



SEMINAR OF DOCTORAL STUDIES

Nature and Fiction

École française de Rome
21-26 February 2022

The École française de Rome, in collaboration with the Centre interuniversitaire d'histoire et d'archéologie médiévales, the LIER-Fonds "Yan Thomas" and the Dipartimento di Giurisprudenza dell'Università 'Roma Tre', organizes a seminar of Doctoral Studies in Rome from the 21st to the 26th of February 2022.

For decades now, evolutionary psychology has identified fiction as a necessary stage in childhood development. The ability to pretend is so ingrained in the human being that a pathology is suspected if it does not appear in the first years of life. It is not surprising, therefore, that the denial of reality and recourse to fiction have been practised since the Archaic Age and is witnessed in all expressions of associated life: the families, the communities and institutions in every cultural context have relied on fictions in the field of language, economics, politics, law and in many other sectors. The cultural-historical analysis of these experiences allows us to investigate, through the relationship established with fiction in specific contexts, fundamental traits in the history of thought and values of past societies. Fiction meant different things in different cultural contexts, and its concrete applications were different as well. In the translation from the Ancient world to the early Christianity, which assigned a transcendent value to nature, a tension began to emerge on many fronts between the pagan culture's cavalier attitude towards reality and nature, and the resistance of Christian thought to an overturning of the Creation and the manipulation of natural laws given by God. The absorption of classical culture into medieval philosophy, theology, law, art and literature, and the passing of this legacy into the Modern Age, kept alive insoluble contradictions that over the centuries acted as an extraordinary creative generator in Western culture.

The border between the creative power of artifice and the risk of counterfeiting, in other words between a positive and a negative meaning of fiction, will be the focus of the Atelier, which aims at enhancing the research of young scholars in this field. The Atelier is open to participants with a background in the humanities, social sciences and law, in order to stimulate those coming from historical, sociological, legal, literary, artistic, anthropological and philosophical studies to reflect on fiction, on the meaning of nature, on the antinomies fiction/nature and fiction/reality in the context of their doctoral research.

The Doctoral Week will be organized as follows: during the morning sessions expert scholars will deliver a report on the subject of the Doctoral Week, while the afternoon sessions will be devoted to the reports (20 minutes) of the selected PhDs and Post-docs, introduced by one of the participant professors of the institutions involved and followed by a general debate. Languages accepted for the oral reports: Italian, French, English.

The Doctoral Week will be open to 10 PhDs and Post-docs of all nationalities. Applicants must be engaged, or have been engaged, in research projects relevant to the issues discussed during the *Atelier Doctoral*. The 10 PhDs and Post-docs selected will be hosted by the Ecole Française de Rome, in the stunning Piazza Navona. The Doctoral Week will take place in an equipped room placed in the same building on the ground floor. Most of the lunches and dinners will be covered by the organization, while travel expenses shall be borne by the participants themselves.

Applicants must submit the following to secrma@efrome.it no later than the 15th of December 2021:

- a covering letter explaining your reasons for making the application;
- a brief curriculum vitae specifying language skills and possible publications;
- a summary of your project (2 pages, 6000 characters ca.);
- a letter of recommendation.

The applications will be examined by the Scientific Committee and the results will be announced not later than the 22nd of December 2021. The Scientific Committee reserves the right to accept as auditors other participants interested in the topics addressed by the *Atelier Doctoral*. No bursaries will be available for auditors.

All the PhDs and Post-docs selected will provide not later than the 30th January 2022 a paper (around 10 pages) in which they will explain the subject of their research and how it is related to the subject of the Doctoral week. Languages accepted for the written 10 pages paper: Italian, French, English, Spanish, German.

An Abstract (3 pages) is also required in a language other than the one chosen for the oral presentation. Languages accepted for the Abstract: English, French, Italian.

The best reports will be proposed to the editing staff of the review *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome*. Those admitted will be expected to attend the sessions assiduously. Obligation to present the GREEN PASS and to wear a mask.

Scientific Committee:

Emanuele Conte (Università degli Studi "Roma Tre")
Sara Menzinger (Università degli Studi "Roma Tre")
Paolo Napoli (École des hautes études en sciences sociales, Paris)
Pierre Savy (École française de Rome)
Julien Théry (Université Lumière de Lyon / Ciham)

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