Jessica Burton

Tintin's Global Journey

Editors as Invisible Actors behind the Comics Industry of the 1960s

The editorial role is a vital contribution to the comics production chain, without which many comics would not exist – editors are the invisible actors who keep the industry moving. They are also complicated in terms of agency – in some ways, they are beholden to the wants of their readers and those of their publishers, but their agency may alternatively become apparent in the final comics product. This chapter has the dual aim of bridging the gap between the worlds of comics production and of comics academia, aiming to open an ongoing conversation into this under-studied aspect of production. Despite the crucial nature of the editorial role, it is often one that goes unnoticed within scholarship. Casey Brienza points out "an especially urgent need" (2010, 105) for comics production research, arguing for a sociological approach to its actors. This call has been met with great progress in recent years, with notable examples considering cross-publisher practices (Lesage 2018) or histories of individual publishers (Moine 2020). For the most part however, literature that examines behind-the-scenes roles tends to focus on artists and writers, usually in the form of general audience biographies (Delisle and Glaude 2019) or, rarer, on working conditions for creators (Kohn 2018). The editors' role in general has been sparingly acknowledged, and when it is referenced, it uses the editor as a publishing figurehead rather than their role (Pessis 2006). One notable exception to the existing scholarship is a proposed publication *The Comics of Karen Berger: Portrait of the Editor as an Artist* (Bieneke n.d./forthcoming) whose call for papers (published in 2019) promises an in-depth look into the specific contributions of one editor as well as into the blurring between editorial and creative role. It is in this vein of research that this chapter aims to encourage wider considerations of comics' most invisible actors: its editors.

The chapter will examine the role by first briefly considering duties of general editors and particular tasks of comics editors, specifically reflecting upon the Franco-Belgian context and on the 1960s as a period of change in terms of the editor's role in comics. Within this timeframe, it will assess the comic magazine as a vessel for editorial voice, or in other words, the relationship between editors and their readers. Arguably, this is where we see the greatest level of editorial agency too. The concept of *editorial voice* underwent an interesting change in this decade, as the roles of creators and editors merged, and editors were credited and became well-known to a wider public for the first time. Some of the most famous cases of

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this occurrence were creators who became Editors-in-Chief of popular comic magazines, including Greg for *Journal de Tintin* [Tintin magazine] in 1965 and René Goscinny and Jean-Michel Charlier for *Pilote* [Pilot] in 1963. The comic magazine thus rendered *some* editors visible, but this was not necessarily the case for most in the profession, particularly not for those working on comics albums.

The present contribution will therefore draw a distinction between the visibility of editors in different comics publishing formats, examining the increasingly visible role through the comic magazine format as well as the almost entirely invisible one in the context of comic albums in the 1960s. In this chapter, these terms are taken to respectively mean youth magazines of around 50 pages featuring a majority of anthology comic strip content with editorial material and games, on the one hand, and the soft or hardcover book of a minimum of 48 pages containing one story or series of stories relating to the same characters, on the other. The study is concerned with the Franco-Belgian comics industry.

A case study of two foreign rights comic album editors, Pierre Servais (head of foreign rights at Casterman) and Per Carlsen (founder of Carlsen Verlag and director of Danish foreign rights agency, Illustrationsforlaget), will then be presented. In examining the corpus of correspondence between the two men in the publisher archives of Casterman, the chapter intends to contribute to a greater understanding of how international publisher ties manifested through different editorial roles. Indeed, Servais and Carlsen played a large role in the international diffusion of the famous *Tintin* series. Available in over 70 languages and countless transmedia products, researchers have focused on the series' global diffusion through questions of translation, its societal issues, and its creator (Cartier et al. 2019). Yet, little has been discussed about the invisible industry actors behind this global phenomenon. It is entirely possible to argue that *Tintin* could not have reached such worldwide visibility without the aforementioned actors, and this chapter thus aims to shed light upon these actors, who, until now, have remained mostly invisible.

The Role of Editors

The role of an editor is a varied one. To begin to understand it, we must first make some clarifications about the term and the facets it can encompass. The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading (CIEP)[1] defines the role as "professional help

1 The CIEP (formerly the SfEP – the Society for Editors and Proofreaders) is a UK-based professional editorial body, which offers training, guidance, and a job board for editors and those wishing to hire an editor.

to make a text ready for publication or use by ensuring that it is clear, consistent, correct and complete" (CIEP 2021, n.pag.). Though this is a contemporary definition, it provides a simple overview that editors give *professional help* – the person behind the role has been professionally trained to do so, but they offer *assistance* rather than taking full creative responsibility. They are therefore the facilitators rather than the makers of a published product, working from behind the scenes in an often invisible capacity. For the Franco-Belgian context, the respective term *éditeur* is broad. It can mean the individual who is doing the job or refer to the publishing house. In some cases, it has been several things all at once, for example Dargaud *Éditeur* which indicated both Georges Dargaud the person in his role as editor-in-chief and as CEO of the publishing company, which *éditeur* also refers to. Questions of crediting are relevant regarding this definition, as albums would be credited simply with the publisher under *éditeur*, while magazines would include the name of the editor-in-chief in this category.

We must then contextualize what it is editors do. This is a difficult task, as duties are too wide-ranging to give a complete description, but professional editing bodies attempt to give insights. One such example is describing how "an editor needs lots of different skills to successfully publish a book [. . .] to be creative [. . .] to be collaborative and strategic [. . .] as well as really good project managers" (Seaman 2018, n.pag.). A consensus through these resources is that an editor's role is many jobs rolled into one. When we consider the field of comics editing, the role becomes even more varied. The comics editor's job is to make a product the best it can be in terms of story, visuals, and final product. They are involved in development, script editing, and facilitating working collaboration of creators. Once final pages are submitted, it is the editor's job to render the pages publishable, which may involve facilitating lettering corrections, art corrections, and proofreading. They can also be involved in the marketing of the book to retailers and are crucial decision makers in choosing which stories get published.[2] We may therefore summarize the editorial role via several key elements: Editors are professionals with many varying duties and responsibilities and are facilitators and mediators who must have a detailed knowledge of creation and the production processes. Without them, comics could not be published.

2 List of duties taken from professional editorial experience of the author.

The Editorial Voice

Though the role may go somewhat unnoticed by the broader public, there can be a strong link between comics editors and their readers. Comics editors have several ways of communicating with their audience. In the first instance, it is the editor's job to commission books that people will *want* to read (and of course to make money through sales). Requiring an extensive knowledge of target audience preferences, the editor in this case acts as the spokesperson for reader desires. The editor also communicates indirectly through marketing copy used to sell the book and directly in the pages of comics, whether through recap pages or the captions placed within or underneath comics panels that can refer to previous issues or give a translation. These all allow the editor to interact with the reader outside of the action of the given story in order to grant supplementary information. The concept of *imagined communities* (Anderson 1983) is a relevant point of reference here, as editors in this case are the invisible glue that unites a fan (imagined) community by mediating the reader experience through a bridging of story world (the fiction) that seeps into the real world (the editorial production behind it).

This distinct editor-reader relationship is particularly evident in comic magazines, rendering the role somewhat more visible than in other formats. Magazines often have some form of "Letters to the Editor" section, where the editorial team engages directly with reader comments or queries. This interactive section has been examined in the American context in the construction of arguably the most well-known editorial persona of Stan Lee, who used the letters to facilitate his own career and build the community of his linked fans, as outlined by Peter Bryan Cullen (2010). Such pages have also been an integral presence in Franco-Belgian comic magazines right through the twentieth century and are examined in detail for *Pilote* by Eliza Bourque Dandridge (2008). A strong fan community was furthermore created through such letters in *Journal de Tintin*, resulting in official fan clubs. Editors reinforced that they were interested in hearing about the club's activities with an extent of editorial control over readers' lives, as they encouraged youngsters to live the morals depicted in the magazine. The bulletin for the *Tintin 2000* club, published in the Belgian edition, is revealing in this regard; the editorial note (signed by Tintin) insists that clubs "faut tenir 'Tintin' au courant de ces activités" [must keep Tintin informed of their activities] (Leblanc 1967b, 27). Inclusive language linking readers into the editorial team such as "nous, nos, notre" [we, us, our] could be found in abundance, while the editorial voice would almost always refer to readers as "chers amis" [dear friends] and make frequent reference to what linked these fans together in a community.

What is interesting to note in *Journal de Tintin*, however, is that the persona of Tintin himself was presented as the editor, somewhat diminishing the public profile of the actual editorial team. Initially in the 1960s, editors of *Journal de Tintin* would take the time to respond to a few letters, publishing the original short paragraph and a brief response in bold text from the editors in the *Entre Nous* [Between us] (Dargaud 1963) section of the reader letters page. The other half of the page was dedicated to notes of readers seeking pen pals additionally placing editors in the facilitator-of-fan-contact role, as they were choosing which letters appeared. The *Entre Nous* section gradually merged into a conversation between the Tintin character and readers over the decade. At first, the page was named *Tintin Courrier* [Tintin letters] (Dargaud 1963), then an image was added of the character, which appeared above the *Entre Nous* title, depicting Tintin at a typewriter while his dog Snowy licks envelopes (Dargaud 1965). In the Belgian edition this was entirely taken over by the character when the section was named *Tu écris . . . Tintin répond* [You write . . . Tintin replies] (Leblanc 1967a). We thus see here that the editorial role was certainly acknowledged and visible through reader letters but became reappropriated to embody the voice of the Tintin character rather than the real editors behind the content. Arguably, in this case, the character of Tintin does not have the agency, it is the editors, but their role is reduced to invisibility.

The Creator-Editor

The comic magazine is nonetheless a crucial component in understanding the visibility of the editorial role. This was particularly true in the 1960s, as creators were given the role of editors, granting the role a certain level of public visibility. Some of the most popular publications in this period were the aforementioned *Journal de Tintin* and *Pilote* (the magazine in which the *Astérix* series found its fame). Both began with more business-like men at the helm of the projects, but both editorial committees decided to promote creators already working for the magazine to editor-in-chief, due to sales decline. It was perhaps felt that people with more of a knowledge of the business of creating comics would have more imagination to create a more exciting product (Dayez 1997).

In the case of *Journal de Tintin*, which had cycled through several editors from its inception in 1946, this man was Greg who took over in 1965. The magazine had previously encountered the "problem" that Hergé was the creative director (and pseudo editorial role) and in the beginning would often not allow strips to appear if he felt that it did not fit with the image of the Tintin character. Until

Greg's arrival, creators were also under ongoing stress from monthly reader surveys, which the editor would use to decide the titles to be dropped from publication. Kohn aptly describes the workplace struggle, with editors considered as the "employers" of creators, and notes

> une forme de pression hiérarchique exercée par l'éditeur ou le rédacteur [. . .] qui possède le pouvoir d'embaucher ou de rejeter [des histoires].
>
> [a form of hierarchical pressure exercised by the editor (. . .) who has the power to discontinue or reject (stories).] (2018, 236)

As the magazine evolved, creators as a whole were afforded more creative freedom thanks to Greg's influence and his cancellation of the survey model. Being first a creator himself, he understood the struggles of his team and used his editorial powers to try and make changes to the magazine model. This is an interesting dichotomy between two forms of creator-editor with Hergé as the unwilling editor who wanted to maintain the interests of his own creation in contrast to Greg as the editor who used his visibility and experience to enact creative change for the anthology magazine.

For *Pilote,* the role of creator-editor was shared by Jean-Michel Charlier and René Goscinny, with Albert Uderzo as Artistic Director from 1963. Like Greg, for these men, the treatment of creators was a key concern. The magazine's foundation came from a dispute of creators who wanted to unionize in 1956 against poor treatment working for *Journal de Tintin* and *Spirou*, hence them striking out on their own to publish *Pilote* in 1959 (Ratier 2013) with the idea to pay higher wages in recognition of time and talent (Michallat 2018, 85). Publisher Dargaud bought out *Pilote* in 1961, and after the purchase the three founding creators signed away their shares in the magazine and their titles were downgraded to a more generic *conseil de redaction* [editorial committee] (Michallat 2018, 82).

The magazine founders Goscinny and Charlier, then key writers and editorial members, were instated to fully-fledged Editors-in-Chief in 1963 after Dargaud wanted to experiment with the magazine to combat falling sales. They were both a huge influence on the magazine and its creators, thereby changing the output product. Just as *Pilote* had wanted to pay its creators more, it also wanted to give them more of a voice within their magazines, a phenomenon related to their past experience:

> They [i.e., Goscinny, Charlier, and Uderzo] insisted on structuring their office as a collective in which the opinions of all members were solicited and considered. Weekly meetings were open to all and attendance was high. (Bourque Dandridge 2008, 25)

The concept of the celebrity is also relevant. Before the 1960s, Hergé was one of a few exceptions to the rule of creators behind comics strips getting little recognition or fame from their work. Indeed, writers did not officially have to be credited on comic strips, as the profession of comics writer was not recognized until this time. Goscinny himself was a key advocate for this change (Lob 1988). *Pilote* played a large role, letting readers get to know the personas of its creators and editors. The arrival of comics series like *Achille Talon* [*Walter Melon*] even satirized editorial policy by depicting parodies of editors like Goscinny within the strips. This strip is applicable to the considerations of the magazine editorial role as it was created by Greg, editor of rival magazine *Journal de Tintin*, and poked fun at his own editor[3] of jokingly named *Polite* magazine in the strip for his constant exclamations of "No, no, no!" (Greg 1963, n.pag.). It is also an indication of a change in reflections, giving readers a new comical look into the editorial work going on behind the scenes. Creators and editors were therefore more publicly visible in the comic magazines themselves but also started appearing on television and radio shows at this time.[4] The 1960s made many *Pilote* creators household names, a legacy that would shape the French comics industry for decades.[5]

The editors named above continued their work creating stories alongside their editorial duties for the magazines and made vast changes in the format and tone of the magazines proving popular with increased sales figures, at least for a few years. While the publishers may have simply wanted someone with intricate knowledge of the creation process to boost sales, their editors became advocates for creators' solidarity and a greater editorial voice. On the surface, this appears to have also meant a greater cooperation between editor and creator within magazine publication teams. Cooperation was also achieved on a cross-publisher scale, aiming at a more widespread distribution for magazines (Burton 2019), which resulted in close editorial collaboration between individuals like Goscinny and Greg. The comic magazine rendered the editor more visible in several ways, including the direct communication with readers through letters, a more public profile in terms of crediting, and appearances by editors in various media forms. The format is uniquely suited to such visibility as it contains features, letters, and competitions, thereby offering a much greater chance for editor-reader engagement. The album however, usually containing only one comic story, did not generally offer this possibility.

3 The satire was made in good humor and fully signed off by Goscinny, who allowed many parodical depictions of himself to appear in the publication.

4 *Le Feu de Camp du Dimanche Matin* is one such show, that gave *Pilote* creators carte-blanche for a radio comedy sketch show on *Europe 1* in 1969.

5 Creators did however stage an editorial coup in 1968 for more creative freedom.

Transnational Publisher Editorial Collaboration

Album editing was therefore a much more invisible field to work in within the comics industry. While it was the job of a comic magazine editor to select strips for each issue or write for features and engage with the reader, the role of an album editor was more akin to book publishing, and they were more involved in the production process.

Through a case study of editors behind the *Tintin* global phenomenon, Pierre Servais and Per Carlsen, we see the process of publishing albums as outlined in correspondence, giving a rare glimpse into the intricacies of comics production as discussed between its invisible actors. The sample of letters between the two men date almost exclusively in the year 1968, thereby at times giving a day-by-day update into production issues.

The two also had somewhat different roles, making for an interesting comparison. They were both editors in name but had differing duties. Pierre Servais is very much the embodiment of an invisible actor – he was the driving force of *Tintin*'s global journey, but there is little mention of him in the historiography of the *Tintin* phenomenon. Per Carlsen's name on the other hand has become much more well known by being attached to the Danish/German publisher he founded, Carlsen Verlag. Arguably though, little is known about the man behind it, or his contribution to the *Tintin* series' global visibility.

Pierre Servais's contributions were recognized by those who worked with him, however. Alain Baran, who acted as personal secretary to Hergé between 1978 and 1983, remarked that Servais was

> [l]'ambassadeur le plus extraordinaire que les albums Tintin a connu à travers le monde parce qu'il s'est voué cause et âme à la diffusion dans toutes les langues possible de l'univers de Tintin, des albums Tintin évidemment.
>
> [t]he most extraordinary ambassador that the *Tintin* albums have ever known around the world, because he dedicated his entire heart and soul to the diffusion of the Tintin universe, of the *Tintin* albums of course, in all possible languages.] (2018, n.pag.)

Baran's reflections are one of the few examples giving specific details about Servais's contributions. In the video, Baran describes how Servais's parents had lamented that the new comics form was no way to make a career, and yet this was exactly how the editor did so, with *Tintin* accounting for the majority of his professional output.

We see the editor as mediator very clearly in the case of Servais, as it was his job to consider the merits of and forward multimedia adaptation requests to Studios Hergé. He was the first point of contact for publishers and media producers and would then do the research on such a project and forward the details for the

attention of the Studios. When Hergé had doubts as to the merits of a translation or adaptation, it was Servais's job to convince him on behalf of the Casterman company (Servais 1960). Servais was arguably one of the founders of the foreign rights industry as we currently know it. Nowadays, there are full companies such as *Mediatoon*[6] which publishers subscribe to in order to let them deal with foreign rights and media adaptation, putting his incredible accomplishments as one man into perspective.

The 1960s were a period of enormous exports for the *Tintin* series and Servais was the uncredited architect behind all of this. His legacy endured, when his successor Étienne Pollet (grandson of Louis Casterman) embarked upon the journey to translate the *Tintin* series into regional dialects and languages throughout the 1970s and 1980s. In terms of production, Servais was also extremely well connected to all aspects of the production line within Casterman[7] and their affiliated international partners. Though Casterman were responsible for the Tintin albums only, he also forwarded requests pertaining to *Journal de Tintin* to Lombard editor Raymond Leblanc. Servais was also responsible for requesting and sending rights payments. His role was therefore essential to almost every aspect of Casterman's *Tintin* album production.

In a similar fashion to Servais, Per Hjald Carlsen strove to make *Tintin* as successful as it could be in the countries for which he held publication rights (Denmark, Sweden, and Germany) from behind the scenes in the late 1960s. Carlsen had first been trained in print production in Germany, Denmark, the United Kingdom, and France and then worked in the family publishing business. Armed with this experience and the knowledge from publishing press translations of comic strips before World War II, he started to publish children's picture books such as *Petzi* [*Barnaby Bear*/*Rasmus Klump* (DK)]. Carlsen extended the Danish publisher into Germany in 1954, and into Sweden in 1967. It was through the *Tintin* series that the publisher started publishing comics in 1967. Despite these achievements, it would seem that Carlsen *chose* to be an invisible actor

> og han træder sjældent offentligt frem, [. . .] han ikke ønsker officielle hverv inden for forlæggernes kreds.
>
> [and he rarely appeared in public, (. . .) he did not want official positions within the circle of publishers.] (Hartmann 2014, n.pag.)

6 A French media distribution company which sells licensing rights to international publishers for comics, derived animations, and media products.

7 Casterman at the time consisted of two separate entities, the publisher and the printworks. Servais was very involved in the technical specifications he discussed with the head of the printers.

Unlike Servais, Carlsen is frequently referenced within the historiography, but usually on the surface level, merely as the founder of Carlsen Verlag. His contributions to the international success of the *Tintin* albums are rarely acknowledged. In this case though, we are presented with another reason for such editor invisibility: Some, like Carlsen it would seem, simply did not wish to be fully credited for the work they do.

The working relationship between Servais and Carlsen was close, even though the *Tintin* albums were seemingly rather unsuccessful in the territories Carlsen published them in (Carlsen 1968a). Correspondence between these two men is significant and offers detailed insights into the editorial work going on behind the scenes, placing the editor role as an integral component in the production chain. They pursued success and cultivated their working relationship despite an initial lack of sales, with much advice from Servais for ideas to generate more public interest in the series (Servais 1968a). The men address each other frankly but politely, giving us an idea of the true market happenings with no redactions. By seeing the problematic elements within the production chain, we are able to arrive at a deeper analysis of how the industry worked than we could if everything had gone smoothly. The day-to-day business is also conveyed, e.g., via conversations on lettering corrections though their printer colleagues (Carlsen and Voss 1968; Servais and Veys 1968). In some letters, Carlsen admits his disappointment at sales of the first years, but expresses hope for the future, particularly as libraries are unexpectedly the biggest buyers in Sweden and consistently put in large orders for books they find to be "of quality" (Carlsen 1968b). The scope of the subjects discussed in the letters clearly demonstrates that the editors needed to be knowledgeable about many things beyond the comics content, with issues as wide-ranging as the value of the Danish krone in relation to the Belgian franc (Servais 1968b). We can also see that Casterman believed the German/Danish/Swedish territory to be important, so much so that they gave preferential concessions, allowing Carlsen double the standard time for rights and printing payment (Servais 1968b).

One specific production element that appears in the correspondence concerns a set of defective Swedish copies of *Les Bijoux de la Castafiore* [*The Castafiore Emerald*], which went out to retailers and libraries. They had been printed at Casterman and then sold on by Carlsen in Sweden. Carlsen expresses his dismay that they were getting copies returned on a daily basis and writes multiple letters to try and find a solution between January 1968 and April 1968. Servais acts as a mediator between Carlsen and the Casterman printing department. Eventually it is decided that Carlsen will return the full stock to Tournai for repair, as it was faster than making a new print run of the book (Carlsen 1968c; Servais 1968c). This production mishap had the potential to be disastrous for the Carlsen/Casterman relationship and indeed the future of publishing *Tintin*

in Sweden (particularly as Carlsen points out the recent removal of *Tintin* from a so-called Swedish publishing blacklist and the great shame it would be to lose the progress made). The two parties remained professional and courteous throughout this process, each working to find a solution. The relationship clearly did not suffer too much, as six subsequent *Tintin* titles were published later in the year in all three countries.

The letters also give a valuable insight into the markets of the countries, as well as demand for the books. We see from print orders where the books were most popular, for instance with the number of printed copies for *Les Cigares du Pharaon* [*Cigars of the Pharaoh*]: Germany was the largest order (10,000 copies requested), then Denmark (7,000 copies), and then Sweden (5,000 copies) (Servais 1968b). There is confirmation that Germany and Sweden think of the albums as *books* rather than comics, both from the forwarding of positive reviews from the Buying Centre of Swedish Books and the desire from the German arm of Carlsen to receive printed albums in time to exhibit them at the Frankfurt Book Fair.[8]

These letters are a precious detail in showing the importance of editors and the sheer scope of elements that they had to oversee. Such correspondence is unfortunately a rarity in publisher archives, given the fact that many of these conversations were seen as unimportant. We cannot discount the significance of such partnerships in building an international industry of the 1960s, however. As demonstrated here, through collaboration of individuals like Servais and Carlsen, a path was laid out for a more concrete type of working relationship between editors within the industry. In some ways, this was also a recognition of the power of editors both as an influence on how the industry worked and on what was published. Nonetheless, the role of an album editor was certainly an invisible one, as shown by the lack of acknowledgement of these two men in the multitude of writings on the *Tintin* series.

Conclusion

This chapter has examined the editorial role and its considerable contribution to the comics industry. The role is a vital but invisible part of keeping books progressing into publication. The duties of an editor are wide-ranging, with a different set of duties for each individual, each project. The variety makes the role somewhat difficult to quantify, however, and even professional editorial bodies struggle to define everything an editor might do. Nonetheless, we have

8 One of the most famous book publisher events to this day.

seen that this is a unique and varied profession, one which becomes even more specialized within the role of comics editor due to the added artistic elements and higher number of creators to liaise with. This may go some of the way towards explaining the lack of scholarship surrounding the comics editor; as each responsibility is different for each individual, as well as different for every single comic published, the scope of these invisible actions can be simply too broad to allow for a detailed analysis. This is also explained in part by Brienza (2010), who notes a need for personal-level engagement with creators willing to be interviewed. This chapter thus also aims to respond to Brienza's (2010) calls for more research into comics production, via the only personal traces left of these editors: their correspondence. With comics scholarship increasingly concerned with the production chain of the industry and even taking steps towards examining editors with reflection such as the aforementioned (Bieneke n.d./forthcoming), it is hoped that these actors will become more visible. There are many more avenues to explore in future research, however, including questions of the briefly mentioned hierarchy and how this is affected by gender and class, as well as family connections in the publishing industry. The examples of editors used in this chapter are all white men of middle to higher-class, quite typical for the profession of editor in general, and does not give an insight into the often even more invisible work of female collaborators, particularly in the 1960s, which of course merits further research.

The editor can have great influence on comics content, as we have seen in the case of comic magazine editors-in-chief as well as in that of the *Tintin* albums in the 1960s. A crucial element of this influence comes from the editorial voice, which can in some ways be thought of as the editor's personal stamp on the product, and indeed a demonstration of their agency. For Greg, Goscinny, and Charlier, this stamp came in the form of a new tone for their magazines, granting the rest of the magazine creators more creative freedom, and certainly made the role of the editor more visible. Format can therefore be a consideration at the level of editor visibility, with a clear distinction between magazines and albums. For album editors Servais and Carlsen, meanwhile, their extensive duties did not necessarily lead to greater visibility. Their mission was to publish *Tintin* in as many languages and territories as possible and, arguably, *Tintin* could not have reached fame around the world without such invisible actors. Correspondence between these editors is a rare demonstration of the duties of and relationship between international editors, showing the necessity for a vast knowledge of publishing as well as market trends and a shared responsibility for the production chain across nations. Mutual respect was key, and without such a collaborative relationship, *Tintin* may not have travelled as it has.

This chapter has offered a brief glimpse into the editorial world in the context of France and Belgium in the 1960s. It has shown that we must consider

the role and the power it represents, as well as given examples of some important individuals. It must be taken into account that these individuals are the exception to the rule, and that there are many hundreds, or even thousands, of comics editors through history who have not been so well known because of the role's general invisibility. Just as it could not give a full overview of every comics editor, the chapter has not sought to give a full picture of the many aspects still yet to be studied, but is merely a start of a conversation that is somewhat overdue.

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