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Editorial

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**Editorial of the double issue 35-36 entitled ‘Fiction, truth and reality’
of the journal *Research in Psychoanalysis***

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The focus of this double issue is the examination of the status of fiction in relation to notions of truth and reality. It is about the identification of the processes that link them, through interdisciplinary reflections that include psychoanalysis. The theme of this double issue stems from the Doctoral School Days 450 (ED 450) organised by Paris Cité University, attached to the Research Centre for Psychoanalysis, Medicine et Society (CRPMS), held on 16 and 17 June 2022, and entitled *Fiction, Réalité, Vérité dans la recherche – Psychoanalyse et articulations interdisciplinaires* [*Fiction, Reality, Truth in Research – Psychoanalysis and Interdisciplinary Articulations*]. This theme has given rise to a large number of reflections, of which we are now undertaking an exploration in greater depth.

Is fiction just a creation of the imagination? Does reality necessarily go beyond fiction, or can it be associated with it according to the representations that follow from it? Does reality allow us to unravel the mystery of one truth among others?

The Latin etymology of “fiction” – *factio* – means not only the “action of shaping”, but also the “action of pretending”. The plurality and even the ambivalence of signifiers and meanings appear to be consubstantial with fiction, in that it has its origins in reality, while distorting it – without necessarily conflicting with the truth.

Different disciplines have explored this question relentlessly, notably through the notion of “truth” – from the Latin *veritas* or *verus* – which is supposed to refer to “that which conforms to reality”. Its philosophical definitions and understanding are manifold: sometimes described as absolute and unique, at other times – notably from the relativist perspective – it is seen as plural and shaped *by* and *according* to man. So, if the search for truth must always be taken into account in the sociocultural contexts, places, times, customs and traditions that accompany it, how is it woven *from* and *with* the notion of reality?

The construction of “reality” – whose Latin etymology is *realitas*, derived from *res* meaning “material thing” – is based on a compromise between what the senses perceive and what is elaborated by thought. Perceived reality thus becomes the subjective expression of a multidimensional reality, coloured by the history of the subject or that of research, myths or stories, transmissions or distortions.

Fiction can have a truth value in various disciplines, but it can also operate as a creative process, like the process of research. Fiction(s), truth(s) and reality(ies) come together in the work of shaping raw material. How does this process of creation which is at the heart of this edition – the shaping of fictions, truths and realities – unfold not only in psychoanalytic theory, but also in the other disciplines and themes that mobilise it?

On the occasion of this double issue, the aim is to establish a dialogue between the arts, therapeutic mediations, clinical practice, medicine, reporting, new technologies and psychoanalysis. We propose to explore the interweaving of fiction, truth and reality through the various themes that structure it. We will begin by examining the historical and philosophical contributions to psychoanalysis. We will then explore the theme of this issue through the intersection of literature and the virtual. Next we will study the role of fiction through the methodological prism of various therapeutic devices. The notion of art and the archaic dimensions of the psyche will then be developed, leading us to observe the links with violence and the prison environment. Finally, we will analyse how trauma, death and transference can resonate with these concepts of fiction, reality and truth.

HISTORICAL AND PHILOSOPHICAL CONTRIBUTIONS

We propose to introduce this double issue with the themes of history and madness, first with Simon Dureuil’s article on the writings of Michel Foucault, and then with Julien Guillou’s, which compares and contrasts the points of view of Sigmund Freud with those of Alfred Adler.

- Simon Dureuil uses the fictional aspect of *Madness and Civilisation: A History of Insanity in the Age of Reason* (Foucault, 1988) to analyse the effects of truths that result from it. He sets out to show how this helped to demarcate madness as an object of research.
- Julien Guillou postulates the existence of a fiction specific to the transference dynamic of analysis, and conducive to the updating of a “historical truth”, that of the unconscious of the desiring subject.

The authors both place fiction and truth in tension, between psychoanalysis and philosophy. They enable the reader to see how fiction can bear witness to a reality that is particular to a certain contextualised truth, taking its value from a predefined historical and disciplinary framework.

FICTION, BETWEEN LITERATURE AND THE VIRTUAL

Fiction can be found in the field of literature, but also in that of the virtual. A number of authors have examined the place of literary fiction in psychoanalysis, together with the role of fiction in the virtual world.

- Lyasmine Kessaci looks at fiction as a means of accessing a hidden truth, that of the unconscious, through *The Auto-Biography of Goethe. Truth and Poetry: From My Own Life* (Goethe, 1848), and a paper by Sigmund Freud entitled “A Childhood Recollection from Goethe’s *Dichtung und Wahrheit*” (Freud, 1917). The question of fiction led the author to consider the fantastical or even mythological dimension in Goethe’s writings.
- It is also through myth, interposed between fiction and truth, that Maxime Annequin, Quentin Dumoulin and Romuald Hamon describe the life and work of H. P. Lovecraft, a highly creative writer of the twentieth century. How can his work hold any truth? The authors also tell us about the subjective function of writing for Lovecraft.
- From the outset, Felipe Diaz distinguishes theoretical fiction from literary fiction in order to theorise the question of female masochism from other angles. His main aim is to show that it is the result of an erotic invention, characteristic of the subjectivities born of the industrial revolution and contractualism.
- In her article, Sandra Pluchart develops the subjective impact of the use of persuasive technologies and analyses the place of fiction in this phenomenon. This opens the next section with an article on conspiracism in the virtual space.

INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES

Research methodologies can be regarded as being at the crossroads of fiction, truth and reality.

- The first article in this section presents the *TwitToMyth* project, developed by a multidisciplinary team of researchers in clinical psychology, information and communication sciences, and narratology. They are: Florent Poupart, Sarah Troubé, Melinda Texier-Bazin, Manon Bouscail, Sylvie Bourdet-Loubère, Laurent Branchard, Lucie Loubère, Julien Teyssier, David Vavassori, Malie Berton-Daubiné, Marc Marti, and Tamara Guenoun. Their research focuses on online conspiracy discourse.
- In the field of dance and aesthetics, Dominique Mazéas and Claire Nioche introduce us to the *EtuDanse* method for young children with autism and their parents. What these two articles have in common is that they set out research methods applied within groups, and make use of narrativity.
- Meanwhile, Adriana Barrera Anaya presents a technique for interpreting children's games transposed to Freud's method for the interpretation of dreams (Freud, 1900), a research method she has developed within a Child-Parent Reception Centre. The reader is guided through the trajectories of both psychic and external reality that are specific to the method.

AR(T)CHAIC

Many psychoanalysts have been interested in art, and continue to be inspired by what it evokes (Roussillon, 2021; Brun & Talpin, 2007; Le Poulichet, 1996). Art can reveal the archaic psychic productions of its creator, or elicit those of the observer or audience. The following articles invite you to explore the interface between art and the archaic.

- Starting with music, Stéphanie Grousset explores the fictional dimension of *King Lear* and the writings of the composer Hector Berlioz. The reader travels between literature, music and psychoanalysis in an attempt to comprehend what the author sees as the climax of the composer's work: romantic passion and the madness that ensues.
- With Arnaud Malausséna, it is the imagination that takes centre stage, thanks to haiku. These short Japanese poems tell, through the prism of this art form, the story of the disaster visited on the city of Hiroshima. The author shows the creative process at work in these haiku, shaping a passage from the unspeakable to a thought-image.
- Mario De Vincenzo takes a closer look at the process of figuration, straddling the line between truth and fiction. He shows how the path of creation enables the subject undergoing analysis to access their primary processes and allow them to be transformed.

Through the pages, the reader is therefore led from the objects created to the creative processes at play in psychoanalysis and the unconscious. We may think we are moving away from external reality, but rather, are we not in fact moving towards it? According to D. W. Winnicott (1971), it is creativity, as a process, that permits the subject to apprehend external reality.

VIOLENCE AND THE PRISON ENVIRONMENT

Violence is a way of acting in external reality, at the same time as the subject seems to be trying to escape from it. Drawing on clinical experience in a prison setting, the authors address the issue of violence and present support modalities using therapeutic methods: hypnosis and drawing.

- Thibault Collin highlights the relationship between fiction and Islamic radicalisation as a symptom. He presents the possible variations, distinguishing the fiction specific to radicalisation from that of religion. How does the subject shape their reality by adhering to radical and extremist ideals? The author identifies how this symptom – worthy of a fiction – prevents the subject from confronting an external reality.
- Marion Perrot, Justine Chevance and Antoine Bioy also lead us down the path of reality. They propose the use of hypnosis with incarcerated subjects, postulating the great malleability of psychological processes, thanks to the potential of the imagination and to the creation of a transitional space (Winnicott, 1971). Hypnosis thus facilitates the understanding of the reality of imprisonment.
- In Apolline Carne's article, it is through drawing that we observe the conception of external reality of a prisoner incarcerated for domestic violence. The drawings recount, in their own way, his original experiences testifying to a singular relationship with the body and the heart, and grappling with a death experience. By putting them into narrative form, he moves towards differentiating between his psychic reality and external reality.

TRAUMA, DEATH AND TRANSFERENCE

The following four authors focus on the psychological dimensions of trauma and death. In each case, the question of transference is highlighted in order to understand their psychoanalytical thinking.

- Maud Delahaye analyses the individual and collective psychological functions of fiction in war photojournalism. To do so, she draws on her research into the psychic and psychopathological issues faced by journalists in high-risk areas, and combines psychoanalysis and philosophy with the contemporary history of journalism. She

examines what the use of fiction reveals in a field where external truth and reality are the watchwords.

– Salima Boutebal and Claire Michel propose to conceive the narrative of a traumatic event as a means of reviving a subjectivising fiction. Drawing on the effects of French colonial history and the decolonial reflections that flow from it, the authors question the framework of analysis and the value of co-constructing a narrative based on trauma.

– Narrativity is also predominant in Hubert Chatrousse's article. He links phenomenology and literature with psychoanalysis. Drawing on his experience as a firefighter and on his research, he shows how a style of writing – as a testimonial narrative – can help other firefighters share their traumatic experiences.

– Alexandra Voulgari and Eric Bidaud examine the moments of strangeness, shock and paralysis of thought that psychologists may experience in front of patients hospitalised with maxillofacial cancers. Using the mythical figures of Medusa and Perseus, the authors offer the reader a reflection that examines the role and the counter-transference of the clinician faced with this extreme clinic.

We can therefore observe how fiction, combined with narrativity and psychic reality, helps us to understand the effects of trauma and confrontation with the reality of death.

In conclusion, we would like to express our sincere thanks to all the participants of the Doctoral School Days of 16 and 17 June 2022 of ED 450, Paris Cité University. We would also like to thank the management and administration of ED 450 and the CRPMS for their support and the allocation of the budget to finance the translations of the internal doctoral researchers. Finally, we would like to express our deepest gratitude to Mi-Kyung Yi for entrusting us with this project, and to Thamy Ayouch for enabling us to complete this double issue.

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