

# In the Name of Art

## Literary Mentoring as a Collaborative Process

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Mentors, editors or writing colleagues are involved in processes of literary production, sometimes over long periods of time, without anyone ever really paying attention to them. They seemingly disturb a prevalent image cultivated since the Romantic period: namely that of the author drawing only on the self and its solitude. However, along with an increasing professionalisation of writing, collaboration in the form of mentorships has become an integral component of creative writing courses and higher education programmes for emerging authors. A long tradition of mentoring programmes is also well established in Anglo-American universities.<sup>1</sup> The most common approach to teaching creative writing is, however, the workshop, in which students discuss their manuscripts with their peers and a lecturer. In addition, one-to-one tutorials may be organised by some universities.

The idea of the author as a solitary worker – however central dialogue may be to his or her writing process in practice – is based on the largely accepted notion that writing requires secrecy.<sup>2</sup> Thus, according to Roland Barthes, the literary work in progress belongs to the realm of the secret and the 'unnameable'<sup>3</sup> – whether out of embarrassment, a strong sense of responsibility or the fear of losing the creative energy that exclusively flows between text and author. The very moment of writing, its potential conflicts with the act and mediums of creation, is not disclosed before the work is published or at least completed. This moment, referred to as 'the writing scene' in recent studies<sup>4</sup>, can only be commented on retrospectively, if at all. Usually, authors then focus on their struggles with characters or language and rarely mention the role or potential of their conversations with others about their writing processes or works in progress.

Our research project *Writing as dialogue – literary mentoring and authorship* has observed these moments of disclosure regarding writing processes through conversations, which we have called 'mentoring scenes'<sup>5</sup> – thus echoing the notion of 'writing scenes'. Funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (2014–2018), the study was conducted in creative writing workshops and mentoring situations at three European universities and several German publishing houses. The material we collected consists of recorded conversations between mentors and students as well as interviews with authors and their editors. In the present analysis we shall refer to a few examples selected from twenty-two conversations in total – five in French, nine in English and eight in German – recorded between September 2014 and August 2015 at the Bachelor in literary writing, Swiss Literature Institute, Bern University of the Arts; at the Master of Arts in Creative Writing, University of East Anglia, Norwich; and at the Master en Création littéraire, Université Paris 8. All our examples are

part of individual mentoring situations that accompany the students' development of their final diploma projects. Based on the terminology of the different courses, we use the following terms to refer to the two mentoring partners: on one hand, the 'student', on the other, the 'mentor' or 'supervisor'. During our research, we recorded three to four meetings of each of our seven mentoring duos.<sup>6</sup> We also collected different versions of the students' manuscripts discussed in these conversations.

The three universities we worked with have different terms for their mentoring courses: 'Mentorat' in Bern, 'supervision' in Norwich and 'suivi individuel' in Paris. They also have different ways of integrating these courses into the curricula of the respective MA or BA programs. In Bern, students meet their mentors every two weeks over the course of their three-year bachelor's degree; in Norwich, 'supervision' only takes place in the last three months of the master's degree and in Paris, mentors and students regularly meet during the last year of the master. The notions of 'Mentorat', 'supervision' and 'suivi individuel' all refer to a common understanding of what literary mentoring is or can achieve. Mentoring processes occur when individual supervision takes place over a long period and follows the elaboration of students' projects, which will later be presented as literary BA or MA dissertations. In all of these courses, the pool of mentors is limited and students are not (entirely) free to choose their supervisor. Rather, the latter will sometimes be assigned by the course organisers and may not know the student yet – or only from their common participation in a writing workshop.

In the writing process, literary mentoring is situated between the moments of initiation and publication. The individualised process of literary mentoring integrates a young writer in a 'community of practitioners',<sup>7</sup> in which a more experienced writer accompanies the work of their junior colleague with a critical eye. The literary mentor's attention in itself encourages the less experienced writers to take seriously their desire to write and to affirm their identity as a writer. If the more junior writer has not yet published their writings, the dialogue with a mentor can serve as a space of pre-publication: through mentoring, they become aware of the effect of their writing and of varying perspectives on their text. The mentor participates in both these processes as an external agent with the power to advance or hinder the writing process. He or she is hence involved in the process of literary initiation and publication – 'publication' in the sense of a heterogeneous contemporary literary practice as described by Lionel Ruffel.<sup>8</sup> Yet the mentor is seldom regarded as a collaborator of the prospective author. The analysis of our material, however, has shown that dialogue in literary 'mentoring scenes' tends to be highly collaborative. This manifests itself when the two interlocutors step back from their personal perspectives on the text and think about its needs or inherent rules – when they, as it were, act in the name of art. In what follows we describe three moments of this collaboration: namely, the idea of the agency of the text, the mentors' immersive acting, and the use of the pronoun 'we' in mentoring conversations.

## THE AGENCY OF THE TEXT

The dialogue between mentor and student focuses on the text which the student is writing. Both dialogue partners are concentrating on one and the same object or emerging world of ideas. The context – institutional framework or forthcoming diploma – is thereby rarely mentioned. Mostly, timelines and the external diploma pressure are ignored. One mentor at the Swiss Literature Institute even points out that writing is an emotional process, which cannot

be gone through only in order to be gone through. He argues that writing requires time and that loss of control is important.<sup>9</sup> However, at the Swiss Literature Institute, mentors sometimes remind students of the approaching deadline. One mentor, in particular, repeatedly asks his students to organise and structure the accumulated material.<sup>10</sup>

In the 'mentoring scene', the two interlocutors are thus focusing on the manuscript. The written words guide their conversation. This joint attention corresponds to a definition of dialogue by Karlheinz Stierle. For Stierle the characteristic of dialogue is, first, a continuous and mutual attention of two dialogue partners for each other and, second, a common focus on an object, relation or problem.<sup>11</sup> The joint attention of the two dialogue partners also provides the condition for collaboration in the mentoring scene, namely the idea of the text as a third actor or agent within the mentoring process. The dialogue is in fact based on a triangle between the student, the supervisor and the text, or, as one of the project participants has pointed out: 'In the beginning it was a discussion and then it increasingly turned into something organic; she reads my text and something is coming out of that and that is going back into me and then back into the text again.'<sup>12</sup> The text becomes part of a chain of actions which include writing, reading and discussion – it is formed by the conversations, but also actively forms those in turn. As a 'feedback loop',<sup>13</sup> this chain of action could, theoretically, keep going and produce a never-ending story.

The agency of the text emerges indirectly, for instance when the conversation follows the manuscript page by page. The text is hence not only the object of conversation but also guides its course. And it can have an impact on the tonality of the conversations, for example when humorous texts lead to humorous conversations.<sup>14</sup> There are also examples of the manuscript influencing the way mentor and student refer to themselves or each other. At the Swiss Literature Institute a student was writing his grandmother's life story, but at the time of the recording, his own involvement in the story was not clear yet. This uncertainty manifested in the conversation with the mentor often misspeaking or hesitating over whether to address his student as 'the author', 'the narrator' or a 'character' of the text.<sup>15</sup>

The agency of the text becomes more directly apparent in the common interest of both dialogue partners, when it comes to revealing the potential of the text. In an interview, one of the institute's mentors explains that he always knows quite quickly what the text would 'need'<sup>16</sup> to become more complete. After a first reading he already develops what he calls 'his own vision of the finished work'.<sup>17</sup> But he also mentions his scruples over whether to express this vision for fear of hindering the student from developing their own vision of the text. A mentor from Norwich similarly argues that the supervisor should 'encourage students to explore the possibilities, which can emerge'<sup>18</sup> and that 'a fine-tuned emotional and intellectual judgement'<sup>19</sup> is therefore needed. The exploration of possibilities, in turn, does not happen on behalf of the mentor or the student or any other (abstract) reader, but 'for the benefit of the story'.<sup>20</sup> This, however, does not mean that supervision is a 'conversation on techniques'.<sup>21</sup> The question is rather: 'What is the optimal form of this text? What can the text be? How can the novel achieve its world, its corporality?'<sup>22</sup>

In a conversation between the duo working on the text about the student's grandmother, the mentor argues in a similar way to get his student to delete self-referential passages. At the time of the recording the manuscript also included a meta-story reflecting on the writing process. The mentor justifies his suggestion as follows: 'Not everything that was in the text

served the text, that's just what it is. It is more productive when the writing process is reflected by the text itself instead of being discussed on a meta level.<sup>23</sup> Most of the time, however, conversations in the name of the text are based on elements that have not been written yet. The existing version of the text inspires an exchange about its potential expansion.

## COLLABORATION AS A NARRATIVE IMMERSION

During the different stages of the elaboration of the literary text, from the very start of the process until the revision of an already thought-through and sometimes nearly written up narrative project, we have observed two main forms of collaboration within the dialogical setting of mentoring. The first happens by way of an immersion in the text. Characters, plot, the 'elements of fiction' become the space in which the collaboration between mentor and student takes place. In a 'mentoring scene' recorded at the Swiss Literature Institute, a supervisor encourages a student to focus more clearly on the protagonist of his story. According to the mentor, so far too little attention has been paid to this character, whose traits constitute a mere caricature of what could be a much more complex personality. But the story seems to work quite well and provoked a series of very pleasing laughs from the audience at an end-of-term reading, which in turn strengthened the author's confidence in the comic portrayal of his main character. The supervisor then explains the need to further explore this particular character's potential through the text itself by retelling a scene of the story. In said scene the protagonist is sitting by the fire and reading a dubious legal report, with which he hopes to recuperate most of his mother's inheritance money: 'So in the foreground, him sitting by the fire has to be outlined clearly, maybe by this one phone call. And then: Lean back, nose the whiskey, take a sip, look out the window, look into the fire, look at his own slippers – and then ponder what's just happened.'<sup>24</sup> At this point, the mentor is clearly focusing on the character, positioning himself within the narration, exploring the potential of this particular scene from within the character's situation. His aim here is to encourage the narrator to be closer to the protagonist; according to the supervisor, this is the only way the effect-driven caricature can be overcome.

This collaboration on the development of the text from within the narration also takes place in another conversation, recorded at the University of East Anglia. In this example, student and supervisor agree that the narrative project is going very well. However, the structure of the story has not been fully elaborated yet, and the reader must be brought to understand the inner motivation of the main character better. The supervisor argues from within the protagonist's inner monologue:

*I sat down on the couch and wondered what to do. Maybe I needed to go to the gym, ... maybe I needed to get a really good job, so I had some cash, maybe that would bring her back, but in the bottom of my heart, I knew that, none of these things were really going to work with... what's her name?<sup>25</sup>*

Here, giving feedback implies talking from within the emerging story, collaborating, as it were, with and through the text, as well as with its author. In another conversation of the same duo, both supervisor and student are engaging in the development of narrative elements; in this project, the central plot is centred around a jobless but enterprising man, who intends to participate in feline shows with his cat in order to win back his estranged spouse:

*Supervisor: And what if the love rival is the bodyguard of, like the kind of super successful cat show shower?*

*Student: (laughs) That would be really funny.*

*Supervisor: And that the missing cat is the one that belongs to that super successful figure. The kind of mister big... . That might be one way of integrating them.<sup>26</sup>*

At this point in time, both the supervisor and the author are evoking a story, which – unlike in most supervisions – is not placed in front of them. Indeed they are speaking about a text, which the student has started but has not yet sent to his supervisor. The elaboration of the story, from the characters' point of view, occurs here as a narrative projection in which both can participate. Further along in the conversation, the student adds: 'I think you are right that his romantic rival should have something to do, there must be a meeting that has to happen between them, because that would up the stakes.' Here, the story and what it articulates are being developed via a highly dialogical process. Whether or not the novel pursued these directions, the supervisions sometimes took the form of collaborative story-telling. Although student and supervisor speak as separate entities, at this point they seem to engage in a common prospective enunciation of the text.

#### WE - COLLABORATION AS A COMMON ENUNCIATION

This way of speaking together from a common position, as expressed by the use of the personal pronoun 'we', is another feature of the mentor-student conversations we recorded. While far from being a persistent trait of mentoring dialogues, it nevertheless occurs in key moments.

Towards the end of an hour-long discussion, during which a supervisor and his student addressed a series of problems posed by a novel manuscript, the author jokingly asked: 'Is there anything you liked?'<sup>27</sup> With the sense of humour that characterises this dialogue the student here was clearly expressing uncertainty. His supervisor reacted by reminding him of the very positive overall evaluation he made at the beginning of their meeting ('It's great, coherent, ... the prose is very clean, you know, it works.'<sup>28</sup>) Concluding their supervision meeting, he then added: 'We will crack it!'<sup>29</sup> Although they are not constantly using 'we', the pronoun appears when the supervision is about to close. This 'we' here voices encouragement and the assurance that the supervision will enable student and supervisor to jointly solve the problems identified in the text. The pronoun also indicates that both interlocutors share (some) responsibilities within the dialogical process.

In a conversation we recorded at the Swiss Literature Institute, a mentor also used the pronoun 'we' to encourage his student during the writing process: they were discussing different fragments of a text that still lacked a vision of the whole story. Through the exchange with his mentor the student was becoming aware that, in fact, most of the passages could have functioned as the beginning of the text, that he had many characters and descriptions but still no clear plot. As he was complaining about the story stalling, the mentor said: 'No, sometimes it protects us a little to procrastinate and to say "I have to first do this, and that"

- and then to suddenly jump into the cold water.'<sup>30</sup>

The mentor here uses 'we' in an impersonal way, in the sense of 'we writers' and not in the sense of 'you and me'. In order to encourage his student, he tries to explain the conflict as a typical part of a writing process that the author will surely find a solution to. Unlike the Norwich supervisor, this mentor does not refer to a collaborative perspective, but tries to encourage his student through a more general common experience – the practice of writing.

The previous examples show that collaboration is marked by discreet forms of a common enunciation; the 'we' can also be a point of controversy. Thus, in another recording from the Swiss Literature Institute, the use of 'we' denotes a form of over-identification by the student. The above quoted student who tended to caricature his main character recapitulated the decision to change the name of his protagonist as a collaborative understanding between his mentor and himself: 'You said it would be sort of desirable if we no longer referred to him as uncle. I somehow saw this as process of maturation.'<sup>31</sup> The student's use of 'we' in his wording of the modification reveals his wish for collaboration, whereas the mentor often reproached him for not acting more autonomously.

#### A COLLABORATION WHICH DOES NOT SPEAK ITS NAME

Students and mentors believe in the dialogical process and consider it a potentially very productive interaction during the writing process. Looking back over a three-year mentoring period with author Silvio Huonder at the Swiss Literature Institute, the German author Matthias Nawrat notes how he regarded his mentor as an 'adventurer': 'That is to say, to engage with everything, really everything, the author writes – also with the meandering of which there may be traces, at most, in the finished text, once the writing process has been successfully completed. This is the kind of reader one wishes for: a true adventurer.'<sup>32</sup> He further explains that having a reader at his side enabled him to disconnect his self-critical gaze on the text while writing and thus helped free his imagination. A supervisor at Norwich told us how effective the supervision process can be, when collaboration – a term which he does not use, however – is based on an equal degree of interaction: 'The more interactive the position of the student is, the more productive it is for the production of literary texts.' The adventurers here are both student and supervisor: 'There is risk involved, in writing, as in supervising.'<sup>33</sup> Being an open process, literary mentoring cannot guarantee a specific outcome.

However productive the process may be, neither students nor mentors ever consider it as leading to collaborative authorship. Within the institutional framework, students make the decisions and their work is assessed. Although the student is clearly responsible for the final assessment, supervisors are often personally concerned about final grades or feedback given to MA or BA literary dissertations. Sylvain Pattieu, a supervisor in the MA course at Université Paris 8, comments on how involved he still may feel at the end of the dialogical process, when his students are facing other examiners' comments; in this particular MA course, supervisors are part of the final jury for the MA dissertations and are thus directly confronted with the reception of the literary projects they have accompanied over the course of several months:

*We generally agree [on the evaluation of the dissertation], but last year, a student, whose text I appreciated, was heavily criticised. I felt for her, I had the impression that I had done something wrong.... It is always difficult, at the end, to give grades,*

*which do not necessarily mean much, which just reflect a general opinion regarding the text, a jury consensus, and even some negotiations.*<sup>34</sup>

So even though the authorship of the text remains unquestioned, supervisors are closely involved. However strong that involvement may be, it is obvious that supervisors have to let students create, write and rewrite according to their own agency. Claire Genoux, a mentor at the Swiss Literature Institute, emphasises that ‘the text does not belong to me. If anything I try to suggest ways of working and, mostly through questions, to interrogate the author himself, rather than the text.’<sup>35</sup>

This division of responsibilities seems a topos of all the mentoring duos we have examined. This division is echoed in the statements of two editors whom we interviewed about their collaboration with authors. Jo Lendle, the editor in charge of Germany’s renowned publishing house Hanser Verlag, said: ‘A very simple rule seems important to me: we make suggestions and the author decides. This is the principle, which always applies’,<sup>36</sup> even in cases when the editor may be convinced that his idea would improve the text. Caroline Coutau, the editor in charge of Zoé, a literary publisher based in Geneva, also draws a clear line between the role of the editor and the one of the author: ‘It’s about ... supporting the elaboration of the text, not about participating in it.’<sup>37</sup>

Authorship thus remains a solo performance in the eyes of those who accompany the work of authors, sometimes over years and across several texts. Interestingly, this is being underlined by mentors and editors at a time, when, at least in France, the emergence of literary works is often marked by collective practices. Indeed, if one considers the field of publication at large (and not only its mainstream players), authors are navigating their publishing careers between different poles, ranging from conventional publication to alternative channels, such as performance, collaboration with other artists, self-publishing and collective writing. In our research, most mentors and supervisors belong to a generation in which there is little interaction with unfinished works. The students belong to another generation (often born after 1980) and many of them strongly rely on dialogue when it comes to their writing processes. A graduate of the German Literature Institute in Leipzig told us that she considered her peers as the ‘feedback generation’.<sup>38</sup> Like her writing friends she often seeks the advice and feedback of other writers as well as readers, thus clearly relying on an intense degree of interaction regarding unfinished works.

Traces of such collaborative practices, which mostly consist of conversations about work in progress and of mutual feedback on unfinished manuscripts amongst peers, can sometimes be found in the acknowledgement lists of literary books. Ben Lerner, for instance, precisely lists the (many) people who, in one way or another, contributed to the writing of his novel *10:04*,<sup>39</sup> which itself reflects on the at times highly collaborative practice of writing, submitting and editing a book. In continental Europe, such acknowledgements remain rare, but young authors’ literary practices are certainly more clearly embedded in a chain of feedback, sometimes starting in the framework of a university course and continuing beyond the completion of their BA or MA degrees in creative writing. Authorship, though not an explicitly collaborative notion, is making the heretofore invisible presence of others in the writing process more visible.

- 1 See for instance Michelle Eble and Lynée Lewis Gaille, eds., *Stories of Mentoring: Theory and Praxis* (West Lafayette: Parlor Press, 2008).
- 2 In the words of Claudia Dürr and Tasos Zembylas, mentoring and editing conversations belong to the 'phase of opening up' of authors in the midst 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', when the writer withdraws and wishes to write alone as much as possible (see Tasos Zembylas and Claudia Dürr, *Wissen, Können und literarisches Schreiben: Eine Epistemologie der künstlerischen Praxis* (Vienna: Passagen, 2009), 95).
- 3 Roland Barthes, *The Preparation of the Novel: Lecture courses and seminars at the Collège de France 1978 - 1979 and 1979 - 1980* (New York: Columbia, 2011), 11.
- 4 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 into account the language, the tools and the physical, respectively gestural, aspects of writing. Rüdiger Campe, 'Die Schreibszene, Schreiben,' in *Schreiben als Kulturtechnik. Grundlagentexte*, ed. Sandro Zanetti (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp 2011), 269-283. See also Davide Giuriato, Martin Stingelin and Sandro Zanetti, eds., '*System ohne General*'. *Schreibszenen im digitalen Zeitalter* (Munich: Fink, 2006), Davide Giuriato, Martin Stingelin and Sandro Zanetti, eds., '*Schreiben heißt: sich selber lesen*'. *Schreibszenen als Selbstlektüren*, (Munich: Fink, 2008), Martin Stingelin, ed., *Mir ekelt vor diesem tinten klecksenden Säkulum*. *Schreibszenen im Zeitalter der Manuskripte*, (Munich: Fink, 2004); Davide Giuriato, Martin Stingelin and Sandro Zanetti, eds., 'Schreibkugel ist ein Ding gleich mir: von Eisen'. In *Schreibszenen im Zeitalter der Typoskripte*, (Munich: Fink, 2005).
- 5 Cf. Marie Caffari and Johanne Mohs, 'La scène de mentorat - (Se) raconter la création littéraire en plein travail,' *Nouvelle Revue Synergies Canada* 1 (2017); <https://journal.lib.uoguelph.ca/index.php/nrsc>
- 6 All participants of our research project are anonymised. The relation between male and female participants is balanced: seven women and seven men. Three of the women are mentors and four are students, whereas the male participants provide four mentors and three students.
- 7 Cf. Zembylas and Dürr, *Wissen, Können, literarisches Schreiben*, 14-15.
- 8 See Ruffel, Lionel, 'Publier en dialoguant. Sur les formations en 'création littéraire',' *A Contrario: Écrire en dialoguant* 27 (2018); <https://www.cairn.info/revue-a-contrario-2018-2.htm>
- 9 Cf. 1st series, 4th supervision, 20.4.2015, supervisor.
- 10 Cf. 2nd series, all supervisions, supervisor.
- 11 Stierle, Karlheinz, 'Gespräch und Diskurs - Ein Versuch im Blick auf Montaigne, Descartes und Pascal,' in *Das Gespräch*, ed. Karlheinz Stierle and Rainer Warning (Munich: Fink, 1984), 301.
- 12 Abschlussgespräch mit dem Studenten aus SLI, Serie 1, geführt am 19.6.2015. 'Am Anfang war es eine Diskussion und dann ist es immer mehr zu so etwas Organischem geworden; dass sie meinen Text liest und da kommt was raus und das geht wieder in mich rein und dann geht's wieder in den Text.'
- 13 Carl Bereiter, 'Entwicklung im Schreiben, *Schreiben als kognitiver Prozess*,' in *Schreiben als Kulturtechnik*, 410.
- 14 Cf. UEA, 3rd series, 1st supervision, all supervisions and SLI, 2nd series, all supervisions.
- 15 Cf. SLI, 1st series, 3rd supervision, 16.12.14, supervisor.
- 16 SLI, 2nd series, interview with a supervisor, July 2015.
- 17 Ibid.
- 18 UEA, 2nd series, interview with a supervisor, 7.7. 2015.
- 19 UEA, 2nd series, interview with a supervisor, 7.7. 2015.
- 20 Ibid.
- 21 Ibid.
- 22 Ibid.
- 23 SLI, 1st series, 2nd supervision, 10.10.2014, supervisor. 'Nicht alles, was im Text gewesen ist, dient dem Text, es ist einfach so... Es ist produktiver, wenn sich der Schreibprozess im Text selber wieder spiegelt und nicht auf einer Metaebene.'
- 24 SLI, 2nd series, 4th supervision, 23.4.2015, supervisor. 'Also im Vordergrund muss dieses Sitzen am Kamin die deutliche Kontur haben, vielleicht dieses eine Telefonat. Und dann: Zurücklehnen, am Whiskey schnuppern, ein Schluck nehmen, aus dem Fenster gucken, ins Feuer gucken, seine eigenen Pantoffeln angucken - und dann über das sinnieren, was jetzt passiert ist.'
- 25 UEA, 3rd series, 2nd supervision, 2.6.2015, supervisor.
- 26 UEA, 3rd series, 1st supervision, 13.5.2015, supervisor and student.
- 27 UEA, 1st series, 1st conversation, 13.05.2015, supervisor.
- 28 UEA, 1st series, 1st conversation, 13.5.2015, supervisor.
- 29 UEA, 1st series, 1st conversation, 13.5.2015, supervisor.
- 30 SLI, 3rd series, 2nd supervision, 20.2.2015, supervisor. 'Non, parfois cela nous protège un peu, en se disant, il faut que je fasse ça, puis après... Tout à coup de se jeter à l'eau....'
- 31 SLI 2nd series, 3rd supervision, 14.1.2015. 'Du hast gesagt, es wäre sozusagen erstrebenswert, wenn wir jetzt nicht mehr vom Onkel reden. Ich habe das als Reifungsprozess irgendwie gesehen.'
- 32 Matthias Nawrat, 'Der kritische Abenteurer ein Erfahrungsbericht aus dem Mentorat bei Silvio Huonder,' in *Writing as dialogue. Practices of editors and mentors in contemporary fiction*, ed. Johanne Mohs, Marie Caffari and Katrin Zimmermann (Bielefeld, transcript, 2019), 44. 'Nämlich sich auf alles einzulassen, und auf wirklich alles, was der Autor schreibt auch auf die Irrwege, von denen in einem fertigen Text, nachdem der Schreibprozess erfolgreich zu Ende gelaufen ist, höchstens Spuren zu finden sind. Einen solchen Leser wünscht man sich: einen echten Abenteurer.'
- 33 UEA, 3rd series, interview with the supervisor, 7.7.2015.
- 34 Sylvain Pattieu, 'En lisant, en dialoguant. À propos du cours "suivi de projet" dans le Master de création littéraire de Paris 8,' *A Contrario*: 'On tombe généralement d'accord, mais l'an dernier, une étudiante dont j'aimais le texte a été fortement critiquée. Je me suis senti mal pour elle, j'ai eu l'impression d'avoir eu tort,..... C'est toujours difficile, à la fin, de donner des notes, qui n'ont forcément pas grand sens, reflètent un avis général sur le texte, un consensus de jury, et même quelques négociations.'

- 35 Claire Genoux, 'Écrire librement. Accompagnement et exigence – un aller-retour de l'autre à soi ?', *A Contrario*. '[L]e texte ne m'appartient pas. J'essaie plutôt de proposer des pistes et surtout, par des questions, de sonder l'auteur lui-même plus que le texte.'
- 36 Jo Lendle, 'Non pas savoir mieux, mais savoir autrement. Expériences et pratiques d'un éditeur,' *A Contrario*; '[U]ne règle toute simple me paraît importante: nous faisons des propositions, et c'est l'auteur qui tranche. C'est le principe qui vaut dans tous les cas.'
- 37 Caroline Coutau, 'L'éditeur et son auteur,' *A Contrario*; 'Il s'agit de... soutenir, sans non plus participer au déploiement du texte.'
- 38 Interview with Judith Keller, January 24th 2018.
- 39 Ben Lerner, *10:04* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2014).

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