

Introduction: Materializing the “Eternal French Connexion”

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THE IMAGES HAVE BEEN FAMILIAR around the world for more than fifty years: a shy Jack Kerouac standing beside road-travelling companion Neal Cassady; Allen Ginsberg and Peter Orlovsky sitting back to back on a bench in Paris, smiling brightly; William Burroughs in trench coat and fedora outstaring the camera with sinister poker face. Sustained by innumerable biographies, exhibitions, and film adaptations, such iconic images of the first major Beat writers as travellers and border-crossers remain indelible in the popular imagination, persisting as nostalgic snapshots of countercultural rebels from a black-and-white past when writers had the power to move an entire generation. The enduring popularity of the Beats as photogenic iconoclasts has created a wider public interest than in perhaps any other area of literature. But it also deterred academic scholarship for decades and has led to a mismatch between the shallow, seductive imagery of hip Americana in mass circulation and the picture now constructed in the critical field.

Over the past two decades, Beat Studies has come of age: the days of fanzines, hagiography, sociology, and broad cultural history, when discussion focused largely on jazz or drugs and a trilogy of famous writers and their holy texts – Ginsberg’s “Howl” (1956), Kerouac’s *On the Road* (1957), Burroughs’ *Naked Lunch* (1959) – are long gone. Beat Studies today is far broader and richer, and has decentered itself as it has expanded: sensitized to issues of race, gender, sexuality, and social justice, while attentive to work in multiple media, it now produces book-length studies ranging from Beat religion and philosophy to Beat cinema and

theatre. With the appearance of *The Cambridge Companion to the Beats* (2016), it now also bears the “imprimatur of the academy,” as Steven Belletto, the volume’s editor, notes with self-conscious irony.¹ At least in the United States, Beat Studies is increasingly in rather than out of step with mainstream academia.

This special issue of *L’Esprit Créateur* therefore appears at a moment of sustained academic expansion. It takes part in a reorientation of the field that one of its new leading scholars, Jimmy Fazzino, dates specifically from 2004, when *Reconstructing the Beats*, a collection of essays edited by Jennie Skerl, challenged the “adulatory mythography” of earlier criticism.² 2004 was also the year the Beat Studies Association formed, which by 2012 was producing an annual journal dedicated to promoting the legitimization of the field and “the integration of Beat scholarship into canonical U.S. literary critical discourses.”³ The present special issue on “French and Beat Literatures: A History of Mutual Appropriation, Reception, and Translation” takes up a position within this trajectory but, most distinctly, attempts to shift the field’s dominant critical paradigm beyond its traditionally American-centric focus and toward more text-based approaches.

One-way traffic and two solitudes

Since *Reconstructing the Beats*, the expanded panoramic embrace of Beat Studies beyond the borders of the United States has been enhanced through a series of ambitious publications, chiefly: *The Transnational Beat Generation* (2012), edited by Jennie Skerl and Nancy Grace; Jimmy Fazzino’s *World Beats: Beat Generation Writing and the Worlding of U.S. Literature* (2016); the two dozen essays of “Global Beat Studies,” the special issue edited by Oliver Harris and Polina Mackay for *Comparative Literature and Culture* (2016); and *The Routledge*

Handbook of International Beat Literature edited by A. Robert Lee (2018). While this special issue of *L'Esprit Créateur* shares with these and other recent studies a desire to connect Beat literature with non-US national literatures, to explore how the American Beat writers shaped and were shaped by work from other cultures, the point of origin, methodology, and aims of the essays collected here are distinct from most of the work represented by the above titles, much of which originated from within the field of American Studies.

The following articles essays emerge, in contrast, from a European tradition of comparative literary studies and significantly arose out of “Paris Interzone: The Transcultural Beat Generation,” the sixth annual conference of the European Beat Studies Network held at the University of Chicago in Paris.⁴ The 2017 event featured close to a hundred talks and multimedia performances given by scholars from around the world and gave a particular shape to the current essays insofar as they have not been defined, like Transnational American Studies, as an essentially American project. The subtitle of Fazzino’s book, *The Worlding of U.S. Literature*, can be seen as quite ambiguous in this respect, as it potentially lays claim to the universalizing logic it otherwise helps to deconstruct. Certainly, within an Americanist framework, comparisons across cultures still tend to reinforce an American point of view, as in the opening assertion of John Tytell’s *Beat Transnationalism* (2017): “William Burroughs, Jack Kerouac, and Allen Ginsberg felt that they needed to leave their own culture in order to see it more clearly.”⁵ The transnational aspect of Beat literature in such an approach involves border crossing, but it remains one-way traffic. While other internal contradictions within transnational studies of Beat literature have been identified, most cogently by Todd Tietchen,⁶ the pragmatic risk here is that the all-encompassing embrace can only end up sacrificing material depth and detail for the sake of inclusivity and breadth. Thus, *The Routledge*

Handbook of International Beat Literature achieves an impressive diversity of excellent essays but is framed loosely in terms of addressing “Beat literature and culture, or its equivalence,” “Beat energies” and “Beat or Beat-like expression.”⁷

While Grace and Skerl rightly forecast the transnational as “a fertile turn for Beat Studies,”⁸ the present articles attempt to nuance its application. Taking a more precise approach by narrowing its comparative focus, the issue has a double aim stressed by its title, “French and Beat Literatures,” and by its fitting bilingual venue, *L’Esprit Créateur*. First, the histories traced here are indeed more *mutual*: the reciprocal impact of French and Beat literatures is examined in articles written in French as well as in English, and by scholars working within Francophone and Anglophone critical traditions or at their intersection. Second, the approaches taken to analyze these histories are more *material*, more concerned to examine texts than describe contexts. In taking the text itself as the site of reciprocal cultural appropriations, the following essays have something in common with recent studies such as *Hip Sublime: Beat Writers and the Classical Tradition*, recently edited by Sheila Murnaghan and Ralph Rosen,⁹ or the forthcoming special issue of *Humanities* edited by Hassan Melehy, “Beat Generation Writers as Readers of World Literature,” which in different ways construct textual genealogies of works by Beat authors, instead of historicizing their lives as travellers. The text-centered dialogue embodied by the following articles, however, is of course not global but emphatically bicultural. This special issue seeks very specifically to demonstrate the material presence of French literature within the works of known and lesser-known Beat writers, as well as to reassess the reception and impact of Beat literature within French culture, by paying close attention to the complex processes through which Beat texts were edited, adapted, and translated into French.

At first sight, it might seem an old story, because there is nothing new about the Beat writers' "eternal French connexion," to quote translator and adaptor Claude Pélieu.¹⁰ That Ginsberg, Orlovsky, Burroughs, and Gregory Corso stayed at the so-called Beat Hotel in the Latin Quarter during the late 1950s and early 1960s has been one of the most familiar chapters in Beat cultural history, generating its own book-length study, *The Beat Hotel* by Barry Miles (2000).¹¹ Paris has long been singled out as the one non-US point of reference on the Beat map, the French capital making up the trio of cities named in the subtitles of such books as James Campbell's *This is the Beat Generation: New York, San Francisco, Paris* (2001) and the catalog of the Centre Georges Pompidou's exhibition, *Beat Generation: New York, San Francisco, Paris* (2016).¹² The connection between Beat and French literatures has thus remained based in biography. It has generally been constructed through narratives of bohemians abroad and their real-life encounters with French writers, such as Burroughs visiting Louis-Ferdinand Céline in Meudon or Corso larking around with Marcel Duchamp at a Paris party, and to analyses of apparently simple acts of homage such as Ginsberg's poem "At Apollinaire's Grave." Focusing on the allure of identities from Artaud the madman to Rimbaud the rebel, and on texts written by the Beats in the French capital, however, all too often amounts to adding icons to icons. As I have argued in *The French Genealogy of the Beat Generation* (2017), this approach enables broad discussion of "influence," instead of forcing more exact attention to working methods of textual appropriation, transformation, and translation. Modern French literature was the "fundamental intertext" that helped form the original Beat circle in mid-1940s New York, long before Burroughs and Ginsberg set foot in Paris, and it materially sustained their œuvres as well as Kerouac's for decades.¹³ The driving force behind this issue is hence the conviction that bicultural and genealogical approaches are

essential to any study of the Beats as transnational writers, because these same approaches were so central to the development of Beat literature in the first place.

If Beat writers actively bridged cultures in their texts, making appropriations across national literatures, criticism needs to do likewise in order to understand how they worked; and yet, with very few exceptions, Anglophone and Francophone scholarship has remained two solitudes. Redressing that divide is one aim of this special issue, while stimulating further genealogical enquiry is another. For the Beats were not only prolific writers but remarkable readers, so that long-awaited studies are yet to be published on the formative role played by other national literatures, from the English and Irish (Eliot, Yeats, Joyce, Beckett) to the German (Goethe, Rilke, Kafka) and the Russian (Dostoevsky, Gogol, Mayakovski), to name just Modernists. The recent publication of *Hip Sublime* certainly proves that the readings not only of Burroughs, Ginsberg, and Kerouac, but also of Robert Creeley, Ed Sanders, Robert Duncan, Kenneth Rexroth, Philip Whalen, Diane di Prima, and Charles Olson far exceeded the realm of Modernism. We might also wish for more work of the kind that Peggy Pacini has done on the legacy of Beat literature in contemporary French poetry¹⁴ or studies that would pursue directions laid out in the *Routledge International Handbook of Beat Literature*, to reveal how Beat texts have shaped the work of contemporary authors from across the world.

While the following articles are pragmatically focused, restricted to American post-war counterculture and to modern and avant-garde French texts and films, they respond not only to the recent transnational turn embraced by the field of Beat Studies in the United States, but also to a resurgence of interest in the Beats in France, which makes the publication of this special issue particularly timely. The major exhibition at the Centre Pompidou in 2016 was indeed followed by two recent French volumes: *Beat Generation: L'inservitude volontaire* edited by

Olivier Penot-Lacassagne, and *Beat Attitude: Femmes poètes de la beat generation* assembled by Annalisa Marí Pegrum and Sébastien Gavignet (2018).¹⁵ Finally, the prospects are very promising for future work drawing on unused resources archived at the Institut Mémoires de l'Édition Contemporaine (IMEC) located at the Ardenne Abbey in Caen. For the European Beat Studies Network conference in 2017, the Institute provided a rich array of documents and artwork by Claude Péliou that were exhibited,¹⁶ but it also houses the archives of other neglected *passeurs* who have shaped the reception of Beat Studies in France,¹⁷ such as publishers Maurice Girodias and Christian Bourgois, who are discussed here respectively by Maarten van Gageldonk and James Horton.

Publishers, translators, and writers as ‘passeurs’

The French *passeur* has no “appropriate equivalent in English,” as Marie-Anne Hansen-Pauly rightly points out.¹⁸ The nearest equivalent might well be the term “cultural mediator,” which in the opening article of the current volume Maarten Van Gageldonk borrows from Bruno Latour, to analyze the role of Girodias’ magazine *Olympia Review* in the early 1960s. The agency of publishers like Girodias and Bourgois is highly problematic, of course, and one reason for the neglect of their key role in disseminating Beat literature in France has been the relative lack of archival-based research to support analysis of the editions they published. The same can be said of another embodiment of the *passeur* that emerges here as one of the most important and least acknowledged figures: the translator.

By stressing how important translators have been for the reception of Beat literature in France, this special issue responds to Grace and Skerl’s call for new transnational approaches to Beat Studies that might help expose “as lacunae, for instance, treatment of genres,

gender/sexualities, translation, dissent, and cyberspace” (11). While mixed in with diverse terms here, this call was still an important belated recognition that the work of transnationalism crucially depends on translation, as a process of conveying texts across and between languages, and that, within Anglophone scholarship, translation has been largely ignored. In the study of Beat literature, this lacuna reflecting the bias of scholarly expertise has been a particular problem. It has meant overlooking how the American writers accessed their Rimbaud or Céline to serve their own creativity, and on the other side, how their own texts were recast for Francophone readers. The two articles most centrally concerned with translation in this issue reveal a good deal about the resulting problems. Oliver Harris demonstrates how intractable it proved for Pélieu and his wife Mary Beach to translate the cut-up writing of Burroughs, and James Horton shows the same two translators’ difficulties in rendering Ginsberg’s poem *Kaddish* into innovative French. But beyond insights gained from their close comparative reading of texts in English and French, what Harris and Horton also reveal is the misunderstood importance and ambivalence of the translator him- or herself as a cultural figure. As an unusual double act, the case of Beach and Pélieu indeed complicates the issue of the translator’s agency addressed in both articles, that is, the extreme difficulty of interpreting responsibility for the target text in terms of translation, adaptation or even outright error.

There is a certain ambiguity inherent in the practice of the translator, and it is an appropriate irony that in translation into English *passseur* loses something of its ambivalence in French: its compromising associations of a person who clandestinely ferries people or things across, the smuggler and even the drug courier. While the implication of subterfuge sits well with spreading controversial countercultural texts, the ambivalence also emerges in the role of Beach and Pélieu whose cultural significance as champions of Beat literature, at a time when it

was generally dismissed and often denounced, was never matched by the importance accorded to them as ‘mere’ translators. Although the couple had what Horton terms a “translation project” to “introduce Beat writing to French audiences while seeking to align themselves with the American literary current,” publishers did not generally recognize them as *passseurs* on a mission.

When in 1974 Pélieu coined the phrase “the eternal French Connexion” it was in fact bitterly ironic, appearing in a letter to Ginsberg lambasting French publishing houses, with their contracts for translation amounting to “robbery” and their sloppy editing.¹⁹ As Horton directly notes in his analysis of the Beach and Pélieu translation of *Kaddish*, in the case of what look like mistakes, it is difficult to determine who introduced them. Pélieu himself addressed the issue in another unpublished letter to Ginsberg, admitting “it’s all very embarrassing for us, because after all, WE are (in your eyes) the ones responsible.”²⁰ On the other hand, one of the paradoxical values of mistranslation, as Harris demonstrates in his close reading of Beach and Pélieu’s work on Burroughs’ cut-up texts, is that what they lost in translation makes visible what has often been overlooked by readers of the English originals. That is, cut-up texts not only raise issues of agency, intentionality, and the specter of untranslatability, but in so doing challenge our relation to our ‘own’ language; and the close readings of translations and originals made by Horton and Harris suggest rich possibilities for future work in such theoretical directions. In terms of reassessing editions in translation, or assessing ones previously overlooked, Horton and Penot-Lacassagne make passing mention of the 1967 *Cahier de l’Herne* that brought together an unusual trio of writers – Burroughs, Pélieu, and Bob Kaufman – which would also reward further study. What role did the grouping have on these

authors' reception in France, notably that of Kaufman who became known as the 'black American Rimbaud'?

Equally, there are opportunities for further comparative textual work, which include not only editions deserving to be rescued from the margins, but major texts. While space in this issue did not permit sustained attention to Jack Kahane's translation of Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, there would be much to say about his 1964 edition of *Le festin nu* – which remains the one in print by Gallimard – as regards its impact on Burroughs' Francophone reception, especially with respect to cultural reference, idiom, rhetorical style, and textual corruption. In terms of cultural reference, for example, the value of Kahane's domesticating translation, which renders "an uptown A train" as "l'express du centre," or "Woolworths" as "Monoprix," is dubious, surely condescending too far toward the presumably ignorant French reader at the expense of the cultural specificity of the text.²¹ As for textual corruption, numerous errors as well as redactions due to censorship left only five sections of *Naked Lunch* actually translated in full, a major problem magnified by the extensive revisions of Burroughs' text through later editions in English.²² And stylistically, Kahane either missed or chose to ignore the reuse of evocative phrases running throughout the text; for example, the "music down a windy street" that drifts verbatim from the "Benway" section to "The Market" and to "The Examination" becomes "un air de musique au coin d'une rue balayée par le vent," then "un orphéon à un carrefour balayé par le vent," and finally "des bribes d'orphéon au fond d'une rue balayée par le vent" (Burroughs, *Festin nu*, 51, 125, 219). Kahane's translation prevented French readers from hearing the repetition of such trademark leitmotifs. But the view in retrospect should always be historicized, and so in defence of Kahane, his highest priorities for translating a text that challenges most Anglophone readers lay elsewhere: as the 1964 review of *Le festin nu* in

Le Monde noted, “le vocabulaire de la drogue a été quasi inexistant en français [...] jusqu’à la publication de la traduction d’Eric Kahane.”²³ Such analysis and the fresh perspectives it yields could be extended. However, more broadly, the lacuna in comparative studies of major Beat texts in their French translations becomes all the more striking when we bear in mind, for instance, that detailed work has been done on the translation of Ginsberg’s “Howl” into Turkish, by Erik Mortenson in *Translating the Counterculture: The Reception of the Beats in Turkey* (2018).²⁴ The work done on French translations in this issue will hopefully serve to stimulate further research at the intersection of Beat and Translation Studies.

If the translator is a *porteur de cultures*, so too other agents who are the subject of brief or extended study here, such as Jean Fanchette. Editor of *Two Cities*, a bilingual Parisian review that published Corso and Burroughs, and an accomplished poet in his own right, Fanchette was considered by Ginsberg as a possible translator for “Howl.”²⁵ In fact, there is a good case for seeing the Beat writers themselves as *porteurs*. Ginsberg can be considered as much a *porteur* as a poet, and maybe for him the two roles were in fact inextricable. For his aesthetic, which especially in the 1950s involved a mass of references, appropriations, and his own translations of French poetry, was strategically committed to *passing on* a certain tradition through his writing. The two essays concentrating on Ginsberg here, by myself and Franca Bellarsi, directly respond to his work as the product of a *poète-porteur*. In different ways, both essays engage with key texts from the mid-1950s – “Howl” and “The Lion for Real” – and draw on some of the rich documentary materials – letters, journals, essays by Ginsberg – that extend the reach of his œuvre as a canon of citations. That is, such paratexts not only provide vital material evidence for analyzing Ginsberg’s poems, but, in presenting records of reading

and appropriation, serve a function not dissimilar to that of the poems themselves: they pass on a passionate appetite for literature and for communicating that passion to the reader.

While Ginsberg was a “name dropper on an epic scale,”²⁶ his poetry of the 1950s is as often cryptic as it is explicit in naming names. His references have been largely neglected, therefore, not only because of the overshadowing presence of poets more familiar to Anglophone criticism, from Walt Whitman to T.S. Eliot, but because his allusive strategies were often deliberately oblique. In the variorum edition of “Howl,”²⁷ Ginsberg makes an unusually long and especially tantalizing allusion to “Cris d’aveugle” from *Les amours jaunes* by Tristan Corbière, and here I offer the first reading of its significance for Ginsberg’s aesthetics. His other key allusion to the nineteenth-century *poète maudit* is equally difficult to interpret, or indeed to identify, since it is an uncredited line in French used as an epigraph to “The Lion for Real.” And yet, the epigraph’s source text, Corbière’s “Rapsodie du sourd,” turns out to be a model for him in terms of rhetorical style, structure, musicality, and above all, an extreme type of meta-irony. A comparative reading of Corbière and Ginsberg thus reveals that the French poet’s aesthetics shaped the American’s over the course of a decade, in the crucial period preceding and following his writing of “Howl.”

Franca Bellarsi’s article addresses another of Ginsberg’s neglected but significant French points of reference and answers her own provocative question – “un marriage improbable?” – by establishing a series of aesthetic affinities with the work of the avant-garde poet, artist, and film director Jean Cocteau. Her argument is grounded in the chronology of Beat interest in Cocteau, which runs from Kerouac’s fascination in the mid-1940s epitomized by his novella *Orpheus Emerged* (1945), through to the period a decade later when Ginsberg was preparing to write “Howl.” In Bellarsi’s analysis, Cocteau emerges as a “contemporanean

gnostic creator,” a key figure for Ferlinghetti as well as Ginsberg and Kerouac, and for connecting their respective works through his own “visionary economy.” For Cocteau’s literary and cinematic œuvre, with its characteristic juxtaposition of disparate images and blurring of dream and realistic worlds, embodied a form of magical realism and a commitment to the unconscious to which all three Beat writers could relate. Cocteau’s maxim of creativity, “Il faudra vous convaincre que l’artiste trouve d’abord et cherche après,” comes to sound typically Beat, a natural complement to the aesthetic credos of Ginsberg and Kerouac, with their faith in spontaneity. More than that, in terms of form and material texture, the hybridity of a ‘book-movie’ like Kerouac’s *Doctor Sax* (1959) makes perfect sense viewed through the lens of Cocteau’s cinema, with its mysterious speeding up and slowing down of time and its dreamlike animations of a supernatural world in the midst of the familiar. As Bellarsi contends, far from being a superficial gesture of identification, the “blood of the poet,” which Kerouac infamously wrote on the wall of his Columbia University room after watching Cocteau’s experimental film *Le sang d’un poète* in 1944, runs through such works as a synthesis of the surrealist treatment of the image and a gnostic reading of reality.

If Ginsberg’s poetry signals to readers its sources openly and more cryptically, the function of the *porteur* also appears in another sense: embodied materially in the magazines that disseminated and discussed Beat literature in both Francophone and Anglophone circles and, most important, in crossovers between the two. This under-researched function of the magazine as a cultural mediator is common ground for Maarten Van Gageldonk’s work on the “monthly from Paris” *Olympia Review*, Olivier Penot-Lacassagne’s on French magazines such as *Actuel* and *Planète Plus*, and Jason Earle’s examination of Sylvère Lotringer’s journal *Semiotext(e)*.

Van Gageldonk's focus on *Olympia* affirms that the house magazine of Girodias' Olympia Press played a major role in the postwar expatriate scene in Paris, its Franco-American contents helping to shape the reception of Beat literature on both sides of the Atlantic. The cultural relations fostered by *Olympia* were indeed consistent with its parallel in the United States, *Evergreen Review*, the house magazine of Barney Rosset's Grove Press; as van Gageldonk comments, for Rosset, whose editions and translations were so influential for internationalizing literary culture throughout the era, Europe was synonymous with France. However, as his article also shows through close attention to detail, Girodias' magazine had at least two readerships in another sense: literate tourists with an appetite for a romanticized vision of Paris, and a more sophisticated audience who would have responded to the way Corso demystified the city by revealing traces of the bitter and bloody Algerian conflict.

For Penot-Lacassagne, scrutinizing representations of the Beats in the French popular press and the leading avant-garde journal *Tel Quel*, together with examining the ambivalent function played by anthologies, exposes gaps in the standard history of reception: "l'approche rétrospective gomme les aspérités." His article documents how brutal were the denunciations against Beat writing in *Tel Quel*, how idiosyncratic were the selections in Alain Jouffroy and Jean-Jacques Lebel's influential anthology of 1965, how Maurice Nadeau's *Lettres nouvelles* contributed to blurring basic distinctions between Beat authors and *beatniks*, and how in fact French journals like *Actuel* and *Planète Plus* proved to be more effective in promoting Beat literature in France. Demonstrating how little the French intellectual avant-garde thought of the American Beat writers, Penot-Lacassagne offers a quite different perspective, then, to that of Jason Earle, whose focus on *Semiotext(e)* brings to the fore the role of its editor Sylvère Lotringer as a *porteur* working in the other direction.

Intriguingly, Lotringer had different recollections of the French scene, at least concerning the reception of Burroughs: “When I arrived in New York from Paris in 1972, I was amazed that so few people had heard of William Burroughs,” he recalled; “he had a huge intellectual following in France within the Rimbaudian modernist tradition. But in New York, Burroughs seemed to have fallen out of favor.”²⁸ Earle’s article establishes the significance of Lotringer’s magazine and the two major events it staged in New York – the “Schizo-Culture” conference of 1975 and the Nova Convention three years later – in rehabilitating Burroughs as part of a larger transatlantic project. It reveals that the Burroughs Lotringer reintroduced to his home country was in key respects very French, defined by his relation to Michel Foucault, Gilles Deleuze, Félix Guattari, and Jean-François Lyotard (all present with Burroughs at the 1975 conference), and that he was promoted through his avant-garde credentials as a theoretician of the rising power of media culture. Arguing that *Semiotext(e)* in effect used Burroughs to smuggle French critical theory “into the heart of America,” Earle’s article also examines how the magazine that adopted and reshaped Burroughs was itself changed in the process. His analysis demonstrates the material impact of Burroughs’ aesthetic practices through which he developed his core ideas about language and control, by showing how *Semiotext(e)* appropriated the performativity of cut-up and collage techniques to renew its own page layout and satirical use of images.

Burroughs as a radical theoretician and experimental practitioner in a European tradition also emerges as key to Andrew Hussey’s exploration of the postwar avant-garde scene in Paris. But while Burroughs has long been identified as the most European of the Beats – the very embodiment of the “eternal French connexion” – Hussey’s account goes back to the emergence of cut-up methods in 1959 and takes a fresh look at the received historiography.

According to the standard narrative, the American abroad originally developed his methods as a direct response to the legacy of Tristan Tzara and 1920s Dada. Rather, Hussey situates the Beat writers in the Paris of the late 1950s in relation to the Lettrists in the late 1940s, examining the practice and theoretical outlook shared by Burroughs and Tzara's fellow-countryman from Romania, Isidore Isou, and stressing their common assault on linguistic as much as literary norms. In addition to revealing unsuspected parallels between the Lettrists and the Beats as avant-garde circles drawn to Paris, therefore, Hussey's article offers Isou and Burroughs as similarly positioned within larger movements as radical, instead of representative, figures whose work pushed the limits of language and literature.

Where Hussey offers an alternative history of the avant-garde as the context for Burroughs' emergence in the 1950s, and Earle explores the transatlantic mediating role of *Semiotext(e)* in refashioning Burroughs as a theorist in the 1970s, Susan Pinette engages directly with Deleuze and Guattari as the main French philosophers taken up by critics within Beat Studies since the 1980s. As a study of reception, her article first diagnoses how Deleuze and Guattari's key concepts of "deterritorialization," "rhizome," and "minor literature" have been used and misused to frame critical readings of Kerouac in the United States. Pinette then brings together the reductive way in which Kerouac's American readers have celebrated his deterritorialization and the equally reductive way in which his Quebecois readers have, in contrast, embraced him as one of their own. In her argument, each position represents only one pole of Deleuze and Guattari's theory, while for them the American road novelist crucially embodied all stages of it. That is, the search for ancestors in Kerouac's *Satori in Paris* (1967) stands as a reminder that the line of flight *can* always go wrong: it exemplifies, for the two French theorists, how the temptation of reterritorialization is part and parcel of the process of

deterritorialization. Sensitive to culture and geography as well as to theory, Pinette's article thus appreciates the difficult if not impossible location of Kerouac as an American of Francophone descent having to write in English, and in so doing builds on important recent work on his bicultural identity, such as Hassan Melehy's book *Kerouac: Language, Poetics and Territory* (2016). The particular value of her case, however, is to reveal how the widespread but selective use of Deleuze and Guattari's commentaries on Kerouac goes against the grain of the ambivalence and hybridity of identity increasingly recognized in his work.

Melehy's own article here gives space to an important but neglected figures in Beat Studies, one whose position simultaneously in and outside the field is embodied in his change of name: from LeRoi Jones to Amiri Baraka. Distancing himself from former Beat companions, in the 1960s Baraka assumed the status of a dissident who wanted to commit more fully to a political critique along lines of ethnicity and sexuality. This is the Baraka referenced and appropriated in two of Jean-Luc Godard's films, *Masculin féminin* (1966) which draws on his play *Dutchman* (1964), and *One plus one*, aka *Sympathy for the Devil* (1968) which cites his *Blues People* (1963) and essay "The Changing Same" (1966). Through a detailed reading of Godard's cinematic choices, Melehy establishes the common cause of their attacks on artistic as well as political institutions, arguing for the integration of Nouvelle Vague cinema and Beat writing in a criticism engaging with but not restricted by national and linguistic borders. Melehy's article is therefore a useful reminder of the limits and lacunae in any focused comparative approach, including my own *French Genealogy of the Beat Generation* (2017). Even if one of its aims was to bridge the long-separate Anglophone and Francophone approaches to Beat writing, because of the book's focus on the Beats' appropriations of French

literature, it still remained culturally one-sided; hence the opportunity of this special issue, to encourage reciprocal relations, mutual recognitions, two-way traffic.

Given these objectives, it seems logical that the *passeur* should emerge as its *fil rouge*, connecting the attention given to neglected figures, such as publishers Jean Fanchette or Christian Bourgois, and translators Mary Beach and Claude Pélieu, in recognition of their essential roles in disseminating Beat literature in France, with the generally overlooked cultural function of magazines from *Olympia Review* to *Semiotext(e)*. But new light is also shed here on the three major writers of the Beat Generation, and while most recent studies have rightly sought to expand the field beyond Burroughs, Ginsberg, and Kerouac, the following articles reaffirm how rich their œuvres are for comparative analysis and how much genetic research remains to be done. They can also be seen to embody three quite distinct versions of the *passeur* that have in common the problem of language itself: Kerouac, the Franco-American ambivalently located between cultures, expressing the pain as well as the possibilities of a hybrid identity; Burroughs, the theorist whose work performs a violent but also liberatory alienation from linguistic norms; and Ginsberg, the smuggler of radical texts across languages through acts of translation and appropriation. These and other voices come through clearly in their dedication to keeping alive in hostile times a counter-tradition, to passing on to new generations the Beat “French connexion” not just as a literary history but as a vision of the “eternal” carried over from the past into the present, a resilient, transatlantic belief in the power of literature to shape the future.

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Notes

¹ Steven Belletto, Introduction, *The Cambridge Companion to the Beats* (Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 2016), 1.

² Jimmy Fazzino, *World Beats: Beat Generation Writing and the Worlding of U.S. Literature* (Hanover: Dartmouth College Press, 2016), 4; *Reconstructing the Beats*, Jennie Skerl, ed. (New York: Palgrave, 2004).

³ Ronna Johnson and Nancy Grace, “Letter from the Editors,” *Journal of Beat Studies*, 1 (2012): vi.

⁴ For more information about the three-day event I co-organized with Peggy Pacini and Frank Rynne at the University of Chicago in Paris, see <https://z.umn.edu/3ude>.

⁵ John Tytell, *Beat Transnationalism* (n.p.: Beatdom Books, 2017), 1.

⁶ In “Ethnographies and Networks: On Beat Transnationalism,” Todd Tietchen has gone so far as to warn that “transnational Beat narrative remains a cautionary tale” because an agenda to promote social justice can be at odds with the sometimes regressive tendencies in transgressive writing (*Cambridge Companion to the Beats*, 223).

⁷ A. Robert Lee, “Introduction,” *The Routledge Handbook of International Beat Literature* (New York: Routledge, 2018), 6, 9, 13.

⁸ Nancy Grace and Jennie Skerl, “Introduction to Transnational Beat: Global Poetics in a Postmodern World,” *The Transnational Beat Generation* (New York: Palgrave, 2012), 11.

⁹ *Hip Sublime: Beat Writers and the Classical Tradition*, Sheila Murnaghan and Ralph Rosen, eds. (Athens: Ohio State U P, 2018).

¹⁰ Claude Pélieu to Allen Ginsberg, January 19, 1974 (Box 10, Allen Ginsberg Papers, Columbia University).

¹¹ Barry Miles, *The Beat Hotel: Ginsberg, Burroughs and Corso in Paris, 1957-1963* (New York: Grove, 2000).

¹² James Campbell, *This is the Beat Generation: New York, San Francisco, Paris* (Berkeley: U of California P, 2001); *Beat Generation: New York, San Francisco, Paris*, Philippe-Alain Michaud, ed. (Paris: Éditions du Centre Pompidou, 2016).

¹³ Véronique Lane, *The French Genealogy of the Beat Generation: Burroughs, Ginsberg and Kerouac's Appropriations of Modern Literature, from Rimbaud to Michaux* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017), 8.

¹⁴ Peggy Pacini, "Êtes-vous Beat? Contemporary French Beat Writing," *The Routledge Handbook of International Beat Literature*, 89-102.

¹⁵ *Beat Generation: L'inservitude volontaire*, Olivier Penot-Lacassagne, ed. (Paris: Éditions du CNRS, 2018); *Beat Attitude: Femmes poètes de la beat generation*, Annalisa Mari Pegrum and Sébastien Gavniet, eds., Julie Nice, trans. (Paris: Bruno Doucey, 2018).

¹⁶ Curated by Véronique Lane and Peggy Pacini, designed by Yuri Zupancic, and sponsored by the Estates of William S. Burroughs and of Claude Pélieu as well as by the IMEC, the exhibition featured unseen manuscripts, rare photographs, in addition to cut-ups and collages by Burroughs and Pélieu.

¹⁷ The IMEC catalogue can be accessed online at: <https://www.imec-archives.com/en/collections/archives/>.

¹⁸ Marie-Anne Hansen-Pauly, "Pierre Joris: A Mediator of Cultures and Languages," *Uniting Regions and Nations through the Looking Glass of Literature*, Karoline Szatek-Tudor, ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars, 2017), 103.

¹⁹ Claude Pélieu to Allen Ginsberg, January 19, 1974, Ginsberg Papers.

²⁰ Claude Pélieu to Allen Ginsberg, April 2, 1974, Ginsberg Papers.

²¹ William Burroughs, *Naked Lunch: The Restored Text*, James Grauerholz and Barry Miles, eds. (New York: Grove, 2003), 3, 108; William Burroughs, *Le festin nu*, Eric Kahane, trans. (Paris: Gallimard, 1964), 21, 153.

²² On failed efforts to persuade Gallimard to produce a new translation and edition of Burroughs' *Naked Lunch*, see the interview of Théophile Aries by Lucie Malagnat, <https://z.umn.edu/3t67>.

²³ Piotr Rawicz, review of *Le festin nu*, *Le Monde*, September 5, 1964.

²⁴ Erik Mortenson, *Translating the Counterculture: The Reception of the Beats in Turkey* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois U P, 2018).

²⁵ “If you are still interested in translating *Howl*, Paulhan [then director of the *Nouvelle Revue Française*] is ready to publish” (Allen Ginsberg to Jean Fanchette, 23 May, 1961; unpublished letter, courtesy of Véronique Fanchette).

²⁶ John Muckle, “The Names: Allen Ginsberg’s Writings,” *The Beat Generation Writers*, A. Robert Lee, ed. (London: Pluto, 1996), 10.

²⁷ Allen Ginsberg, *Howl: Original Draft Facsimile, Transcript and Variant Versions*, Barry Miles, ed. (New York: Harper Perennial, 1995).

²⁸ Sylvère Lotringer, “Foreword,” *Burroughs Live: The Collected Interviews of William S. Burroughs*, Lotringer, ed. (Los Angeles: Semiotext(e), 2001), 15.