

The Other Side of the Mirror: Disturbances of Reality or
Fictions of History in *La Propagandiste* by Cécile
Desprairies

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Abstract. By articulating microhistory and macrohistory to reveal how evil infiltrates social strata, *La Propagandiste* by Cécile Desprairies invites readers to confront the silence surrounding French collaborationism. This article analyses the historical, ethical, and discursive stakes of the novel, in which, to fulfil a duty of memory, the author conducts a raw autopsy of her family history during the Occupation and questions the legitimacy of writing about collaborationism and propaganda. Drawing on research into the Nazi regime's instrumentalization of language, we further explore how the novel exposes the mechanisms of ideological machinery and the necessity for linguistic, semantic, and ontological decoding, as Desprairies explores the folds of History and fiction to reveal what lies beneath the veneer of words – conceived as receptacles of a secondary reality.

Keywords: Cécile Desprairies, (post)memory, microhistory, French collaborationism, German Occupation of France, propaganda, instrumentalized language, witness, rhizomatic identity.