



Africa's books, books in Africa

Call for papers for *Africa e Mediterraneo* journal

Books exist in Africa since the 3rd millennium BC in the form of papyrus rolls. From the 11th century onwards the manuscript *codices* were then widely developed in Sahelian universities. However, the modern era of print in Africa is closely linked to European invasions, messianic evangelization and then colonization, that took place from the 18th century to the first half of the 20th century. After the conquest of independence, book markets in Africa were quickly dominated by the publishing industry of Northern countries, which capitalized the school sector and developed collections of African literature that were constantly being disseminated. Thus, the image of a continent producing few or no books has gradually developed in the face of a more competitive and innovative Nordic publishing industry.

While the reality of economic domination of African countries on behalf of the North is often indisputable, that of editorial diversity is, on the other hand, subject to different interpretations given the partial information available on African book markets. Since the 1960s, Africa has been developing a heterogeneous and multilingual book market, whose diversity is based on national, regional, and even continental spaces, and obviously makes any essentialist view inadequate. Above all, this publishing industry evolves and is influenced by a changing geopolitical and economic context, in which the capitalization of the international book market and the phenomenon of literary globalization represent a final step.

In this continuity, manifestations of economic and intellectual domination push the African publishing houses towards forms of "reaction", supported by the concept of "bibliodiversity" which in the last twenty years has favoured a greater presence of editorial productions in the international book market, and a consequent higher recognition of their diversity. The African publishing industry thus fits into a logic of "reaction" to exist commercially in contrast to the inviting publishing world in the Northern countries.

While the realities of the book publishing in Africa are still poorly known in the Northern world and dedicated documentation, whether specialized or not, is rare, since 1990s studies have increased both in the academic world, mainstream media and professional spheres. The connections between these different spaces of speech and the work taking place in different geographical areas are nevertheless still rare, which recalls the situation of linguistic exchanges in the sphere of knowledge.

This *Africa e Mediterraneo* dossier proposes to examine the real situation of the African publishing industry in the context of globalization and its impact on the diversity of the local and global editorial offer in the era of globalization.

Africa e Mediterraneo

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Being this edition at a crossroads of several disciplines, the dossier will be enriched by contributions from different fields of study: history of the book, anthropology, linguistics, economics, sciences of communication or sociology of culture.

Contributions addressing (among others) the following topics will be accepted:
the "international" visibility of the African book;
the African publishing industry in the global market;
the African publishing industry through writers' paths;
the gift of books in the African book chain;
the digital media of the editorial diffusion;
case studies on national or regional contexts of book production;
the Publishing industry and the book market in African languages...

Dossier coordinated by: Raphaël Thierry and Sandra Federici

The proposals (title, abstract of max. 400 words, author and a short biography) must be submitted no later than **October 31th 2018** to the following email addresses s.federici@africaemediterraneo.it;
m.scrivo@africaemediterraneo.it.

If the proposal is accepted, the complete article must be submitted by **December 3rd 2018**.

The articles and the proposals can be submitted in the following languages: Italian, English and French, respecting the *AeM* editorial standards.

Africa e Mediterraneo is a peer reviewed journal.