

# Introduction

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As silent diaries<sup>1</sup> or »invisible seconds«<sup>2</sup>, mentors and editors have long supported the work of authors without anyone noticing – or without anyone *wanting* to notice. For becoming aware of their involvement in the creation process of literary texts would have disturbed an image cultivated since the Romantic era, that of the author drawing only on the self and its solitude. Recent years have seen a growing interest in what mentors and editors actually do: editors are increasingly invited to panel discussions,<sup>3</sup> literature festivals focus on men-

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**1** | Cf. Ward, Margaret: »Ich bin jetzt Ihr treues Tagebuch [...].« Lewald as Mentee and Mentor«, in: Christina Ujma (Hg.), Fanny Lewald (1811-1889). Studien zu einer großen europäischen Schriftstellerin und Intellektuellen, Bielefeld: Aisthesis 2011, pp. 131-151.

**2** | Cf. Schneider, Ute: Der unsichtbare Zweite. Die Berufsgeschichte des Lektors im literarischen Verlag, Göttingen: Wallstein 2005.

**3** | For example, the round table »Nähe oder Distanz? Der Autor und sein Lektor. Eine Gesprächsrunde in der Literaturwerkstatt Berlin« in January 2014 (see [https://www.haus-fuer-poesie.org/de/literaturwerkstatt-berlin/veranstaltungen/alle\\_veranstaltungen/naehe-oder-distanz-der-autor-und-sein-lektor](https://www.haus-fuer-poesie.org/de/literaturwerkstatt-berlin/veranstaltungen/alle_veranstaltungen/naehe-oder-distanz-der-autor-und-sein-lektor)), the panel discussion between Katrin Zimmermann and editor Lina Muzur at the conference »Wortwechsel« in November 2016 at the Swiss Literature Institute (see <https://intermedialitaet.com/2016/09/28/wortwechsel-ecrire-en-dialoguant-writing-as-dialogue/>). Other German-speaking examples include a special programme about the book *Wie Romane entstehen* by Hanns-Josef Ortheil and his editor Klaus Siblewski, broadcast on 15.02.2009 on ZDF, or the portrait of Arno Camenisch broadcast on 22.2015 on RTR, in which we see the author working with his editor Urs Engler (see <https://www.rtr.ch/emissions/cuntrasts/arno-camenisch-mund-sutsu>). See also this series of interviews with young editors, published by the *Frankfurter Rundschau* in 2016: <http://www.fr.de/kultur/buchmesse-frankfurt/unter-dreissig/junge-lektoren-2016-lina-muzur-ein-roman-schmeisst-einen-in-diese-welt-rein-a-295107>, <http://www.fr.de/kultur/buchmesse-frankfurt/unter-dreissig/junge-lektoren-2016-mona-lang-einen-funken-vom-eigenen-leben-er>

torship<sup>4</sup> and authors write or talk about their mentors and editors.<sup>5</sup> In 2016 the relationship between the American writer Thomas Wolfe and his editor Maxwell Perkins even became the stuff of a Hollywood blockbuster.<sup>6</sup>

With the increasing professionalization of writing, the collaboration in the form of mentorships is becoming an integral component of creative writing courses and education programmes for emerging authors. In the Anglo-American world, there is a longer tradition of mentoring programmes at universities.<sup>7</sup> The traditional approach to teaching in Anglo-American creative writing programmes, however, is the workshop,<sup>8</sup> in which students discuss their manu-

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kennen-a-295240, <http://www.fr.de/kultur/buchmesse-frankfurt/unter-dreissig/junge-lektoren-2016-florian-kessler-lektor-zu-sein-ist-eine-utopie-a-295290>.

**4** | In 2016, the »Festival du livre suisse« (Swiss book festival) had a thematic focus on literary mentorship including presentations and round tables on the subject (see <https://www.actualitte.com/article/monde-edition/le-mentorat-litteraire-au-festival-du-livre-suisse-de-sion/66992>).

**5** | Cf. e.g. the current series in the newspaper *Le Temps* entitled „Les écrivains et leurs mentors“ or the hommage by Jean Echenoz to his publisher and editor Jérôme Lindon first published in 2001 (Echenoz, Jean: Jérôme Lindon, Paris: Minuit 2013).

**6** | Although the title *Genius* suggests a rather stereotypical idea of authorship, the film contrasts this by centring on the intensive collaboration between author and editor, thus demonstrating the influence of editor Maxwell Perkins, who also worked with Ernest Hemingway and Scott Fitzgerald, on the published form of many literary texts. The film is based on a biography on Perkins' life by Andrew Scott Berg (see Berg, Andrew Scott: *Max Perkins. Editor of Genius*, New York: Dutton 1978). The films *Wonder Boys* (2000) and *Mentor* (2006) focus on the complex relationships between creative writing professors and their students. *Wonder Boys* is a cinematic adaptation of the 1995 novel by Michael Chabon. The film is constructed to end with the protagonist at a typewriter, writing down the events we have just witnessed and thus making the process of creating his second novel into the novel itself.

**7** | Cf. e.g. Eble, Michelle/Lewis Gallet, Lynée (ed.): *Stories of Mentoring. Theory and Praxis*, West Lafayette: Parlor Press 2008.

**8** | Cf. on the history and significance of the writing workshop in the Anglo-American sphere: Myers, David G.: *The Elephants Teach. Creative Writing since 1880*, New Jersey: Prentice Hall 1996; Donnelly, Dianne (ed.): *Does the Writing Workshop still work?* Bristol: Multilingual Matters 2010; McGurl, Mark: *The Program Era. Postwar Fiction and the rise of Creative Writing*, Cambridge/London: Harvard University Press 2009; Cowan, Andrew: »Whither The Workshop? Andrew Cowan, Sam Kelly and Richard Beard discuss the strengths and shortcomings of the Creative Writing workshop«, in: *Writing in Education* (2012), <https://www.nawe.co.uk/DB/current-wie-edition/articles/whither-the-workshop.html>, or Cowan, Andrew: »A live event, a life event: The workshop that works«, in: *TEXT: Journal of Writing and Writing Courses* (2012), <http://www.textjournal.com>.

scripts with their peers and a lecturer. This form of teaching has been adopted by the much younger German-language writing schools at the University of Leipzig, the Berlin University of the Arts, the University of Hildesheim, the University of Applied Arts in Vienna, the University of the Arts in Bern as well as most recently the Academy of Media Arts in Cologne. In addition, however, the 1:1 support system of mentoring is also increasingly adopted, although only the Swiss Literature Institute in Biel has integrated it for the whole duration of the course. Over the last 15 years, various institutions in Switzerland have developed literary promotion and education programmes that place inexperienced authors alongside established authors to discuss their texts.<sup>9</sup> There is no formal education programme for mentors, but by now some of the former students are themselves teaching on writing courses.<sup>10</sup> The potential need for higher education programmes or even a separate degree for editors is currently being considered in Germany.<sup>11</sup>

These ideas, which have become established in literary practice and are therefore increasingly recognized by a broader public, are also slowly entering discussions in literary theory and cultural studies. Most studies in these fields approach the relationship between authors and mentors or editors from

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au/april12/cowan.htm. On the writing workshop in German-speaking countries see also Klupp, Thomas: »Den eigenen Text als fremden lesen. Zur Autoren-Ausbildung am Hildesheimer Institut für Literarisches Schreiben und Literaturwissenschaft«, in: Mitteilungen des Deutschen Germanistenverbandes, Professionelles Erzählen 3 (2016), pp. 255-262, or Haslinger, Josef/Treichel, Hans-Ulrich (ed.): *Wie werde ich ein verdammt guter Schriftsteller? Berichte aus der Werkstatt*, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp 2005.

**9** | In Switzerland, for example, the Rolex-sponsored »Mentor & Protégé« programme has existed since 2002 (see <http://www.rolexmentorprotege.com/mentors-proteges/mia-couto-and-julian-fuks>), since 2008 the »literature mentoring« programme of the Canton of Bern and since 2015 the literary mentoring programme »Double« by Migros-Kulturprozent (see <http://www.double-literaturplattform.ch/de/home>). Also in 2015, an online mentoring programme was launched, where authors support the development of literary texts for a fee (see <http://www.literaturmentorat.ch/>).

**10** | Cf. M. McGurl: *Program Era*.

**11** | See the contribution by Klaus Siblewski in this volume.

a biographical<sup>12</sup> or gender theory<sup>13</sup> perspective. Here, too, Anglo-American academia has had a head start with respect to research publications as well as case studies.<sup>14</sup> This research examines the significance of mentors and editors in writers' biographies or studies gender relations in biographical as well as fictional mentoring relationships between mostly older male writers and their younger female disciples. An exception here is the conference »Old Time Accomplices: Mentors & Mentees«, held in Melbourne in the summer of 2016. The approaches presented at this conference were quite diverse, and the exam-

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**12** | Cf. Dowling, David: *Literary Partnership and the Marketplace. Writers and Mentors in Nineteenth-Century America*, Baton Rouge: Louisiana State UP 2012; Minsaas, Kirsti: »Ayn Rand as literary mentor«, in: *The Journal of Ayn Rand Studies* 8 (2006), pp. 105-111, or Gutiérrez Mouat, Ricardo (2006): »The writer as mentor. Vargas Llosa's *Letters to a young novelist*«, in: Miguel Angel Zapata (ed.), *Mario Vargas Llosa and the Persistence of Memory. Celebrating the 40th Anniversary of *La ciudad y los perros* (The time of the Hero) and Other Works*, Lima: Univ. Nac. Mayor de San Marcos, pp. 41-50. For editing, we might mention first and foremost published exchanges of letters between editors and authors (see e.g. the very well-documented letters of Maxwell Perkins: *Wheelock*, John Hall (ed.): *Editor to Author. The Letters of Maxwell E. Perkins*, New York: Scribner 1987; Brucolli, Matthew Joseph (ed.): *The Only Thing That Counts. The Ernest Hemingway-Maxwell Perkins Correspondence, 1925-1947*, Columbia: University of South Carolina Press 1996 and Kuehl, John/Bryer, Jackson (ed.): *Dear Scott, Dear Max. The Fitzgerald-Perkins Correspondence*, London: Cassell 1973), as well as collected volumes or biographical albums honouring editors (see e.g. Habermas, Rebekka/Pehle, Walter H. (Hg): *Der Autor, der nicht schreibt. Versuche über den Büchermacher und das Buch*, Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer 1989, honouring the editor Günther Busch or Fellinger, Raimund/Reiner, Matthias (ed.): *Siegfried Unseld. Sein Leben in Bildern und Texten*, Berlin: Suhrkamp 2014).

**13** | See e.g. Olin-Ammentorp, Julie: »Female models and male mentors in Wharton's early fiction«, in: Irene Goldman-Price/Melissa McFarland (ed.), *American Literary Mentors*, Gainesville: UP of Florida 1999, pp. 84-96; Menon, Patricia: *Austen, Eliot, Charlotte Brontë and the Mentor-Lover*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan 2003; Simmons, Thomas: *Erotic Reckonings. Mastery and Apprenticeship in the Work of Poets and Lovers*, Urbana: Univ. of Illinois Press 1994; Simon, Tina: »in Gefahr gewesen ... und bis ans Ende gegangen«. *Rilke als Mentor junger Künstlerinnen*, Frankfurt a.M.: Insel 2007 or Froehlich, Maggie Gordon: »Gatsby's mentors: Queer relations between love and money in *The Great Gatsby*«, in: *Journal of Men's Studies: A Scholarly Journal about Men and Masculinities* 19 (2011), pp. 209-226.

**14** | See footnotes 12 and 13, in particular I. Goldman-Price/M. McFarland: *American Literary Mentors*, D. Dowling: *Literary Partnership or Skinner, Jeffrey/Lee, Martin (ed.): Passing the word. Writers and Their Mentors*, Louisville: Sarabande 2001.

plexes came predominantly from French, Spanish and Italian literature.<sup>15</sup> Regarding editing, there also exist a range of studies about the history of publishing houses<sup>16</sup> or the profession of the editor.<sup>17</sup> This area of research is closely related to studies in the sociology of literature that connect practices of publishing to an analysis of literary institutions as well as questions surrounding the staging of authorship.<sup>18</sup>

A notable aspect of the existing research on mentoring and editing is above all the lack of contemporary examples. Almost all the titles known to us are concerned with fictional or historical mentoring and editing partnerships. This almost certainly has to do with attempted distancing and objectivity on the part of researchers, but also with the fact that the work in a mentoring or editing relationship relies on mutual trust. The safe space in which it unfolds is rarely opened before the work is considered complete; if it is commented on at all then only retrospectively by the participants themselves. This resonates with a dictum by Roland Barthes, proclaimed in his lecture on the preparation of a novel in 1978-1980: »writing requires secrecy«<sup>19</sup>. Whether out of shame, a strongly developed sense of responsibility or simply fearing the loss of an energy (Barthes speaks of a sense of »aliveness«<sup>20</sup>) which can develop exclusively between an author and his text – for Barthes, the work in progress belongs to the realm of the secret and the »Unnamable«<sup>21</sup>.

Although, or precisely because, the creation of a literary text is a difficult process to access, this very process is of increasingly central interest to literary theory. This is suggested for example by studies of the »writing scene«<sup>22</sup> since

**15** | See <https://events.unimelb.edu.au/events/6869-old-time-accomplices-mentors-and-mentees-conference>

**16** | Cf. Bessard-Banquy, Olivier: Gallimard 1911-2011. Un siècle d'édition, Paris: Gallimard-BNF 2011.

**17** | Cf. U. Schneider: *Unsichtbare Zweite*.

**18** | Cf. e.g. Heinich, Nathalie: *Etre écrivain. Crédit et identité*, Paris: La Découverte 2000, p. 125ff., or Meizoz, Jérôme: *La fabrique des singularités. Postures littéraires II*, Genf: Slatkine Érudition 2011.

**19** | Barthes, Roland: *The Preparation of the Novel*. Lecture courses and seminars at the Collège de France (1978-1979 and 1979-1980), trans. by Kate Briggs. New York et al.: Columbia, 2011, p. 11.

**20** | Ibid., p. 244.

**21** | Ibid.

**22** | The »writing scene« – German: »Schreibszene« – is a term introduced by Rüdiger Campe. In a research project directed by Martin Stingelin on the genealogy of writing, it was developed into a concept to analyse literary writing processes by taking account of the language, the tools and the physical, respectively gestural, aspects of writing (Campe, Rüdiger: »Die Schreibszene, Schreiben«, in: Sandro Zanetti (ed.), *Schreiben als Kul-*

the early 2000s, the concern with »constraints«<sup>23</sup> or the increasing attention to poetry readings.<sup>24</sup> It is possible that the taboo of literary, and especially collaborative literary working processes implicit in the genius aesthetic is part of the reason for the renewed attraction to analysing them.

A second distinctive feature of the engagement with mentoring and editing in literary theory and cultural studies has to do with the fact that they are rarely discussed as specific moments of literary writing processes. The emphasis is on the actors, their characters, skills and biographies.<sup>25</sup> In the words of Claudia Dürr and Tasos Zembylas, mentoring and editing conversations belong to the »phase of opening up«<sup>26</sup> of authors who are in the middle of writing processes. This refers to times during which the writer searches for inspiration, distraction, or exchange. Such »phases of opening up« alternate with »phases of shutting in«<sup>27</sup>, when the writer withdraws and wishes to write alone as much as possible. The relationship between these phases and how they are valued depends on the authors, their writing practices and processes. The decision to give the

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turtechnik. Grundlagentexte, Frankfurt a.M.: Suhrkamp 2012, pp. 269-283; Giuriato, Davide/Stingelin, Martin/Zanetti, Sandro (ed.): »System ohne General«. Schreibszenen im digitalen Zeitalter, München: Fink 2006; Giuriato, Davide/Stingelin, Martin/Zanetti, Sandro (ed.): »Schreiben heißt: sich selber lesen«. Schreibszenen als Selbstlektüren, München: Fink 2008; Stingelin, Martin (ed.): »Mir ekelt vor diesem tintenklecksenden Säkulum«. Schreibszenen im Zeitalter der Manuskripte, München: Fink 2004; Giuriato, Davide/Stingelin, Martin/Zanetti, Sandro (ed.): »Schreibkugel ist ein Ding gleich mir: von Eisen«. Schreibszenen im Zeitalter der Typoskripte, München: Fink 2005; Fries, Thomas/ Hughes, Peter/Wälchli, Tan (ed.): Schreibprozesse, München: Fink 2008).

**23** | »Contrainte«, in English »constraint«, is a term introduced by the French writers' group Oulipo to describe self-imposed rules according to which an author writes. It is part of a systemic refusal of the idea of writing guided by inspiration (see e.g. Reggiani, Christelle: *Rhétorique de la contrainte. Georges Perec – L'Oulipo*, Paris: Eurédition 2013; Reggiani, Christelle: *Poétiques oulipiennes: la contrainte, le style, l'histoire*, Genève: Droz 2014 or Arts, Clemens O.P.: *Oulipo et Tel Quel. Jeux formels et contraintes génératrices*, Ridderkerk: Offsetdrukkerij Ridderprint 1999).

**24** | See e.g. Dürr, Claudia: »Das Experiment von Frankfurt heute. Zur Kritik von Poetikvorlesungen im Feuilleton«, in: [www.literaturkritik.at](http://www.literaturkritik.at/2017/) 2017, <https://www.uibk.ac.at/literaturkritik/zeitschrift/das-experiment-von-frankfurt-heute.html>

**25** | Cf. footnote 12/13.

**26** | See Dürr, Claudia/Zembylas, Tasos: *Wissen, Können und literarisches Schreiben. Eine Epistemologie der künstlerischen Praxis*, Wien: Passagen 2009, p. 95ff. See also the ideas on a relationship between »Vacuols« and »Dispositifs« in the contribution by Lionel Ruffel in this volume.

**27** | Ibid.

unfinished manuscript to an editor or mentor can therefore be perceived both as a liberation<sup>28</sup> and a loss.<sup>29</sup>

Beyond this, verbal mentoring and editing conversations are very difficult to comprehend and reconstruct as part of the »literary making of«,<sup>30</sup> because they only leave indirect traces in the text. As process-oriented reflections, they enter the writing consciously or unconsciously. An author can work suggestions or ideas uttered in conversations directly into the text. But he can also take them on indirectly, by internalizing a particular, experienced perspective on his work, a repeatedly applied mode of revision. This is vividly described by Wolfgang Herrndorf, who comments on his working relationship with a colleague and his editor: »I have been writing for ten years with Passig-scissors stuck in the head, and for some time now the Marcus-Gärtner-shovel has also been ploughing my sentences; if I practise a few more years, both of them will be out of a job.«<sup>31</sup> This ironic yet triumphalist comment by Herrndorf refers to a process that was not always as efficient as it seems here. The Passig-scissors, in particular, caused the author many sleepless nights and recall a different example of a writer-editor relationship from literary history. Raymond Carver was endlessly thankful to his editor Gordon Lish for the revision and subsequent publication of his texts. But the interventions were so considerable – Lish sometimes shortened Carver's short stories by up to 70 per cent – that they shaped the style for which Carver became famous more than the author felt comfortable with. Instead of being able to internalize the changes and make them productive, Carver felt a pressure so intense that he described it as threat to his »mental health«.<sup>32</sup> In a 1980 letter, the author begs the editor to stop his revisions, for fear that he may otherwise never be able to write again.<sup>33</sup>

**28** | Cf. e.g. Farah, Alain: »L'écrivain qui cache la forêt. Quinze ans d'écriture avec Le Quartanier«, in: *A Contrario. Revue interdisciplinaire de sciences sociales* 27 (2018), pp. 67-79.

**29** | Cf. R. Barthes: *Preparation of the Novel*, p. 244. See also: Genoux, Claire: »Écrire librement. Accompagnement et exigence – un aller-retour de l'autre à soi?«, in: *A Contrario. Revue interdisciplinaire de sciences sociales* 27 (2018), pp. 45-55.

**30** | See Claudia Dürr's entry on »Forschung zum literarischen Making-of« in the »Making-of-Lexikon« (the encyclopaedia of making-ofs) initiated by Jens Roselt and Stephan Porombka (<http://making-of-lexikon.de/#text=forschung-zum-literarischen-making-of>). See also Childress, Clayton: *Under the Cover. The Creation, Production, and Reception of a Novel*, Princeton: Princeton University Press 2017.

**31** | Herrndorf, Wolfgang: *Arbeit und Struktur*, Reinbek: Rowohlt 2013, p. 228.

**32** | Carver, Raymond: *Beginners. Uncut. Die Originalfassung*, Frankfurt a.M.: Fischer 2014, p. 350.

**33** | *Ibid.*, p. 351.

The present anthology reacts to this landscape of existing research on mentoring and editing by explicitly referencing contemporary practices. It brings together various actors of the current literary scene to think about what authors do with their mentors and editors and vice versa; how they negotiate the writing process and balance the possibilities and limits of the »nameable« in the genesis of their texts. The contributions provoke an engagement with collaborative moments in literary working processes from the perspective of production aesthetics, referring to the insights and concepts articulated in the existing research on writing as a cultural technology (*Kulturtechnik*).<sup>34</sup> Among these are the »writing scene«, »self-reading«,<sup>35</sup> as well as the idea of a »feedback loop«<sup>36</sup> between critical reflection and the work of articulation. Furthermore, the present volume turns toward a meaning-focused perspective, as well as the interdependent effects of conversations in literary writing processes from various points of view. This suggests a conception of »dialogical writing«, of *Writing in Dialogue*, which does not refer to the style or the plot of the text<sup>37</sup> but to a working method that regards conversation as a significant part of literary practice.<sup>38</sup> Conversations within working processes become moments of resonance that enable writers and editors to regulate, differentiate, and improve their own activities.

Such an understanding of dialogical writing processes leads to a perception of mentoring and editing that emphasizes their communalities more than their differences. Mentoring and editing are connected to different institutions with pedagogic and economic aims respectively. In short: universities aim to »make« or, to educate authors, while publishing houses make and sell books. Nevertheless, the working processes of editing and mentoring, the distribution of roles and responsibilities, as well as the ideas about what these can achieve have much in common. Comparing the interviews printed here with the mentor and author Ruth Schweikert and the editor, publisher, and author Jo Lendle, there are many correspondences. Ruth Schweikert suggests that a mentorship cannot replace the »fundamental solitude in the face of the text«<sup>39</sup> and for Jo Lendle it is clear that »in writing one is always fundamentally on the

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**34** | Cf. S. Zanetti: Schreiben als Kulturtechnik.

**35** | Cf. D. Giuriato/M. Stingelin/S. Zanetti: Selbstlektüren.

**36** | Cf. Bereiter, Carl: »Entwicklung im Schreiben, Schreiben als kognitiver Prozess«, in: S. Zanetti: Schreiben als Kulturtechnik, here p. 410.

**37** | See e.g. Stierle, Karlheinz: »Gespräch und Diskurs – Ein Versuch im Blick auf Montaigne, Descartes und Pascal«, in: Karlheinz Stierle/Rainer Warning (ed.), *Das Gespräch*, München: Fink 1984, pp. 297–335, here p. 315.

**38** | Cf. also Kessler, Florian: *Werkstattgespräche. Funktionen und Potentiale einer Form literarischer Praxis*, Salzhemmendorf: blumenkamp 2012.

**39** | See the interview with Ruth Schweikert in this volume.

inside«.<sup>40</sup> The conversations in mentoring and editing, then, are the moments that contribute a view from the outside. This gaze confronts the writer with a heightened sense of possibility, as Ruth Schweikert emphasizes, respectively an »other knowing«,<sup>41</sup> as Jo Lendle puts it. How writers deal with this is finally their own responsibility – again, both agree on this – except that mentoring also aims to teach ways of taking such responsibility, while an editing process expects writers to have this ability already. Beyond this, it is clear to the mentor as well as the editor that the processes of rewriting and exchange, in which they are both involved, are not subject to rigid procedures but that they must continuously be readjusted and renegotiated with the authors and their texts.

As the essay by Katrin Zimmermann in this volume discusses in more detail, such a proximity of mentoring and editing can lead to a shift in expectations on the part of authors.<sup>42</sup> There seems to be an increased expectation among young writers that an editor will support and reflect their writing process from the first draft to the final version, as a mentor would. On the other hand, mentors more frequently complain that students expect them to provide the function of an editor, approaching them with texts they consider complete and wish only to be polished to a final, publishable form.

The contributions in this volume begin with a counter-example to this tendency. When he began his studies at the Swiss Literature Institute in Biel, Matthias Nawrat had already written a few texts and beginnings of novels, but a mentorship with Silvio Huonder led him to take on a new approach. His report »Der kritische Abenteurer« [The critical adventurer] recalls his experience of three years of mentoring and its influence on his writing. He reflects on the learning process he went through during this time, describing it as an adventurous journey suspended between two poles. Today, Matthias Nawrat considers the seemingly irreconcilable opposition between blind exploration of an unknown territory and its purposeful surveying a condition to tap into the full potential of his writing.

The subsequent essay, »Disclosure and the ethics of dialogue in Prose Fiction Workshop« by Jean McNeil is concerned with the practices of critique in creative writing workshops at the University of East Anglia. The self-reflective critique of one's own writing, developed in working conversations, also de-

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**40** | See the interview with Jo Lendle in this volume.

**41** | Ibid.

**42** | In a sense, this contrasts with the thesis that there is a tendency in contemporary editing to see the editor as a »product manager«, as discussed in the following article: Beilein, Matthias: »Verlagslektoren als Instanzen der Literaturvermittlung in der Gegenwart«, in: Corina Caduff/Ulrike Vedder (ed.), *Gegenwart schreiben. Zur deutschsprachigen Literatur 2000-2015*, Paderborn: Fink 2017, pp. 233-241.

scribed by Matthias Nawrat in the preceding text, acquires a cultural dimension. McNeil describes the moment of opening up that occurs when texts are discussed in workshops as a trial of public negotiation processes. In discussions with their peers, emerging writers can rehearse the impact of their previously sheltered texts and experience discussions about freedom of expression and cultural appropriation. They thus prepare for the transition from the private writing space to the public sphere of publication, which the author conceives as a moment of »disclosure«.

Claudia Dürr's essay »Wittgensteins Wink und Haslingers Hund. Unsagbares im Sprechen über Literatur, während sie entsteht« [Wittgenstein's hint & Haslinger's dog. The unspeakable in speaking about literature in the process of writing] also examines the potential of conversations in literary writing processes, while also noting its limits. She distinguishes forms of knowledge that are activated in the process of writing from those that exist independently of the act of writing itself. In the light of these epistemological premises, conversations about the texts in progress may access a scope for action that the author may sometimes use more, sometimes less. They can reflect aspects that elude analysis during the process. Dürr then goes on to describe how such »phases of opening up« alternate with »phases of shutting in« within a process of literary production, and how the productive use of these phases often goes hand in hand with an increasing professionalization and stronger integration in the »community of practice« of writers.

The article »Perlen aufziehen oder Pilze suchen« [Stringing pearls or searching for mushrooms] by Marie Caffari and Johanne Mohs deals with mentored writing processes in creative writing courses in Biel, Paris and Norwich. The two authors first discuss the conversation mode of mentoring and compare it to other forms of dialogue in the writing processes. In their evaluation of a corpus of mentoring conversations, they emphasize two moments that reoccur as leitmotifs in the recordings: the moment of writing material that can be developed into a narrative, and the moment of rewriting this material. The metaphors, critical strategies and implicit values through which these leitmotifs are communicated create the impression, as the authors argue, that mentoring promotes an idea of writing that relies primarily on rewriting.

The article »Well done overall: the disciplinary framework of modes and metaphors in creative writing feedback« by Giles Foden takes a practitioner's perspective on how mentors give feedback on their students' texts. Following a short introduction to a theory that builds on the metaphorics of feedback, Foden analyzes the metaphors he uses himself to comment on his students' manuscripts. He concentrates on the traditional structures of texts, the »elements of fiction« according to which student texts are often evaluated and discussed in Britain.

The interview with Ruth Schweikert centres on her ten years of experience as a mentor at the Swiss Literature Institute. She focuses less on teaching specific »elements of fiction« than on the question of showing young authors how to take responsibility for their texts. She also emphasizes the importance of the type of relationship that students look for with a mentor. The author talks about »people's forms of presence beyond the work«<sup>43</sup>, which impact the writing in different ways.

A relationship is also the starting point for the next article by Clara Gudehus. She examines the unpublished exchange of letters between the siblings Otto and Silja Walter, during which the sibling relationship gradually shifts to a mentoring one. Otto F. Walter was an editor and writer, while his sister was a poet and a nun. They both wrote childhood memoirs, published as *Zeit des Fasans* (Otto F. Walter, 1988) and *Der Wolkenbaum* (Silja Walter, 1991) respectively. In her analysis of the writing process of these two texts, Clara Gudehus shows how the epistolary exchange between the siblings may be read as a conversation with both editing and mentoring aspects, continuing into the texts themselves.

Jo Lendle emphasizes in his interview that editing is a relationship of trust that does not necessarily rely on the personal backgrounds of author and editor. Rather, it develops from a continuous closeness during a shared working process. Lendle's answers show to what extent this is fuelled by a shared enthusiasm for the text, while also requiring explicit prior agreements.

In her essay »Von Kraken und Lentoren« [Of octopuses and menditors], Katrin Zimmermann focuses in more detail on the work of the editor. She notes an increased desire for coaching on the part of young authors, as a result of the professionalization of the literary world. Editors, she observes, retain an unshakeable idealism despite their complaints about the growing administrative and organisational challenges. Based on her interviews with editors and authors, she describes some of the key tasks and responsibilities of the editor with reference to specific examples.

Katrin Zimmermann's article is followed by the manuscript of a lecture by Petra Gropp, held in 2015 at the 10<sup>th</sup> editors' conference at the University of Hildesheim. She focuses on the work of the editor from the perspective of a practitioner, by formulating ten theses on the technique of the editor, with a nod to Walter Benjamin. As the reference to Benjamin's theses on writing shows, her reflections can be considered an approach to writing and editing as anachronistic activities.

The contribution by Klaus Siblewski is the manuscript of a lecture held in 2015 at the same conference as Petra Gropp's. His lecture argues for the introduction of an editing degree that teaches not only the basic tasks of an editor

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**43** | See the interview with Ruth Schweikert in this volume.

but also explores editing as an integral part of the creation of literary texts. He poses the question of whether the activities of an editor can be taught and learned, a discussion reminiscent of the arguments surrounding the introduction of literary writing courses two decades ago.<sup>44</sup> On the one hand Siblewski provides an insight into the workshop of the editor, on the other hand he problematizes the social and aesthetic valuation of editing practices.

The subsequent article by Jerome Fletcher explores digital literature and its publishing strategies. As Fletcher shows using a series of examples, the question of dialogical writing processes obtains a completely different dimension here: writing, editing, and even coding are discussed as interactive practices that may sometimes occur in parallel with their publication online.

The collection concludes with Lionel Ruffel's essay »Publizieren im Zwiegespräch« [Publishing in dialogue], which places questions of mentoring and editing practices in a wider historical and theoretical context. He sketches a concept of literature that arises from the moment of publication and diverges from the notion of writing as a soliloquy. Ruffel describes the emergence and content of university courses in literary writing exemplarily as both symptom and cause of the current transformations in the field.

The contributions gathered in this volume are all inscribed in the transition described by Lionel Ruffel, from writing as soliloquy to writing as dialogue. They comprehend practices of mentoring and editing as a dialogue based on the mutual engagement of two conversation partners, which translates into the writing process in different ways. As moments of »preliminary publishing«, these dialogues are described here both by people involved in their own practices of mentoring and editing and by literary scholars concerned with the meanings, functions, and aesthetic of dialogue as a collaborative moment in the creation of literary texts. It is in the nature of the subject that the result comprises texts alternating between oral and written forms and ranging from the academic paper to the essay, interview and lecture to the testimony of experience.

*Translated by Kate Whitebread*

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**44** | Cf. e.g. Jung, Jochen: »Kann tatsächlich jeder schreiben? Ein Symposium über die Lehr- und Lernbarkeit literarischen Schreibens«, in: *FREITAG*, 1.5.1992; Steinert, Hajo: »Bloß das nicht! Bloß kein Diplomschriftsteller!«, in: *BZ*, 16.4.1998; Kaufhold, Oliver: »Der gelernte Schriftsteller bekommt ein Diplom«, in: *Tagesspiegel*, 27.6.1998 or Krechel, Ursula: »In den Kreissälen der Kreativität. Ist Schreiben lernbar, lehrbar, lebbar?«, in: *NZZ*, 4./5.7.1998.

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