

# Editorial

By Étienne Galliard, Co-Publisher And Editor-In-Chief

*Bibliodiversity – Publishing and Globalisation –*  
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Bibliodiversity is a recent concept, emerging from the Spanish-speaking world at the close of the 1990s. Even though the term clearly evokes the cultural diversity associated with the realm of books, it is more than just a slogan and communications tool. Little by little, it has gained depth, acquired new complexity. Today, it refers primarily to the publishing sector's capacity – with “publishing” used here in the broad sense of the word, meaning everything from creation to reading, to all the manufacturing and marketing phases – to produce diversity.

## **Bibliodiversity in the Face of Globalization**

Bibliodiversity is being profoundly tested by the changes occurring in the publishing sector. The globalization process affects the organization and implementation of those tasks required by book manufacturing, marketing, and reading. Globalization has accelerated those changes that have a significant impact on organizations, enabling them to assemble and mobilize resources (labor, budget, etc) – most frequently, these are non-profit publishing houses. It has revolutionized methods, technologies, know-how, and tools. The publishing sector has been overturned, and new stakeholders now usher in novel logic, methods, and perspectives.

Furthermore, the practice of reading, use of content, and finality of writing are all in a state of flux. The various media used for reading replicate and sometimes “distort” content to make it conform to their standards, but they can also give rise to original creations. The space and time given to books are shrinking; books are forced to compete with an increasingly-diverse supply of cultural products and social practices (e.g., social networks). There are without question fewer points of contact between consumers and books. Nonetheless, books seem to retain their symbolic weight and capacity to influence. They still represent the world of ideas – the public sphere. Now consumed on various media, books generate vast cultural universes that influence the collective imaginaries of entire generations on a global scale (think here of the *Harry Potter* saga) – which is a new phenomenon, perhaps the beginnings of a “global culture”.

## **Why a Journal?**

The creation of this journal rests on three preliminary acknowledgments. The notion of bibliodiversity, despite its rapid spread and significant potential, remains scantily explored, insufficiently discussed, poorly grasped, and even misused – reduced at times to a simple slogan. It was important to save the notion from becoming even more depleted. Furthermore, the two co-publishers – the International Alliance of Independent Publishers, which has greatly contributed to the concept's internationalization, along with Double Punctuation – wish to contribute to original research, the development of intellectual and functional tools, and the collection of testimony that could help us understand the changes occurring in the world of books and publishing. Finally, there is not yet much space available in which to study these changing phenomena with a perspective that is simultaneously international, intercultural, and interdisciplinary.

A journal is the most adaptable medium – and doubtless the most suitable – for this kind of research and for the identification of new knowledge corresponding to developments in the

sector. The journal's frequency should be conducive to reflexion; this involves the use of analysis to understand a situation. The frequency of this journal – two issues per year – should meet this requirement without imposing its pace on intellectual output. And if the existence of *Bibliodiversity* inspires studies and encourages accounts (as already appears to be the case), what's not to be happy about?

### **The International Dimension, a Necessary Gamble**

A journal that covers “publishing and globalization” could be nothing less than international. This is an inescapable trait, even if this also requires us to tirelessly work to strengthen the geographic diversity of contributions. But an international journal is very frequently a journal that is exclusively in English. However, even though the importance of English as a language of international communication is unquestionable, English is sometimes also a means of communication that impoverishes the thoughts of those authors who have not fully mastered the language. Accordingly, within the framework of *Bibliodiversity*, one can publish texts in English, French or Spanish.

Still, the recurring components of the publication (cover elements, table of contents, legal mentions, and abstracts of all the articles) are provided in English. So in this sense, English *is* the journal's common language – but by no means its exclusive language.

Even though organizing this multilingualism is sometimes a burden, it should also be noted that it is much less costly than a full translation of every article into all three languages. Which would be, under the best of circumstances, the ideal solution. In any case, the abstracts available in English allow the articles to be accessed and promoted. Multilingualism is a necessary challenge; it simplifies neither the article selection process nor the publication process. Nevertheless, multilingualism remains the most viable option given the present state of the journal; it also means that constant care is taken, at all levels, not to limit the diversity of expression.

### **A Point of Contact between Academics and Practitioners**

In the span of a single year, the project already has made great progress. Starting as a purely-academic journal, *Bibliodiversity* has decisively opened its doors to practitioners (book industry professionals). It wishes to give them a regular place at the table. No doubt, knowledge is born out of the dialogue between the analyses – and even the creations – of academics and the practices, realities, and thoughts of the industry's actors. Naturally, one cannot exist without the other. As such, the goal is not to sanctify *Bibliodiversity* and to limit it to a certain form. Nor is it our goal to make the journal into an open platform, a kind of limitless “Web 2.0”. *Bibliodiversity* wishes to offer its readers quality articles, essential analysis, and seminal writings – or writings that are soon to be so.

As such, articles written by academics are evaluated by two referees according to the principle of double-blind review: anonymized articles are judged on the basis of their academic merits. Those that best satisfy academic criteria are published under the label “Peer-Reviewed”. Reader opinions are also sought for articles written by professionals. In either of these categories, it can sometimes occur that submissions are refused – this was the case for this first issue. But does not any true publication process involve choice?

### **Thematic categories**

The journal uses a thematic approach; accordingly, each issue addresses a selected theme – a central problem. Whereas this issue quite logically strives to define bibliodiversity and to identify indicators that can measure it, the second issue will address digitalization. Other themes are under considerations: developments in copyright law and *droit d'auteur*, the flow of translations, etc.

Nothing prevents the journal from evolving into a more complex form at some future time, integrating additional sections such as columns, book reviews, or even news reports on bibliodiversity. The first issue, although imperfect, does exist, and as such lays the foundation for an intellectual and publishing adventure that should become a long-term endeavor.

### **Readability and Accessibility**

Publishing the journal is one thing, but making its contents accessible and readable is another. Thanks to the efforts made to optimize layout, journal articles are presented in a pleasant, readable, and attractive manner. The two available formats – interactive PDF and Epub – allow the use of different media to access the text. The cover design, illustrations, and typography support these objectives of readability and accessibility.

The hypertext links facilitate navigation within the document and allow readers to leave the document whenever they wish to access to additional information or resources outside the journal. However, *Bibliodiversity* is not an Internet site; it remains first and foremost a linear publication – if the reader desires to use it as such – and is organized, dated, and signed. A web address – [www.bibliodiversity.org](http://www.bibliodiversity.org) – enhances the journal's visibility. It is also intended to eventually provide a place for additional readings. As a service to the journal, the site will maintain its minimalist approach; there are no plans to use the site to replace the journal.

### **Invaluable Support**

The operations of *Bibliodiversity* do not occur in isolation. They depend on the participation of invaluable authors, on the expertise and networks of Board members (editorial and scientific), on the work of an editor-in-chief, and on the commitment of the two co-publishers. Without prior support from Françoise Benhamou (France), Jacques Michon (Quebec-Canada), Jean-Yves Mollier (France) and André Schiffrin (United States), it would have been difficult to embark on this adventure under the best of conditions. Without the involvement of Eva Hemmungs Wirtén (Sweden), Simone Murray (Australia), Gisèle Sapiro (France), Gustavo Sorá (Argentina) and Josée Vincent (Quebec-Canada), the submissions would not have been so well-evaluated nor the editorial policy so refined. May they find here all the recognition that they are due. Thanks in particular to Luc Pinhas (France), member of the Editorial Committee, who was a full participant in the journal's establishment and reviewed an article for this inaugural issue. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the assistance of Laurence Hugues, Director of the International Alliance of Independent Publishers, who welcomed this project, found a way to make it possible, and granted significant independence to the editorial staff. All of these individuals played a role, at different levels, in making *Bibliodiversity* into a challenging adventure, an original (but not informal) medium, and a rigorous (but not predictable) publication. Once again, heartfelt thanks go out to them all.

Étienne Galliard  
Co-Publisher and Editor-in-Chief

*Text translated in English (USA) by Eric S. Bullington*