenders his job and comfort to decipher his wife's illness. In addition, Agustina's "Gift of Sight" (Delirium 01) gave her an ascendant position even at the presence of blood. She is still potent enough to predicate her madness. Her feminism is well preserved in her ex-lover's memory. Midas had many intimate relationships. But, he was obsessed with Agustina's feminism especially, within her state of delirium. In fact, Agustina started imposing her feminism in her childhood. Her father gave her the power that distinguished her. She shared her father to close the house doors every night. When her father called her "Tina" and handed her the keys, she felt her strong influence on him. Moving to her adulthood, she noticed her father's disturbance of her being late when she goes out in a date with a boy. As she needed her father's caring and to feel her feminine impress, she intentionally came home later to piss him off. Though, she had many boyfriends, she did not care about love as long as she obtains what she wants; which is attracting her father's attention. Despite her being sweet and fun, Aguilar considered his wife "crazy inside" (126). Her craziness along with her weird and unacceptable attitudes are motions of Feminism. It is important to mention that Agustina is fond of the "Virgen de Guadalupe" (85). She blindly devotes the statue situated in Guadalupe. Restrepo may even resemble her characters as she promotes the picture of women.

Another character, Blanca, the wife of Nicolas Portulinus; who was completely sane, had great deal in picturing madness in the novel. She met Portulinus many times in order to learn playing music. However, she marries him in a very early age as she had an illegal relationship

with him that led to her pregnancy. She cares for her husband and adopts his mad frenzies. She makes huge efforts to help him. One example is when she repeatedly convinces him that the Colombian Sweet River is not the German Rhine. Her acts display her feminine power. For years, she was able to endure her partner's turmoil absorbing his anger, and understanding his needs and marbles. This behavior continues even after his suicide, while telling her two daughters that their father went back to Germany, instead of telling the truth. Self-denial replaced her trauma. Although she is a sane woman, Blanca could overtake all the obstacles, and impact her feminism.

Eugenia Londono is another woman who reveals an insane attitude; in the time that she discovers her husband's infidelity with her sister. She abandons her dignity to maintain her family's peace. In her childhood, she witnesses the suicide of her father, while she was sleeping. This accident maintains a self pretence ability, that she takes advantage of later. Eugenia's relation with her sister never was that good. This is one of the factors that raise her pretence, especially when her sister's photographs are revealed in her sight. Her pretence manifests her as a highly insane female character. Her malady is also evident within her phobia of sexual behavior, that leads her to dismiss her maid Aminta.

Aunt Sofi also is another example about mad females. According to her, Eugenia's beauty is not sufficient for Carlos Vicente. Her beauty allows her to have a sexual relationship with her sister's husband. This improper conduct which destroys the whole family is determined with her departure. Her misdeed categorizes her as a mad female.

Her sudden appearance yields a valuable support that Agustina needs in her plight. She could help in revealing the truth, which made Aguilar understands his wife's past. She is the partner of Agustina during her rituals. She joins up her niece to celebrate the power of females. She is able to cope with her state and offer her niece the help she needs. She equilibrates between Agustina's madness and her sanity. In short, Aunt Sofi's association with Agustina raised consciousness about the power of Feminism in the novel.

Anita is a marginal character whose feminine print is noticeably observed. She left a good impression in Aguilar's memory, that made him crushed of her. Her personality, beauty, and appearance hints to her powerful feminine power. Aguilar likes to call her the "fearless girl" as she fears nothing. She is ready to lose her job for anyone, and even for the sake of the slightest things. Aguilar describes her saying that "she shows every sign of being ready to ignore the hotel rules and risk her job in exchange for nothing" (57). She likes Aguilar's weak character, and is audacious to show her admiration. Her character is perceived as a mad female that revolts over male power.

Briefly, females in this novel distinguished themselves as outstanding characters. There were few ladies in the context of the novel. However, they proved their reflection on males. They easily conduct the course of events. Males are felt like marionettes in the ladies' hands. Restrepo was intelligent to depict the success of female writers in overtaking male authority. The way in which events change according to women existence, and the language used by the writer denote the novel's Feminism potency (Hughes Davies 14-17).

### Chapter Three: *Delirium* and the Rhetorics of Creativity

*Creativity is a divine madness...*

*a gift from the gods.*

*-Plato-*

Latin American fiction witnessed tremendous changes, especially during the postmodern era. Latin American female writers broke away from magical realism; and moved to new literary modes. They even resorted to mental disorders such as hysteria and madness in their writings. Laura Restrepo's innovative novel *Delirium* is a well illustrative example. Characters and events depended on madness, which made this novel widely reviewed. In *Delirium*, madness is treated as a creative method to escape patriarchal society's limitations. Usually, creativity is referred to as using imagination to devise captivating ideas. However, creativity in literature is the process of celebrating remarkable works focusing on their originality and literary style. *Delirium* is one of the Colombian novels that relies on report style and mixes both fiction and reality. The third chapter exhibits the diverse faces of Creativity in the novel of *Delirium*. It begins with a synopsis in which the novel of *Delirium* is exposed. The indeterminate literary writing style of the author is carefully anatomized. Furthermore, enigma, crossword puzzles, rituals and myths, and heterosexuality are all components of the story. These elements had a part in showing hidden and conspicuous aspects of Colombian society. The last and serious step is parallelizing the two main concepts on which the dissertation is based; Madness and Creativity. The relevance between both notions is manifested to picture female writers' efforts to be universally notorious.

#### 1. Summary of *Delirium*

*Delirium* is an intriguing novel that is highly reviewed and appraised by critics and philosophers. The famous critic Terrence Rafferty reviewed this novel in *the New York Times Magazine* saying: "*Delirium* is a disconcertingly lovely book, and its depiction of Colombian

society at an awful moment in its history is sharp, vivid, utterly persuasive. But by the end, it seems a fair description of *Delirium* which is both sweeter than you'd expect and less nourishing than you'd hope" (Rafferty np).

Laura Restrepo's novel combines mad female imprint, strange rituals, twisted family, and investigative literary style. This novel is set in Bogotá, the capital city of Colombia. In that country, social instability, mental disturbance, crimes, drug traffic, and all the activities which make Colombia a country of fright. Restrepo's novel depicts the politics of violence, madness, and the society's chaos in Colombia. Laura delves into the minds of four characters. Aguilar; Agustina's husband who was caught up in his wife's past and present. He is an ex-professor in university who quitted his job to take care of his mad partner and help her overcome her crisis. Aguilar digs in his wife's past to determine the reason of her delirium. He discovers deep and disturbing facts hidden in her past. Thus, he regrets his unawareness of her childhood. He declares: "I never bothered to ask her about her past, her family, or her memories, ... I mourn the questions I didn't ask..." (Delirium 21). Later, Aguilar is suspicious and hopeful about his wife's sanity.

Agustina is the protagonist in the novel who is mad. She is the daughter of a prominent drug family whose relationship with them is meant to show the reality of the Colombian society. She has the "gift of sight" that enables her to predict the future. Agustina passes a crucial period of madness where the reader is driven to discover the reasons for her illness. Her childhood memories, adulthood, and many secrets are presented. By the end of the novel, we are met with an obscure close. It is not evident whether Agustina gained her sanity or not.

The surrounding circumstances about her madness, which is the main theme of the story; are detected through Midas, a drug trafficker, money launderer, and Agustina's ex-lover. He portrays through his relationship with Pablo Escobar, the Colombian society that is overwhelmed by drugs, corruption, and crimes. He is the narrator of Agustina. He teases out her family's secrets slowly. His life story presents the usual story of a young boy who

struggles illegally to be socially respected. However, his life is surprisingly disintegrated. He disappears and goes back to his mother's house.

The fourth narrative voice is Portulinus. He is Agustina's grandfather and the probable source of her illness by genetics. Throughout the story, he suffers mainly because of his sister's suicide. He leaves his homeland and lives next to the Sweet River. Eventually, his mental disturbance leads him to commit suicide.

Like many other twentieth-century Latin American feminist works, Restrepo mixes these contrastive characters. Laura Restrepo creates a setting that blends excitement, lustiness, and fear. Class, social insanity, and money are the center of *Delirium's* plot, as well as the effectuation among characters. *Delirium* is a novel in which a madwoman and a mental illness play a pivotal role.

## 2. Creativity: a Stylistic Study

In the present study, we selected a Colombian novel which was accurately translated by Natasha Wimmer as a case study. *Delirium* is a novel written by Laura Restrepo. The writer uses madness as a creative mode to escape patriarchal boundaries. In order to reach a high level of creativity, the Indian critic Vikram Seth states: "this beautiful and disturbing book haunted me during the days I read it and long after I put it down. Love, unknowability, loss, and even various forms of gain elide from one to another of its passionate unnerving voices" (Seth np). These enticing words of Vikram Seth depicted the story's madness, social class, narco-traffic, and violence narrated from the first person perspective of four different characters. Though it seems boring at the beginning, the reader feels attracted to finish reading, and discover the mystery behind each character. It affects human beings' minds that are fraught of madness. Its aesthetic language makes it praised by brilliant postmodern writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez and José Saramago. Marquez reviewed the novel saying: "Laura Restrepo breathes life into a singular amalgam of journalistic investigation and literary creation. Her fascination with popular culture... save her novels from any temptation toward

pathos or melodrama, and infuse them with unmistakable reading pleasures" (Saramago np).

Laura Restrepo's style is discriminated by combining fiction and reality. Her report style attracts the reader and takes him in a journey of mystery and pleasure. She portrays her society using postmodern aspects such as: absurdity, metaphors, and stream of consciousness. She mainly did not use speeches on purpose. Moreover, Restrepo's love for journalistic investigation is highly influenced in *Delirium*. She blended journalism with literary creativity. She creates a strong and smooth bound between the past and the present ( Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 132-133). Restrepo as well presents the narrative in dispersed passages instead of presenting each character's story separately. This technique is meant to show the thematic relationship between passages. Restrepo depicts the real events in Colombia after 1960s within a creative fictional frame (Fuentes 24).

### **3. Creativity: a Thematic Study**

#### **3.1. Enigma: Creativity through Inapprehensible Acts**

Throughout the novel events, Laura Restrepo drives us through ambiguous and perplexing paths. The way in which the novel is told invites the reader to read it repeatedly to resolve the puzzle. The mystery is barely solved by the end of the novel. The author switches characters to display figures of madness in the family's twists. The shifting of four narrative voices makes the reader misunderstand the characters at first. Midas's character kept hidden for almost forty pages to reveal his identity. Agustina's character as well as her delirious state is incomprehensible to her husband (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 147). Aguilar pursues Agustina's childhood memories and her family's past. He accompanies her to visit her grandparents' home in Sasaima. There he reads the grandparents' letters and diaries. Agustina shows him the Sweet River located next to the house. Aguilar realizes later that water has power over "Spilled Blood" (*Delirium* 98). He perceives that water has the ability to purify his wife's delirium. At the moment they return home; Aguilar understands that Agustina's childhood memories along with her family's falsehoods are the causes of her malady. The way

in which Agustina follows the method of "feng shui" (27) in her life is inapprehensible. The "feng shui" literally means wind-water. However, it is considered as a Chinese traditional practice that benefits energy to accommodate individuals with their surroundings ("feng shui"). Agustina believes in the importance of this practice in her relationship with her husband. She paints the house in moss green, and asks Aguilar to wear a red tie to welcome her brother's arrival. If Aguilar could only get along with her respect for red color, he would easily realize her case. The last scene of the novel, when Aguilar wears the red tie and stands in front of Agustina asking her: "Miss Londono, is this tie red enough for you?" (Delirium 320), shows Agustina's possibility to recover from her delirium. It also hints to another reason for Agustina's healing. Aguilar's unconditional love to his wife, especially when he took care of her in the worst moments, and resigning his job for her sake, are all signs for his platonic love. Another perplexing character in the novel is Portulinus. Agustina's grandfather is presented as a merely insane man. The cause of his illness is unobserved. However, penetrating into the events leads the reader to the reason of his malady (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 146-148).

Furthermore, the language used by Restrepo is somehow intricate. Including the title, this novel challenges the reader's sanity. The lack of quotation marks, the disordered mixture of past and present, and the structure attract the reader's attention. Another reason, is that every story completes one another and gives an insight into Agustina's madness. There is much play with words which distracts the reader's attention. One example is Agustina's name which is weird and similar to anxiety. This reveals the fact that Agustina's name is meant to demonstrate her mental state. The ending of the story in itself is perplexing and enigmatic. After reading the whole novel, the reader is left with many questions concerning Agustina's illness and Midas state. Maybe, it is the point of the writer to make the reader delirious (Jon). The power of enigma is explicit from the very beginning until the end of the novel. The declarations of Agustina's family members form a kind of puzzle like structure in the novel.

This mysterious narrative needs to be deciphered and rearranged to discover the direct cause of Agustina's mental breakdown. Restrepo's strength to present real events in a mysterious frame is inevitable (Fuentes 24).

### 3.2. Rituals and Crosswords: Obscure Endeavor to Creativity

Laura Restrepo uses some textual strategies to reveal the cultural framework of Colombia. Rituals, myths, and crossword puzzles are significant messages to understand madness in the narrative structure. Rituals and Crosswords have widely been used in literature to convey specific meanings or to understand human behavior. The French sociologist Emile Durkheim defines rituals as:

A ritual is an act within a system of beliefs that defines the sacred and profane in a given society. Rituals help people experience a shared sense of exaltation and fellowship. Ceremonies usually contain initiation rites, sacrifice, purification and redemption linked to supernatural forces. (qtd. in Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 149)

In the novel of *Delirium*, rituals of Agustina's childhood are not simple acts, or even trivial games. They pave her way to breakdown. Agustina and her brother Bichi, feel their power during the secret rituals. Although they were very young, they experienced what Agustina calls: "our victory ritual" (*Delirium* 85). The rituals include washing their bodies, dressing in a strange way, and watching the secret photographs of Aunt Sofi. By the end, they promise each other to do not bring their secret to light. Otherwise, Agustina's gift will fade, and her family will be torn. Through "the great revelation", Bichi reveals the photographs to the whole family that led Agustina to lose her powers. Moreover, it led her to madness; because her mother refused to believe her husband's infidelity. As predicted, the family curse falls true. In her adulthood, Agustina becomes mad, and she starts another phase of rituals by her own. The way Agustina dresses, and watches the photo album is somehow similar to her

childhood rituals. Even her obsession with her father's visit mirrors her solitary rituals (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost, 149-151).

Agustina performs another kind of ceremonies in her childhood with her father. According to Agustina, her father is the source of security against external threats. So, she joins him to lock the house doors every night. Agustina in her adolescence challenges her father's authority through dating boys, and coming back home very late. Her obsession about irritating her father causes her delirious later. In addition to these incidents, the announcement of Bichi's return, and the way falsehoods take place in her family were the outbreak of her madness. Bichi's return may evoke Agustina's madness as it may help her to recover her sanity (151-152).

Another character incorporated in rituals is Midas. His ceremonies take place in l'Esplanade aerobics center, where he launders money from drug business. However, Midas's breaking for the agreement with Pablo Escobar excludes him socially. The only way in which Midas finds conciliation is by telling Agustina the whole truth. The way in which Midas's story is told is sharply distinctive.

Another strategy that motivates the reader to assemble the pieces is crossword puzzles. Crossword puzzles are defined by Sanchez-Blake and Kanost in their book which is entitled: *Latin American Women and the Literature of Madness* as: "crossword puzzles represent the textual framework of scattered pieces to be assembled by the reader, but are also the palimpsest beneath the narrative" (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 154). In other words, the crossword puzzles refer to the irregular and disconnected events in the novel. Indirectly, the reader works hard to correlate them. These crossword puzzles are presented as riddles in the characters of Agustina and her grandfather. During her mental breakdown, Agustina becomes passionate for solving crossword puzzles. Her husband, Aguilar asks: "what revelation might be had from a crossword puzzle, what fundamental combination of words or what clue might allow me to understand something that a moment ago meant nothing to me and that's suddenly

of life-or-death importance" (*Delirium* 71). Aguilar is astonished by his wife's sudden behavior. One of her crossword answers is "palimpsest" (88). This word conveys several meanings concerning Agustina's behavior and language. One of these meanings is about resolving the puzzle presented by the novel.

Again, Sanchez-Blake in her book affirms Portulinus's relationship to reason and unreason through crossword puzzles. He is completely obsessed by solving riddles. He thinks that they are extremely important. Blanca explains the significance of such simple behaviors to her husband saying:

These include orders sent to him by the spirits through something that Portulinus calls letter board ... or in the jumble of words formed in crossword puzzles, the messages hidden in the notes of Portulinus's own compositions, the contents of the page of a book opened at random, the occult logic of the wrinkles in the sheets after a night of insomnia or the insignificant way handkerchiefs pile up in the handkerchief drawer, or even worse, the disturbing appearance of a handkerchief in the sock drawer". (*Delirium* 78)

It is evident that Portulinus's life story can only be understood through his dementia. The music he composes and his relationship with Abelito or Farax put him in a crossword to puzzle. It may appear to the reader that Portulinus's life story is a puzzle that was never solved. ( Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 153-156)

### 3.3. Creativity and Heterosexuality

The novel of *Delirium* connects a detective narrative with psychoanalytical devices. Restrepo emphasizes the familiar trauma in Londono's family. The heterosexual behaviors in Agustina's family are evident. Agustina's father, Carlos Vicente, represents the patriarchy in his family. He imposes his authority violently because he fears any sexual violations that

would hurt his social hierarchy. He teaches gender normality to his sons, and especially Agustina. He owns her body, her mother's body, her aunt Sofi, and even her brother Bichi. Agustina is proud of her father. She states:

"but her father locks up the house tight, and Agustina says to him wordlessly, you are the power, you are the true power, and I bow down before you" (*Delirium* 77). In one hand, he adapts socially accepted manners that make him control her body. His jealousy drives him to punish her every time she goes out in a date with a boy. Agustina's mother, Eugenia, believes that her body is possessed by her husband. This idea restrains her from leaving him when she realizes his infidelity. This idea also facilitates Carlos's unacceptable relationship with his sister-in-law Sofi. In addition, the way in which he beats his son Bichi was the most explicit proof of his refusal to such sexual attitudes. Carlos's rejection for his son's effeminacy explains his intent to keep the social positions (Fuentes 26- 27)

On the other hand, Agustina's brother Bichi, is characterized by sexual deviation. He is softy, tender, and hypersensitive. These acts show his homosexuality. His father is often angry and shows aggressive attitude towards him. He beats him for the most worthless reason, simply because he does not appreciate his effeminate acts. He shouts "talk like a man for God's sake, not a queer!" (*Delirium* 229). Carlos Vicente uttered these words because his son, Bichi, was extremely tender towards the maid Aminta's baby. Bichi's tone of voice seemed feminine as he was imitating his sister. However, it unnerved his father who kicked him fiercely. As a revenge, Bichi brought the photographs of Aunt Sofi, and revealed them to the whole family. When he noticed that nothing would change, Bichi left home with his Aunt Sofi to settle down in Mexico. There he could practice his homosexuality freely. His return dissatisfies his mother and older brother Joaco. It is considered a disgrace that would have an impact on their social status.

Furthermore, Eugenia Londono suffers from phobia towards sexual attitudes. "Eugenia is more like Carlos Vicente, and I'd say that she learned the phobia from him and then developed

her own extreme version; viewing people's sex lives as a personal affront must be a hereditary trait of the families of Bogotá" (226). Eugenia is somehow contaminated from her husband. She opposes her son's effeminacy, and dismisses her maid only due to her phobia. Her daughter maybe inherited the faith that sexuality is something that must be kept as a secret. It is possible that Eugenia maybe acquired this quality from her aunt Ilse. Ilse suffered from masturbation that caused her pain and solitude. Her sexual malady controlled her life. Later, she was unable to stand and committed suicide (Fuentes 32).

In Londono family, sexuality is tolerated as long as it does not disturb their social status. As an example Sofi's secret relationship with Carlos Vicente is tolerated as long as it is kept inside. Also, Midas is welcomed in Agustina's house because her family's affair has been kept as a secret; and because her family depends on him to preserve their financial stability (Fuentes 33).

Decadence of society is also portrayed in the character of Spider Salazar. His sexual impotence represents the elite's inability to preserve their power. Salazar's desire to recover his potency shows his psychotic determination (Fuentes 44).

Restrepo was able to depict heterosexuality within characters. *Delirium* presents different images of sexual behaviors that cause suffering, and pain to their owners.

### **3.3. Creative Figuration of Pablo Escobar**

Latin American literature has always been distinguished by the diversity in its topics. Contemporary writers moved from using magical realism to other literary genres. Laura Restrepo's novel *Delirium* discusses violence in the Colombian society. Her fragmented writing depicts the craziness of Colombian society as it is swallowed in corruption. Paramilitary attacks, guerilla strikes, drugs, money laundering and bombs are all illegal acts that Colombians were forced to endure. Laura Restrepo gives a profound insight of this turmoil during the heyday of Pablo Escobar. Escobar's character was almost hidden. However,

his criminality turns Bogotá to a field of clash or "war for all against all" (*Delirium* 21). Midas McAlister was the linking bridge between Pablo Escobar and Agustina's family. Pablo Escobar is not just the most powerful drug lord in history, but also a well-known tyrannical character in Colombian history. His violent acts had huge impact on the Colombian society. Midas denotes him as "His Majesty King Don Pablo, ruler of the three Americas and absurdly rich thanks to the gringos glorious war on drugs" (66). Midas's words indicate Pablo Escobar's glorification as well as the US involvement in the drug war. Narco-traffic and insurgency are the refuge where Pablo Escobar claims responsibility. His involvement in drug domain deprived him to enter politics, and expelled him from the liberal party:

Silver, who was good company that night, told us that the American embassy, where he works, they have a machine that detects explosions and that just last Tuesday in Bogotá sixty-three bombs had gone off ... Pablo Escobar is in a bad mood, said your brother Joaco, all those bombs are because the Liberal party has just expelled him from its slate for being a drug lord. The man doesn't like being called the King of Coca, said Silver he prefers Father of the Nation. Of course he does, it sounds more democratic. (*Delirium* 102)

Pablo Escobar expresses his anger by bombing the American embassy. Although he was the biggest drug dealer, he refuses that nickname. He wishes to be politically famous. Later, he bombs l'Esplanade for the same reason. Two years before the incident, Pablo Escobar met Midas in Medellin in a business meeting. While talking, Pablo asked Midas: "what was being hatched in Bogotá with regard to the Extradition Treaty that would surrender drug traffickers to the United States, and when Midas told him it was almost certain that Congress would enforce it ..." (219). Pablo was wanted by the American government because he is a part in

society's deterioration through drug trade. He is angry because of this act. Pablo Escobar proclaims his vengeance when he says: "I'm going to spend my fortune making this country weep" (219). His repression leads him to bomb l'Esplanade where he kills many people. He happily claims his responsibility in this crime without any regret. His ability to surrender his fortune for the sake of politics represents his thirst to be "the master of the universe" (219).

Restrepo depicts the real image of Pablo Escobar through another character. She describes his physical appearance and even his personality. Midas's disrespect for Pablo's three female cousins in the aerobics club, because of their low social standing, makes him suffer a lot. Pablo asks Midas to send him a big sum of money and promises to return it tripled after four days. Midas works hard to give him what he wants. However, Pablo's intent was to revenge for his dignity because "Pablo turned out to be a man of honor first and a dealmaker second" (83). Restrepo takes the advantage of this story to show the moral side of Pablo Escobar; as he uses violence to show his visibility.

The aim of Pablo Escobar is to trap society's elite in corruption of illegal business. He puts them in his hold through drug trafficking. This machine marks the movement of Colombia from order to chaos. Delirium demonstrates the idea that Colombia's social and political problems cannot be understood simply. Illegal activities and power of the elite hinder Colombia's development (Fuentes 48-52).

Restrepo uses Pablo Escobar as a tool to portray the state of Colombian society. She did not justify whether Pablo Escobar and his career affect the Colombian society; or the Colombian society expedites the emersion of a character like Escobar. However, it is evident that Escobar manipulates every individual within drug trafficking. Restrepo's allegory of the Colombian society would not be complete without her creative portrayal for the character of Pablo Escobar. She accurately describes the socio political state in Colombia during the twentieth century caused by corruptive illegal activities.

#### 4. Madness and Creativity: Controversial Symbolism

Madness has always been regarded as a form of mental illness. It varies according to the state of mind. Whether schizophrenia, hysteria, or delirium, the affected person is generally referred to as a "mad". In the past, madness was seen as a social and medical problem. Then, it overwhelmed other fields. During the sixteenth-century, scholars studied the relationship between madness and culture. Numerous works focus on madness through art and literature. Miguel de Cervantes, William Shakespeare, and the Dutch Desiderius Erasmus were among the writers who created "the madman" in their writings (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 05-06).

In the nineteenth-century, romanticists embraced imagination. Authors and writers explored new orientations of madness. In *Madness in Nineteenth-Century Literature-Introduction*, the author Suzanne Dewsbury explained that many poets like John Clare were thought to be real mad and even confined to asylums. In fiction, madness was tackled in various ways. Many writers attempted to picture mental deviation in a realistic frame; whereas others portrayed the reactions of characters' insanity. In other words, nineteenth century society's obsession with madness was influenced in literary works (Dewsbury. Par 01)

It is important to explain that madness witnessed huge developments. At the beginning, it prevailed fiction as a theme. It was used to overtake the traditional themes. As an example, the need to substitute the ordinary magical realism in Latin America was intelligible. Madness in America was the tool that liberated writers from religious boundaries. Mad writers or mad characters were the predominant modes of that time. Madness as a theme added a glamorous touch, and raised the standard of literature in the whole world. However, in the twenty-first-century, madness became a literary contrivance. It is defined by Elaine Showalter as "a female malady". It intrigued readers to subvert feminine marginalization. Madness is applied mostly in female fictional works to proclaim their ability to reach a high level of success. Madness works as a device for plot, psychology of characters, and in events. As madness moved to

overwhelm female characters, it allowed women to describe their suffering in a male dominant society. However, madness recently appears in writings not because it appears in real life. It suggests understanding female literary power. It invited certain kinds of narratives that enhanced women's status. Female literary fiction through madness became universally famous and successful (Sanchez-Blake and Kanost 10-14).

At the beginning, madness was related to males to show their power, and to reflect satire in society. However, during postmodern era, madness moved to female writers and writings. The arrival of feminism movement allowed women to gain wide space of freedom. Politics, culture, economy, art and most of all literature were domains where women became powerful. Female writers displayed their ability to produce powerful and creative masterpieces; through applying madness on women characters. Their feminine touch enabled them to avoid marginalization and leave patriarchy system.

Latin American fiction has always sought to reach a high level of success though most works were not translated. However, there were many works that illustrate Latin American writings' advancement. Authors and writers abandoned magical realism and searched new literary styles. Madness in its beginning in fiction referred to both writers who were mentally disturbed, and to abnormal characters. Recently, the figures of mad mirrored the changes of women's positions in Latin American society. Sor Juana Ines de la Cruz was the first writer who made outstanding trials to gain a literary positioning. This facilitated a new wave of female writers who denounced male oppression. Latin American female writers used the theme of madness to report their social and political significance. Mental illnesses prevailed most female writings such as Cristina Peri Rossi, Cristina Rivera Garza, Irene Vilar, and Laura Restrepo. Their narratives were allegories in which madness tackles social problems. The intersection of marginalization and their literary power resulted in universally accepted writings. Madness was presented in form of asylums and hospitals to heal social morality. Even language was constructed to promote intellectual debates created beyond clinical

discourses. Foucault asserts: "language is the primary and ultimate structure of madness" (Foucault 237). Foucault believes in the importance of language to determine the fine line between reason and unreason. During postmodern era, many literatures addressed madness to describe life struggles of Latin American females. Madness became a literary device that paved the way for female writers to reach creativity.

On one hand, creativity denotes the state or quality of being creative. It is also defined as "the ability to transcend traditional ideas, rules, patterns, relationships, or the like, and to create meaningful new ideas, forms, methods, interpretations, originality, progressiveness, or imagination" ("creativity"). The three latter qualities discriminate recent Latin American female writings. Originality is needed to maintain progressiveness which is reached through imagination. Creativity is referred to as the ability to develop and express new ideas, or to step out of the box.

On the other hand, creativity connotes success, inspiration, inventiveness, imagination, ingenuity, and talent. Creativity was not restricted to one field. It was evident in most domains, especially literature. Creativity in literature has been extensively defined from many perspectives. Amber Larson in his *Encyclopedia of Giftedness, Creativity, and Talent* states that:

Literary Creativity is the application of creative thought or action to the domain of written expression. Literature Is one of the major domains where creativity can be Observed and includes poetry, dramas, and plays, prose Such as fiction and essays, and oral literature, such as Folktales or ballads. Literature is an important domain to Consider in light of creative poets, playwrights, and Novelists. (Larson np)

Creativity is not just a concept, but a process of realizing high quality work attributed by novelty. Furthermore, creativity is the outcome of amalgamating fiction and reality. The

belief that madness is linked with creativity has been discussed since ancient times. To draw the equation between madness and creativity, there were and still exist studies that relate both concepts. Creativity has been considered as a means that measures the success of literary works. The emergence of madness sought to inspire creativity. Sandra Gilbert and Susan Gubar who wrote *The Madwoman in the Attic* point to the idea that "madness represented the price women artists had to pay to exercise their creativity in a male dominated culture" (Gilbert and Gubar 81). Madness was a strategy for women to break the barrier of ignorance. However, Latin American female writers were intelligent in promoting madness as the female malady that marks the feminine identity.

There were many studies that documented mental illness in creative people; whereas others objected to such a link. Creative thinking may infect conscious people. It is even asserted that creativity transcends the frequent ideas and plain styles of writing. (Rothenberg)

The Colombian Laura Restrepo uses madness in her writings. Her works were praised, and she gained several awards. The novel of *Delirium* has been classified as a part of narco-literature genre. It is widely studied and analyzed by critics. Restrepo's textual strategy of using madness as the framework of her novel is evaluated. Restrepo's style of writing is labeled as "report style". She mentions in her lecture: *Don Quijote and the Real Thing: On Madness and Modernity*: "we feel more comfortable trusting in the symbolism of the real and in its interpretations. We are no longer very interested dealing with reality as raw matter as... when we do battle with our own creations- systems of signs that constitute culture itself" (Restrepo np). Therefore, the writer uses madness as a basis component in her novel. She is one of the few writers who convey reality in a fictional and sarcastic frame. Michel Foucault in his book which is entitled: *History of Madness* states that "the literature of madness is a medium for raising the critical consciousness of humanity-to open a space for women to talk about the intersections of experience, culture, and politics" (qtd. in Sanchez- Blake and Kanost 135). Foucault thinks that the literature of madness opened the doors for women to be

socially and politically respected.

Although the novel's inscription does not appraise the content, Restrepo's goal is to delude the reader. The novel starts with a quote for Gore Vidal saying "Wise Henry James had always warned writers against the use of mad person as central to the narrative on the ground that as he was not morally responsible, there was no true tale to tell" (Vidal np). In this epigraph, Restrepo hides her intent to write about an insane protagonist. At the same time, she shows freedom to dissent his advice. In *Delirium*, madness is the source, the implement on which the story is created. The novel is narrated in stream of consciousness and merges past events with present. Agustina is the insane female and the axis on which, all the other characters and stories converge. The reader is guided in a journey to discover the reason of Agustina's loss of sanity. Her family who lives in falsehoods, her past memories and childhood, and her husband Aguilar are all the agents that lead to her insanity. The narrative technique is somehow ambiguous. The more the reader gets deep, the more he deciphers the enigma. This way, the story looks more intelligible. Also, Restrepo relates individual madness to the state of chaos that overwhelmed the Colombian society. Agustina's husband seeks to understand his wife's illness. However, he is first obliged to discover her past. Aguilar was not certain yet about his wife's dementia. He thought loudly that he is:

managed to establish two things: one, that it is by native  
voracious and can swallow me up as it did her, and two, that the  
vertiginous state at which it multiplies means that this is a fight  
against the clock and what's more I've stepped in too late  
because I didn't know soon enough how far the disaster had  
advanced. (*Delirium* 19)

This passage represents the idea that delirium was not very evident at the beginning. Aguilar had possibilities about the expansion of this frenzy. His idea about craziness changes according to the evolution of events. Once he says "delirium has no memory" (70); because

his wife barely remembers him. One day, he affirms that madness is contagious, simply because Aunt Sofi tells him "madness contaminates you, ...delirium can enter through the eyes" (36). At a specific time, he defines madness as: "the beautiful indifference of hysteria". Then Aguilar becomes convinced about his wife's madness when he states "tonight she and madness are one. My wife is crazy" (190). Aguilar feels that Agustina's delirium is dangerous, contaminated, and intricate. But, he remembers her as "creative" (49). Madness is the main piece that completes the novel.

In *Delirium*, different types of symbolic and real mental insanity are revealed. The sequence of events is meant to reflect the Colombian society. Restrepo depicts the truth and falsehoods of society through Agustina's family. Restrepo constructed an equilibrium throughout the novel. Agustina's madness which is revealed, and Colombia's hidden madness are patent in the novel. She used madness to uncover the scars that violence had left on individuals and society in Colombia. Restrepo tends to address the controversial symbolism between madness and creativity, which go in a parallel way. Laura Restrepo uses madness as an endeavor to show her literary creativity.

## Conclusion

Madness has always been perceived as a mental disorder which is related to females. It is defined as the disorder associated with emotions, thoughts, and behaviors; distinguished as a pathological within the social codes and cultural norms in the society. It has many forms like rage, schizophrenia, and hallucinations. In the seventeenth century, women considered madness as a way to escape daily routines and enter asylums. In the twentieth century, madness was an act to rebel against oppression and subjugation to men. It was used by females in art and literature. A group of emergent Latin American women writers used madness to raise awareness about the suffering of women. They targeted as well the social and political problems; which affected their countries during that time. Latin American female writers introduced a new trend in postmodern literature; by using madness which is a psychological illness as a theme and a literary device. They intended to give the reader a real image about Latin American societies after the Second World War, and the beginning of globalization. That period was characterized by a state of chaos and decadence. Women have been able to redefine their roles in society, and claim their independent identities. Madness embraced the idea that the mental disorder can be the source of inspiration that gives an identity which favors female writers.

The notion of using madness brings to mind an old study that relates between genius persons and their level of mental disorder. Many authors and writers are believed to suffer from a mental disturbance. This shows that creativity is related only to such psychic illnesses. However, new studies prove that even normal persons are able to reach the level of creativity. Furthermore, this creativity is evident in fiction works that negotiate feminist issues through feminism endeavor. The rise of postmodernism enabled Latin American female writers to foster many themes to break away from marginalization, and to build their status. Madness as a theme and a literary device is manifested in numerous female narratives which are highly evaluated. It reveals society's deviation in a creative frame.

This research highlighted and elaborated creativity as an unconscious process; and madness as a literary device. Latin American female authors of the twentieth-century established their way to creativity through madness. This relation is expounded by psychologists and critics whose interest is new literary themes. There are common features that lead them to go together. Biological and emotional aspects have created an integral and mutual relationship. Laura Restrepo's *Delirium* emphasizes the attachment between madness and creativity. Restrepo represents a mad female figure to describe psychic pain and traumatic experiences. She drills into the society, and individual spheres to investigate national conflicts, and formulate possible solutions. She uses riddles and puzzles which give voice to creativity and madness. This relationship is further explored through four different narrative voices. This multiplicity of narrators allows the reader to understand the Colombian society. Moreover, it characterizes the postmodern novels that permit the diversity of visions. Laura Restrepo strongly used madness to maintain female subjectivity and advocate their thoughts. Briefly, Latin American female writers were successful in overtaking their suffering through writing. They relied on madness as a weapon to transmit their voices all over the world, and attain literary creativity.

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