

# Bibliodiversity

The monthly newsletter of the Alliance of Independent Publishers  
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## Editorial

*This third edition of Bibliodiversity gives us the opportunity to return to a couple events that marked the life of the Alliance during these past three months – three long months that were rich in activity, which did not give us the time, alas, to write you. Thanks to all for the warm welcome that you give to this informational newsletter, which has become rather indispensable.*

*The Paris Book Fair took much of our time, as you know, since we organized for the first time a collective stand where each invited publisher had the opportunity to sell a selection of their works. A successful event, if we rely on the feedback we've received since. You can find under the "Events" section a brief summary of this occasion, which is of course cursory but gives an idea.*

*For the third year running, the Alliance was represented at the African Fair, which was held at the Geneva Book Fair in the beginning of May. It was there that the idea was born, last year, upon a chance encounter, of a co-publishing project that was realized in March: see the section "New Release" for a presentation of L'Ombre d'Imana ("The Shadow of Imana"), by Véronique Tadjo, a pan-african publication.*

*Finally, we would like to give special attention to the Arabic-speaking network, with a portrait of its coordinator, Nouri Abid. This network was recently re-established in Beirut, and already is teeming with publishing projects.*

Etienne Galliard

## New Release

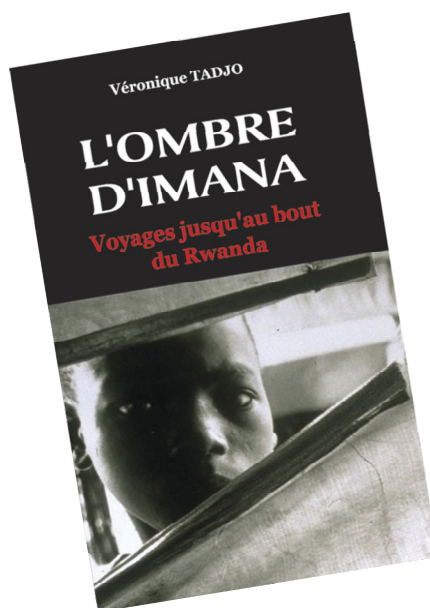
### Eight African countries for *L'Ombre d'Imana* ("The Shadow of Imana")

**Title:** *L'Ombre d'Imana*. ("The Shadow of Africa")

**Author:** Véronique Tadjo.

**Countries where published:** Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Gabon, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia.

**Language:**  
French



The Alliance of Independent Publishers wished to make this exceptional and subtle work on Rwanda available in Africa, written by Véronique Tadjo and originally published in

France by éditions Actes Sud.

Invited in 1998 to a writers' residence in Rwanda, Véronique Tadjo, from the Ivory Coast, discovered the remnants left by genocide. Touched by what she saw and heard, she tried to understand the roots of the barbarity. She decided to write in order to give faces, names, and lives to those that she met, whether victims or torturers. The author took on the challenge of writing on a

painful and complex subject while avoiding manichaeism, by giving a perspective that is both trenchant and modest on one of the greatest dramas experienced by contemporary Africa.

Profoundly poignant, *L'Ombre d'Imana* was published simultaneously, as a co-publication, in 8 African countries, and is sold at a price not to exceed 1,500 CFA francs (that is 3.7 Tunisian dinars and 2.3 euros), in order to make the work as affordable as possible for African readers.

This initiative received enthusiastic support from its author, its French publisher (Actes Sud), its African co-publishers and Radio France Internationale. This co-publication is at the center of several themes: the circulation of works within French-speaking regions, supporting local cultural industries, promoting reading, access to books. This is perhaps the beginning of an effort to reinstitute African literature to Africa that could be reproduced in the context of an ambitious collection?

## Events

### Paris Book Fair

The Alliance of Independent Publishers would like to thank all who contributed to the success of our collective stand at the last Paris Book Fair. To give an idea, with a couple figures, of this exceptional



happening, see the following column ...

- A 45 m<sup>2</sup> stand, equipped with 11 rectangular tables, 12 shelves, and 2 round tables with 6 chairs!
- 1,756 books for sale at the stand;
- Total sales amounting to around 6,000 euros, which went entirely to publishers;
- An average of 56 clients per day;
- A centralized sales register;
- A team of 4 people dedicated to the stand;
- A contribution to fees that amounted to between 200 to 400 euros, based on the financial capabilities of each of those displaying;
- The presence of members of the Alliance in a dozen round tables and debates;
- 5 live broadcastings from the Salon.

Summary of sales for the collective stand of the Alliance at the 2006 Paris Book Fair				
Publisher	Total sales in euros	Initial stock in n° of books	Quantity sold in n° of books	% of initial stock sold
L'Atelier	1,239	257	84	33%
Ecosociété	874.6	142	50	35%
ECLM	692.83	228	48	21%
Ruisseaux d'Afrique	579.4	148	60	41%
En bas	521.5	150	39	26%
Eburnie	443	143	53	37%
AES	388.5	85	26	31%
LIBRE	340.2	-	-	-
Afrilivres	275.5	137	24	18%
Tarik	234	105	18	17%
Silence	236	130	15	12%
Sankofa	184.32	90	20	23%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>6,008.85</b>	<b>1,615</b>	<b>437</b>	<b>27%</b>

Commercial results varied from publisher to publisher (see table above), which can be explained by their different situation. Certain publishers were displaying on two stands (there was also a Moroccan collective

stand for Tarik, for example), others had very few titles presented. A stronger profitability for this type of operation is entirely possible, considering shared fees, which was the case here. As a reminder, transport costs were covered, and publishers participated in costs for renting the space with a contribution of either 200 or 400 euros.

But of course, the Book Fair is not only statistics. The relations forged, the debates covered, the partnerships made, the “media” coverage are also precious indicators of the way in which the Alliance is recognized and welcomed. During the month of March, these types of contacts were particularly numerous and positive.

This was the first time the Alliance held a collective stand, and if we decide to do this again, we would like to further improve our results. We welcome your constructive remarks.

## The Geneva Book Fair, with an African twist

The third annual Geneva Book Fair was held from April 29 to May 1, 2006, where around thirty authors and publishers from French-speaking Africa or the African diaspora met up. The Alliance has been present at this event since its first edition, where the idea of co-publishing *l'Ombre d'Imana* in sub-Saharan Africa, was born in 2005.

This year, we went in order to present, one year later and with book in hand, this successful co-publishing project. In addition, Olivia Chouquet, responsible for the Alliance mission, met many authors and publishers from sub-Saharan Africa in order to finish collecting information for the study, started in December 2005 in Dakar by Karine Lewkowicz, on publishing in African languages, directed by Jean-Claude Naba (éditions Sankofa et Gurli, Burkina Faso).

These debates were organized around the enchanting – and difficult – theme of Knowledge and recognition (*Connaissance et reconnaissance*). Once more, there was much magic: shared moments, unforgettable encounters, emotion and intelligence combined. Bravo to the organizers in general, to Jean Richard and Isabelle Bourgueil in particular, for their welcome and their strong commitment. Another



bravo to institutional and financial partners who had, it seems, the intelligent idea of supporting the African Fair for another cycle of three years.

## Portrait

### The publisher from Sfax



Nouri Abid manages éditions Mohamed Ali, created in 1983 and based in Sfax (Tunisia). One of the first private publishing houses in Tunisia, Med Ali works to get new Arabic-speaking authors recognized in the domains of literary criticism, history, and academic works.

It was our dear and missed Noureddine Ben Khader who recommended Nouri to the Alliance. Now a member as well as

coordinator of the Arabic-speaking network, Nouri quickly revealed to us the professionalism of Arabic-speaking Tunisian publishing.

We would like to particularly thank him, along with Joseph Bou Akl of éditions Dar Al Farabi (Lebanon), for organizing the first meeting of the Arabic-speaking network of the Alliance, which was held in Beirut in November 2005.

Amongst many other commitments, Nouri is also the President of the Union of Tunisian publishers, and has maintained solid relations over the years with the major actors in the Arabic publishing world.

In the following months, Nouri Abid and five other publishers are expected to publish the first Arabic language co-publication within the Alliance...more information will follow, as other publishing projects are also being defined. *Choukran*, dear Nouri, for your presence and commitment to the Alliance and its members.

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The Alliance would like to thank its partner organizations and institutions: see <http://www.alliance-editeurs.org/fr/partenaires.htm>

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