

Surrealism and the ‘dreamt autobiography’: oneiric materiality in the prose of Claude Cahun and Ithell Colquhoun

Proceeding from François Leperlier’s speculative genre classification for Claude Cahun’s *Disavowals*, this paper will draw out the implications of such a label for the work itself, by putting it in conversation with the prose fiction of Ithell Colquhoun with particular emphasis on her recently published third and final novel, *Destination Limbo*.

It will consider parallels and differences between their forms and approaches, through engagement with each writer’s perspective on Surrealism, as made visible in the oneiric materiality of text and through supporting philosophical statements of intent. Critical analysis will seek to illuminate the differing ways in which these works stage a processual exploration of ‘self as constraint and prism’, framing its observations within Leperlier’s original term.

The paper will go on to explore the implications for scholars and practitioners alike of a Guattarian-chaosmotic reading of such work and its dream materials, making the case for these texts as offering new, radical forms of expression of the Surrealist project.