

Bibliodiversity

*The newsletter of the Alliance of Independent Publishers
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Editorial

The news is very digital-oriented this month.

First of all, the debates that came out of the meeting in Guadalajara have been put online: from questions of desktop publishing software, to the growing digitization of our review, we have been exploring digital means to maintain and animate our alliance.

In the meantime (and considering the current state of our progress), we will give a quick summary of what is in tail for 2007, including the meeting of the entire network.

Luckily, everything is not in the process of being “digitalized” into a virtual state at the Alliance. As proof, one can look to the concrete and generous commitments of Ritu Menon – see below under the “Portrait” heading. A big bitter in the Indian publishing industry, she is both a militant and committed intellectual.

Etienne Galliard

New Release

Online: 100 Proposals from the World Social Forum

The texts from the work *100 proposals from the World Social Forum* are now available in English!

After having tried, in vain, to work out an English language co-publication, the Alliance team decided to present the 11 texts from this work online. We know that the World Social Forum is an event that is not particularly followed in all English-speaking markets – this was what the Alliance understood from discussions with Alliance

members in the English-speaking network. It seems however important that this spirit of proposal within the alterglobalization world is more visible for actors involved in civil society in English-speaking areas.

The texts from this work are thus now



available in their entirety, downloadable at the following address:

<http://www.alliance-editeurs.org/wsf/>

We however stayed faithful, as you already know, to our co-publishing principles – and to paper publishing! – for the French, Portuguese, and Spanish versions of 100 Proposals. They are currently in circulation in over 10 countries by publisher members of the Alliance.

Events

Free desktop publishing software?

Most publishers use commercial software for desktop publishing (DTP); the best-

known is of course QuarkXpress, but we have seen in recent years an increased following for its direct competitor, Indesign. Unfortunately, it would seem that these software programs represent a significant cost for many publishers.

Upon demand from members of the Spanish-speaking network, the Alliance began in July a small study comparing the different software programs currently used by publishing professionals with the free software available (particularly Scribus). Thomas Weiss, skilled amateur and appointed developer of the Alliance, will be



working to enlighten us on the possibilities of doing professional desktop publishing with free software. (If you do not already know, you can download Scribus for free from the following site: www.scribus.net)

The results of the study will be available during the month of November. In the meantime, your opinions or remarks are certainly welcomed. We are particularly looking to understand better how these software programs manage importing data from another document (word or openoffice), the integration of footnotes, font, etc... Please contact Thomas if you have comments at the following email address: tweiss@alliance-editeurs.org.

In solidarity

The Alliance would like to express its greatest solidarity, as well as its friendship, to the two Lebanese publishers who are members of our movement: Joseph Bou Akl (farabi@inco.com.lb), at our sides since the beginning of this adventure, manages Dar Al-Farabi, and Nabil Mroueh (arabdiffusion@hotmail.com), of Al-Intishar, joined our effort at the last meeting of the Arab-speaking network. Both live and work in Beirut.

Capitalizing on the ideas and experience of independent publishers

You must remember that the Alliance organized, in partnership with the Latin Union and the CERLALC, a meeting of independent publishers within the Latin world, at the end of 2005 in Guadalajara (Mexico). We are happy to say that we have now put up some pages on our site dedicated to this meeting:

www.alliance-editeurs.org/guadalajara.

At this address, you can find all the contributions of the publishers invited, including their background, analyses, and proposals to promote book diversity: absolutely to be discovered!

There are also all the documents that were used at the meeting (the Declaration, the final minutes, etc.), as well as contributions from the institutions present.

In a group effort, the Latin Union also has made some documents available on their Internet site, which can be downloaded at the following addresses: <http://dcc.unilat.org/DCC/Latinite/Colloques/Bibliodiversidad/indexFr.asp>

We hope, in this way, to distribute twice as many of these important texts.

We have not forgotten a paper publication of these texts – in several languages if possible!

Rendez-vous in less than a year...

The countdown has begun. In less than a year, we will hold our great meeting of all members of the Alliance. Many things are still to be decided. We still do not know where this meeting will take place, for example... Two “candidate cities” seem to have advantages: Paris (France) on the one hand, and Montreal (Canada) on the other. But the final choice depends on several factors (logistical facilities, local partnerships, etc.), as well as the financial means (that we still haven’t completely found). We are working very hard to be able to invite all of you, and to organize this great meeting of book diversity. The program will of course be worked out with you, as we did for Dakar. There will inevitably be plenary meetings, as well as meetings within linguistic networks, and other informal and propitious meetings we hope.

We would also like to work on an adaptation of the Convention on Cultural Diversity in the publishing world. Who is better-placed than independent publishers, those major actors in book diversity? This convention, which was signed at UNESCO last year nearly unanimously (excluding two votes), is in the process of being ratified in several countries despite the opposition and lobbying efforts of certain parties. It is interesting to imagine sectorial adaptations based on this general text: not to create just another text, but to target independent publishing in a more precise way. We will have time, between now and then, to discuss this with you.

Reciprocal links and electronic review

The Alliance of Independent Publishers is proud to present each of its members on its website and also refer its Internet visitors to their proper sites through links (an average of 6,000 monthly visitors since December 2005). The Alliance and each of its members would each gain from the situation if all the Internet sites of its member publishers mentioned their membership in the association, and added a link to our website to their own (www.alliance-editeurs.org).

For three years, a paper version of a review managed by Alexandre Tiphagne has tried to bring together snippets from the press (papers and radio programs, essentially) that



discuss activities of the Alliance of Independent Publishers (co-publications and international meetings, declarations, texts regarding our position or certain causes taken on, etc.). This review has been distributed almost exclusively to our institutional partners, which we have always regretted. It seems important to us that this source of information be shared with members of the Alliance; after all, we are speaking about you.

We are trying to work on this, but have excluded the option of sending a paper version that would be too heavy, too expensive, and not necessary. We have once again come upon a digital solution; we are now gradually putting online an electronic review that will bring together the principal articles concerning our network and the co-publications produced by its members. In order to properly inaugurate this new tool, an exemplary article published by the weekly magazine *Jeune Afrique* (“Young Africa”), from the week of July 16 to 22, 2006, with 80,000 editions printed) is now available online. They speak of us; they speak of you!

Of course, we are trying to make this electronic review as complete as possible. We are thus asking you to send us any documents regarding projects realized in the context of, or with the help of, the Alliance: press articles, radio programs, and perhaps even television.

We thank you in advance!

Portrait

A woman pushing boundaries



Ritu Menon is a militant. In order to better serve her commitments, she is a writer, publisher, and teacher. In 1984, she actively participated in the founding of Kali for Women, the first and oldest Indian publishing house dedicated to the women’s cause. Recently, she created Women Unlimited, a member of our network.

Ritu is today one of the most influential specialists on the question of women in South Asia. She has written many works that now serve as references. We can particularly note, within her vast repertoire: *Making a Difference: Feminist Publishing in the*

South. Ritu is convinced: we must listen to women, give them voice, and work at giving a greater representation of their ways of seeing the world.

Women Unlimited, in partnership with Kali for Women, today offers the best and most complete feminist catalogs in this part of the world. Of course, Women Unlimited maintains direct links to several women’s movements, throughout the world. Always present, Ritu and her publishing house is committed and active at regional, national, and international levels.

Last year, with a dozen other Indian independent publishers, including our dear friend Indu Chandrasekhar of Tulika Books, Ritu put together an association that aims, among other things, to reinforce the distribution and visibility of its members’ publications. The Independent Publishers’ Group is a member, as an association, of the Alliance.

While we recognize, particularly in the Western world, that the gender gap is far from disappearing, that mentalities are difficult to change or evolve, Ritu’s voice and the positions expressed by similar feminist networks must be heard. Without boundaries, of course.

 **Alliance**
of independent publishers
for another globalization

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A **non-profit association**. **Tax situation** inspected by the tax authorities of East Paris (France). **2004 accounts certified** by an independent auditor - Cabinet SOFIDEEC, Paris (France). **2005 accounts** are in the process of certification by an independent auditor - Cabinet SOFIDEEC, Paris (France). The use of data collected by the Alliance **complies with the French data protection act** (declared to the French data protection authority, the Commission nationale de l'informatique et des libertés). **Cost accounting** on class 6 and 7 accounts (revenue - expenditure) is carried out to ensure effective monitoring of fund allocation. **The annual reports** (corporate and financial) of the Alliance, validated by the Annual General Meeting, are available on request from the permanent team. The documents published by the Alliance for circulation are printed **on recycled paper**. **Consumables** used by the Alliance are usually of organic farming and fair trade origin.

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

The newsletter of the Alliance of Independent Publishers is produced by the permanent team. The following participated in producing this issue: Alexandre Tiphagne (atiphagne@alliance-editeurs.org), Thomas Weiss (tweiss@alliance-editeurs.org), and Etienne Galliard (egalliard@alliance-editeurs.org). This issue was translated in english by Reagan Kuhn, in spanish by Thomas Mouriès.