

1 Analyses of symbiotic bacterial communities in the plant pest *Bemisia tabaci* reveal high
2 prevalence of ~~*Hemipteriphilus Candidatus Hemipteriphilus asiaticus asiaticus*~~ on the African
3 continent

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18 Running Head: ~~*Hemipteriphilus Candidatus Hemipteriphilus asiaticus asiaticus*~~ in African
19 whiteflies

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22

23 **Abstract**

24 Microbial symbionts are widespread in insects and some of them have been associated to
25 adaptive changes. Primary symbionts (P-symbionts) have a nutritional role that allows their
26 hosts to feed on unbalanced diets (plant sap, wood, blood). Most of them have undergone
27 genome reduction, but their genomes still retain genes involved in pathways that are necessary
28 to synthesize the nutrients that their hosts need. However, in some P-symbionts, essential
29 pathways are incomplete and secondary symbionts (S-symbionts) are required to complete parts
30 of their degenerated functions. The P-symbiont of the phloem sap-feeder *Bemisia tabaci*,
31 *Candidatus* Portiera aleyrodidarium, lacks genes involved in the synthesis of vitamins,
32 cofactors, and also of some essential amino-acids. Seven S-symbionts have been detected in the
33 *B. tabaci* species complex. Phenotypic and genomic analyses have revealed various effects,
34 from reproductive manipulation to fitness benefits, notably some of them have complementary
35 metabolic capabilities to *Candidatus* Portiera aleyrodidarium~~*Portiera*~~, suggesting that their
36 presence may be obligatory. In order to get the full picture of the symbiotic community of this
37 pest, we investigated, through metabarcoding approaches, the symbiont content of individuals
38 from Burkina Faso, a West African country where *B. tabaci* induces severe crop damage. While
39 no new putative *B. tabaci* S-symbiont was identified, ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~*Candidatus*
40 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*, a symbiont only described in *B. tabaci* populations from Asia, was
41 detected for the first time on this continent. Phylogenetic analyses however reveal that it is a
42 different strain than the reference found in Asia. Specific diagnostic PCRs showed a high
43 prevalence of these S-symbionts and especially of *Candidatus* Hemipteriphilus asiaticus
44 ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ in different genetic groups. These results suggest that *Candidatus*
45 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ may affect the biology of *B. tabaci* and provide
46 fitness advantage in some *B. tabaci* populations.

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48 **Keywords:** *Bemisia tabaci*, *Candidatus Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~,

49 secondary symbionts

50 **Introduction**

51 Many insects feed on nutrient-imbalanced diet (plant sap, wood, blood), and there is strong
52 experimental evidence that microbial symbionts can promote utilization of these resources by
53 the synthesis of essential nutrients, like amino-acids and vitamins (for review see 1). In
54 hemipterans, ~~t~~hese obligatory symbionts, also called primary symbionts (P-symbionts), are
55 intracellular, strictly maternally inherited and, for most of them, have evolved with their hosts
56 for millions of years (review in 2). They are often housed inside specialized cells, bacteriocytes,
57 within a dedicated organ, the bacteriome, localized in the host's abdomen, which constitutes a
58 stable environment for the symbionts and facilitates their transmission to offspring (3, 4). As a
59 consequence of this lifestyle, their genomes are extremely reduced (5, 6). Their minimal
60 genomes retain genes involved in pathways that complement essential nutrients lacking in their
61 host' diets (7). However, in some bacterial symbionts, gene repertoire seems insufficient to
62 meet the metabolic demand of their hosts (review in 8). For example, in aphids, in the subfamily
63 Lachninae, the P-Symbiont *Buchnera aphidicola* has lost its ability to synthesize tryptophan
64 and riboflavin (9).

65 These deficiencies can be compensated by the acquisition of alternative symbionts that can
66 mediate equivalent functions. Indeed, in addition to their P-symbiont, insects often harbour
67 ~~facultative symbionts, also termed~~ secondary symbionts (S-symbionts). These ~~“non-essential”~~
68 symbionts are predominantly vertically transmitted but can also be horizontally transmitted,
69 and have a wide range of effects from mutualism to parasitism (review in 10). -Several studies
70 have shown that these co-resident S-symbionts can complement the metabolic network of the
71 P-symbionts leading to an inter-dependency between the symbiotic partners. Thus, all the
72 members of the aphid subfamily Lachninae depend on a second co-obligate symbiont to
73 complement specific gene losses of the P-symbiont *Buchnera* (9, 11; review in 12). These co-
74 symbionts are numerous with eleven identified up to now: ten γ -proteobacteria and one α -

75 proteobacteria. This inter-dependency between the symbiotic partners is not restricted to aphids
76 and *Buchnera*, it has been described in other hemiptera like in Cicadas where the P-symbiont
77 *Sulcia* has almost always been detected with one or more co-obligate symbionts (12).

78 Like other phloem-sap feeders, the whitefly *Bemisia tabaci* harbours a P-symbiont, *Candidatus*
79 *Portiera aleyrodidarum* (13), that synthesizes essential nutrients. However, *Ca. Portiera*
80 *aleyrodidarum* ~~*Portiera*~~ has a tiny genome, around 355kb (14-17) and, while this γ -
81 proteobacterium has the capacity to synthesize carotenoids and most essential amino-acids (14),
82 it lacks almost all the genes involved in the synthesis of vitamins and cofactors. Moreover,

83 pathways involved in the synthesis of some essential amino acids are incomplete (18). *Bacteria*
84 *belonging to* seven *genera of* S-symbionts have been identified in the cryptic species complex
85 of *B. tabaci*: *Hamiltonella* ~~*defensa*~~, *Arsenophonus* ~~*sp.*~~, *Cardinium* ~~*hertigi*~~, *Rickettsia* ~~*sp.*~~,
86 *Wolbachia* ~~*pipientis*~~, *Fritschea* ~~*bemisiae*~~ and *Hemipteriphilus* *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* (19-
87 22). They are all localized in the same bacteriocytes as the P-symbiont but some can also be

88 found in the hemolymph (23). Their roles remain poorly understood but range from
89 reproductive parasitism (24) to fitness benefits such as thermal tolerance (25, 26). Moreover,
90 the analysis of their genomes suggests that some of them could play a nutritional role. For
91 example, *Hamiltonella* can provide vitamins and cofactors, and could also complete the missing
92 steps of the lysine pathway of *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum* ~~*Portiera*~~ (18). Because of these
93 complementations, presence of S-symbionts is expected in all whitefly individuals. In a
94 sampling performed in West Africa in 2007 and 2009, *B. tabaci* individuals were indeed
95 predominantly found infected with S-symbionts, but in some populations no S-symbiont were
96 recorded (27). In this former study, prevalence of S-symbionts was determined with an *a priori*
97 method, *i. e.* through PCRs using specific primers targeting the six symbionts identified in *B.*
98 *tabaci* at the time, thus leaving the possibility that other, undescribed endosymbionts were
99 present. Since, a seventh S-symbiont, *Candidatus Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~

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100 ~~asiaticus~~ (hereafter "~~Ca. Hemipteriphilus~~Hemipteriphilus asiaticus"), has been described in *B.*
101 *tabaci* (19-20). This makes it possible that Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus~~Hemipteriphilus~~, as
102 well as other bacterial symbionts, are in fact present in the S-symbiont free *B. tabaci*
103 individuals.

104 In order to get a full picture of the symbiont diversity, we investigated the symbiont content of
105 individuals sampled in Burkina Faso (West Africa) using a metabarcodinggenomie approach.
106 In this country, *B. tabaci* is a pest of primary importance, with a severe impact on economic
107 activity (28). Indeed, *B. tabaci* is a cryptic species complex (42 species reported till now based
108 on a 657bp portion of the mitochondrial cytochrome oxidase 1 (*mtCOI*) DNA sequence: 29-
109 33), and in Burkina Faso individuals belong either to SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa), ASL (Africa
110 Silver-Leafing) or MED (Mediterranean) species (34). Using universal bacterial primer sets we
111 detected few bacterial species and, more importantly, no new putative S-symbiont. However,
112 the S-symbionts known in *B. tabaci* were found, except *Fritschea*, and notably Ca.
113 Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~—that is described for the first time in Africa.
114 Interestingly, phylogenetic analyses revealed that this Ca. Hemipteriphilus
115 asiaticus~~Hemipteriphilus~~ differs from the reference strain identified in Asia (20). In addition,
116 diagnostic PCRs revealed high prevalence of S-symbionts in these populations, and notably Ca.
117 Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ in ASL and MED individuals, which questions its
118 possible role in the biology of *B. tabaci*.

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119 **Results**

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121 Among the 630 individuals sampled in Burkina Faso in 2015 and 2016, the majority, almost
122 84%, belonged to the MED species, more especially to the MED-Q1 genetic group (81% ; 3%
123 belonged to MED-Q3). ASL and SSA (more precisely SSA2) genetic groups represented 10.5%
124 and 3% of individuals respectively (34).

125

126 **Bacterial community characterization**

127 The bacterial community of *B. tabaci* collected in Burkina Faso was characterized on 72
128 individuals by a metabarcodinggenomie approach, without *a priori* assumptions, using
129 universal bacterial primers targeting the 16S+DNA-16S rRNA gene and an Illumina sequencing
130 technology. Between 107,000 to 927,000 reads were obtained per sample (average : 2155,000
131 reads ± 9,420). The majority of the reads belonged to the known *B. tabaci* P- and S-symbionts
132 and, in most field individuals, sequences from *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum*~~*Portiera*~~ constituted
133 the majority of reads (up to 98.16% ; 714.28% on average ± 2.9% ; see “table_level6” in Dryad,
134 <https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.547d7wm91>, and Figure 1). We detected bacterial taxa belonging
135 to the genera ~~*Alkanindiges*~~*Acinetobacter* in few samples at ~~extremely~~ low abundances since
136 they represented between 0 and 7.46% of the sequences obtained per individual, both in field
137 and lab samples. They may represent gut bacteria or contaminations. Overall, no new S-
138 symbiont has been detected.

139 All the known *B. tabaci* S-symbionts have been found except *Fritschea*. However, it is not
140 surprising since this S-symbiont seems to be scarce worldwide in *B. tabaci* (35). Moreover, in
141 a previous survey done in West Africa using specific primers *Fritschea* was not found (27). As
142 already shown, there is a link between symbiotic bacterial communities and genetic groups:
143 *Hamiltonella* was found to be the most common S-symbiont in MED-Q1, and *Arsenophonus*

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144 in MED-Q3 and SSA2 individuals. *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ is the only S-
145 symbiont presents in all genetic groups except SSA2 (*i.e.* in MED-Q1, MED-Q3 and ASL). It
146 was not detected in individuals of the laboratory lines.

147

148 **Phylogenetic analysis of ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus asiaticus***

149 Twenty individuals positive for *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~, belonging to
150 MED-Q1, MED-Q3 and ASL genetic groups, were used for phylogenetic analysis. They
151 originated from eight localities and, when possible, in each locality, the three genetic groups
152 were represented (Table 1). The ~~16S rRNA~~ *16S rRNA* sequences (483bp) obtained with the new
153 primers designed in the present study (Table 2) were 100% identical in all the individuals (*i. e.*
154 8 MED-Q1, 7 MED-Q3 and 5 ASL). This sequence showed ~~the highest~~ 100% similarity with
155 the ones of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Candidatus Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~-endosymbiont
156 and *Rickettsia* of *B. tabaci* available in the genbank database (~~Blast done in December 2021~~).

157 ~~16S rRNA~~ *16S rRNA* gene is highly conserved (36) we thus ~~we~~ designed new primers on two
158 other loci, *GltA* and *GroEL*, using the sequences of the *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*
159 ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~-isolate YH-ZHJ available in Genbank (20). The 190bp sequences of *GltA* were
160 identical in all our 20 samples, but one substitution was found in the *GroEL* sequences (269bp)
161 between MED individuals (Q1 and Q3) and ASL individuals, whatever their sampling locality.

162 Analyses of the concatenated sequences obtained for the three loci (942bp in total) revealed
163 ~97% identity between the *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~-strains identified in
164 Burkina Faso and the YH-ZHJ reference isolate from the China *B. tabaci* species (between 1 to
165 13 different bases according to the gene). ~~Topologies of the trees for *GroEL* and *GltA* were~~
166 ~~similar to the one of the concatenated tree (*16s rRNA* is not informative since the 483bp~~
167 ~~sequence of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* is 100% similar to *Rickettsia*).~~

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168 We also analysed the phylogenetic relationships of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*
169 *Hemipteriphilus* and other close Rickettsiales, *Rickettsia*, *Orientia tsutsumagushi* and *Sitobion*
170 *miscanthi* L Type Symbiont SMLS. The trees constructed with maximum-likelihood and
171 Bayesian inference methods are identical and showed that *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* is
172 closer to SMLS than to *Rickettsia* (Figure 2), which is concordant with analyses of Bing *et al.*
173 (20) and Li *et al.* (37). (Figure 1), and showed that *Hemipteriphilus* is closer to SMLS than to
174 *Orientia tsutsumagushi* and *Rickettsia*, which is concordant with analyses of Bing *et al.* (20)
175 and Li *et al.* (37).
176 This phylogenetic analysis thus confirms the presence of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
177 *asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ in MED-Q1, MED-Q3 and ASL genetic groups in Burkina Faso. It
178 also reveals that they represent different strains than the one found in Asia, and that the strain
179 found in ASL differs slightly from the strains in MED-Q1 and MED-Q3.

180

181 **Distribution and prevalence of bacterial endosymbionts in field populations**

182 The presence of the P- and S-symbionts was checked in 334 individuals from nine localities in
183 Burkina Faso (Figure 32) and several host plants (vegetables, ornamental plants and weeds) by
184 specific diagnostic qPCRs. All the S-symbionts described so far in *B. tabaci* were targeted
185 except *Fritschea bemisiae* because this bacterium was not found in the 16S rRNA +6S rRNA
186 metagenomic-metabarcoding analysis. The infection status of individuals for the P-symbiont as
187 well as the S-symbionts (*Hamiltonella*, *Arsenophonus*, *Cardinium*, *Rickettsia*, *Wolbachia*, *Ca.*
188 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~) are presented in Figure 43. *Ca. Portiera*
189 *aleyrodidarum*~~*Portiera*~~ was found in all but five individuals from different sampling sites. PCRs
190 done on the actine host gene as well as the detection of S-symbionts ensured the extraction
191 quality, but we cannot exclude that the quantity of *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum*~~*Portiera*~~ was
192 under the real-time PCR detection threshold in these samples. The fact that these five

193 individuals all belong to MED-Q1 can be explained by the high prevalence of this genetic group
194 (262/334).

195 More than 98% of individuals harboured at least one S-symbiont and, as expected, the
196 prevalence of the S-symbionts genera depended on the genetic group (Fisher's Exact Test, P =
197 0.0005 ; see data analysis of 21). *Arsenophonus* is the most frequent symbiont in SSA2 and
198 MED-Q3 individuals (89% and 79% respectively), while 96% of individuals belonging to
199 MED-Q1 harbour *Hamiltonella*. Interestingly, *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ is
200 dominant in ASL samples with 82% of individuals infected, while 50% harbour *Arsenophonus*.
201 More generally *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ is very frequent in all biotypes,
202 except SSA2 in which it has not been found. For the first time, this symbiont is described in
203 MED-Q1, MED-Q3 and ASL genetic groups. In all of them, its prevalence is high: 77% in
204 MED-Q1, 53% in MED-Q3 and 82% in ASL. Globally, the symbiotic composition in these four
205 genetic groups corresponds to what is known in literature (meta-analysis in Zchori-Fein *et al.*
206 (21); see Gnankiné *et al.* (27) for previous data obtained in Burkina Faso), except for *Ca.*
207 ~~*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*. The symbiotic composition is not influenced by the
208 locality for MED-Q1 (Fisher's Exact Test, P = 0.1414), which is the only genetic group found
209 in all the localities (Figure S14).

210 Co-infection by several S-symbionts is frequent (69%), mostly double-infections which
211 represent 90% of multiple infections. However, the presence of three or even four S-symbionts
212 within the same host individual has also been detected (20 and 2 individuals respectively; Figure
213 43). An exception is the biotype SSA2 in which only single infections have been found. Some
214 associations of symbionts are frequent and others never found. We never found *Rickettsia-*
215 *Cardinium*, *Rickettsia-Wolbachia* and *Wolbachia-Arsenophonus* combinations. On the other
216 hand, in the MED-Q1 individuals *Hamiltonella* and *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*
217 ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ co-occur frequently: this assemblage represents 76% of bi-infections in this

218 genetic group (193/253). In MED-Q3 and ASL, Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~
219 is often associated with *Arsenophonus* (58% and 92% respectively). These results show that
220 Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ often co-infect individuals with another S-
221 symbiont, especially the two more frequent S-symbionts, that are also the ones confined to
222 bacteriocytes.

223

224 **Influence of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ on the P-symbiont density**

225 As it is the first time that Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ has been detected in *B.*
226 *tabaci* individuals from the African continent, we aimed at determining whether its presence
227 has an impact on the P-symbiont. We thus compared the density of Ca. Portiera
228 aleyrodidarum ~~Portiera~~ in presence and in absence of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus
229 ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ (Figure 54). Results indicated that the presence of Ca. Hemipteriphilus
230 asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ does not affect the density of Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum ~~Portiera~~
231 (n=282, Wilcox rank test, W=8364, P=0.0847).

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233 Discussion

234 The whitefly *B. tabaci* is one of the most devastating agricultural pests worldwide. In Africa,
235 damage induced by this species complex ~~isare~~ huge and results in severe impacts on the
236 economic activity of many countries. Effective control requires understanding its ability to
237 spread and determining factors involved in its important polyphagy. In this context, heritable
238 bacterial symbionts are of primary importance since they may provide their hosts with
239 important ecological traits. In the present study, we aimed at describing the symbiotic bacterial
240 communities, diversity and prevalence in *B. tabaci* populations from Burkina Faso (West
241 Africa). In this survey, several *B. tabaci* genetic groups were found: ASL (Africa Silver-
242 Leafing) and MED (Mediterranean, MED-Q1 and MED-Q3), as previously reported by
243 Gnankiné *et al.* (27), and, in addition, SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa), that was detected for the first
244 time in this country, but only in one locality (Lilboure), and only on one host plant, cassava
245 (34).

246
247 The ~~metagenomic-metabarcoding~~ analysis of the bacterial symbionts did not reveal the presence
248 of symbionts not yet described in *B. tabaci*. However, *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
249 *asiaticusHemipteriphilus* is described for the first time in Africa: it was detected in all the
250 genetic groups found in Burkina Faso except SSA, *i. e.* MED-Q1, MED-Q3 and ASL. *Ca.*
251 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticusHemipteriphilus* has been described for the first time in 2013 by Bing
252 *et al.* (20) in *B. tabaci* samples from China belonging to the China1 biotype. Since then, it has
253 also been found in China2, Asia (I and II), Indian Ocean and SSA (SSA6) genetic groups, but
254 only in countries of the Asian continent: Indian and Pakistan (22, 38, 39). In the present study,
255 *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus Hemipteriphilus* was detected in the African continent, with a
256 very high prevalence in the MED and ASL genetic groups from Burkina Faso: 53% in MED-
257 Q3, 77% in MED-Q1, reaching 82% in ASL. On the other hand, it has not been found in SSA2.

258 Since its description, Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ has been relatively under-
259 studied. To our knowledge, only two field surveys have been done so far. They both found the
260 presence of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ in Asia I and II species but with high
261 differences in prevalence: the infection rate was high in Central India (89%: 51 out of 57
262 individuals checked were infected; 38), but lower in Pakistan (between 5% and 39%; 22). Based
263 on all these results, the presence of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ should be
264 sought in population studies when *a priori* methods based on specific PCRs are used to describe
265 the bacterial community associated with the *B. tabaci* complex species. This is especially true
266 as we describe here that Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ can also infect the
267 worldly distributed MED-Q1.

268
269 Our phylogenetic analyses on Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ based on three
270 genes, 16S rRNA ~~16S rRNA~~, *GroEL* and *GltA* revealed that 3% of nucleotide sites differ between
271 the MED strain identified in the present study and the reference YH-ZHJ isolate described in
272 the China *B. tabaci* species (20). It also revealed a substitution in the *GroEL* sequence between
273 the Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ found in MED and in ASL, yet found in
274 sympatry. Therefore, the present data confirm-reveal the existence of polymorphism in the Ca.
275 Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ genus with at least three strains present in *B. tabaci*.
276 Naturally, in further studies, an extended sampling should be done in more continents,
277 countries, on more species/genetic groups, and more molecular markers should be developed
278 in order to get a more accurate idea of the diversity of Ca. Hemipteriphilus
279 asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ strains in this complex species. Anyway, Ca. Hemipteriphilus
280 asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ is not an isolated case: several S-symbionts (*Wolbachia*,
281 *Arsenophonus*, *Cardinium* and *Rickettsia*) are represented by more than one strain in *B. tabaci*
282 (35, 40), with up to 6 phylogenetic groups identified for *Arsenophonus* (41).

283

284 To date the influence of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ on its host is not known.
285 In *B. tabaci*, it has been suggested that some S-symbionts could play a nutritional role, in
286 collaboration with the P-symbiont. Indeed, several data suggest that *Hamiltonella* and
287 *Arsenophonus* could have an impact on the *B. tabaci* metabolism and dietary requirements.
288 These two S-symbionts are almost fixed in some genetic groups (27, 41, present study). For
289 instance, *Hamiltonella* is widespread in MEAM1 and MED-Q1 (review in 21 and 35).
290 Moreover, *Hamiltonella* possesses some genes involved in amino-acid biosynthesis pathways
291 that are lost or non-functional in the P-symbiont (18). In addition, recent experiments
292 demonstrated that this S-symbiont can supply *B. tabaci* with the production of B vitamins (42-
293 43). Even if there is no evidence of fixation in any genetic group in the field, *Ca.*
294 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ could confer a benefit to its host under some
295 environmental conditions, for example, according to the nutritional quality of the host plants.
296 Indeed, previous research demonstrated that aphid performance is associated with the amino-
297 acid composition of the phloem sap (44-45). It could explain why *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*
298 ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ was not present in the SSA species which, contrary to MED and ASL which
299 have been found in several host plant species, has only been detected on cassava in Burkina
300 Faso (34). Analysis of the genome of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~, with a
301 special focus on genes involved in metabolic pathways, would give further insight into its
302 putative nutritional role.

303

304 The presence of another closely relative S-symbiont, *Sitobion miscanthi* L Type Symbiont
305 (SMLS), has also been recently highlighted in the aphid *Sitobion miscanthi* (46). It also belongs
306 to the Rickettsiaceae family and, similarly to *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~, is
307 widely distributed in some populations of its host (see survey in China in 47). It has been

308 suggested that SMLS could stimulate the proliferation of the P-symbiont *Buchnera* and thus
309 improve the aphids' fitness. Indeed, *Buchnera*'s density is significantly higher in SMLS-
310 infected individuals and laboratory experiments revealed that infected individuals show higher
311 values of some fitness traits (37). However, our results did not reveal any influence of *Ca.*
312 *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ on the *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum* ~~*Portiera*~~ density.
313 Clearly, life history traits should be measured on *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
314 *asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~-infected and -free *B. tabaci* individuals. Anyway, the high frequency
315 of these two newly reported S-symbionts in some field populations of these phloemophagous
316 insects could suggest they bring benefit to their hosts. ~~F~~Clearly, further research on the infection
317 dynamics of these S-symbionts, and their role on their host phenotype and adaptation are
318 needed.

319
320 Compared to the previous field survey done in Burkina Faso by Gnankiné *et al.* (27), data on
321 the infection with S-symbionts are highly similar except for the presence of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
322 *asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~, which was not described at that time. In particular, the infection rate
323 involving at least one S-symbiont were higher than 90% in the two studies. In MED-Q1 genetic
324 group, *Hamiltonella* is the more frequent S-symbiont (96% in the present study, 89% in 27)
325 while *Arsenophonus* is the most common bacteria in MED-Q3 and ASL individuals (previous
326 study/present study, respectively 93%/79% and 40%/50%). Interestingly, *Hamiltonella* and
327 *Arsenophonus* are mutually exclusive which is not the case of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
328 *asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~ that is often found in co-infection with these S-symbionts: it was
329 involved in almost 80% of co-infection by two S-symbionts.

330

331 **Conclusion**

332 In summary, these data confirmed the variability of the symbiotic community in the *B. tabaci*
333 complex species, showed despite its the high temporal stability of the symbiotic community in
334 populations in the *B. tabaci* complex species found in Burkina Faso, and reveal the
335 presence of another player whose role deserves to be studied. The stability and the high
336 incidence of S-symbionts in *B. tabaci* ~~(in the present study, we found that more than 98% of~~
337 ~~individuals harbour at least one S-symbiont)~~, together with genomic studies, suggest that they
338 can have central roles in shaping the fitness of this pest in different environments.
339 Understanding their possible contribution to successful invasion, widespread distribution, and
340 more generally, on the population dynamics of this whitefly is critical for the implementation
341 of effective pest management programs.

342

343

344 **Materials and methods**

345

346 **Sampling**

347 Sampling was done in nine localities in Burkina Faso, Western Africa (Figure 31), in March
348 and April (dry season) 2015 and 2016 on vegetables, ornamental plants and weeds as described
349 in Romba *et al.* (34). The species and biotypes (hereafter genetic groups) of the individuals
350 (adults) were determined in Romba *et al.* (34) according to the PCR-RFLP method developed
351 in Henri *et al.* (48). ~~Total DNA was extracted from single whiteflies.~~ Three species were found,
352 ASL (Africa Silver-Leafing), SSA (Sub-Saharan Africa) and MED (Mediterranean). Within
353 the MED species, two genetic groups, MED-Q1 and MED-Q3, were identified.

354

355 **Characterization of the bacterial community**

356 Seventy-two field-collected whiteflies from Burkina Faso were used to characterize the
357 bacterial community ~~through qPCRs using primers specific to each symbiont.~~ They were
358 chosen in order that all genetic groups, all localities and all host plants were represented (Table
359 1). We also included 18 adults coming from laboratory lines belonging to MED-Q1 and MED-
360 Q2 genetic groups reared for years in the « Laboratoire de Biométrie et Biologie Evolutive ».

361 The universal bacterial primer set ~~341+9F-TCG-TCG-GCA-GCG-TCA-GAT-GTG-TAT-AAG-~~
362 ~~AGA-CAG-CCT-ACG-GGN-GGC-WGC-AG~~ and ~~805R-GTC-TCG-TGG-GCT-CGG-AGA-~~
363 ~~TGT-GTA-TAA-GAG-ACA-GGA-CTA-CHV-GGG-TAT-CTA-ATC-C~~ was used to amplify

364 ~~486-464~~ bp of the V3-V4 hypervariable regions of the ~~16S rDNA~~ gene (49). The primers
365 were synthesized with overhang adapters (in italic) for index attachment and Illumina

366 sequencing adapters. For each sample, ~~which consisted in one individual,~~ triplicates were
367 performed, consisting of three PCR reactions ~~using the KAPA ReadyMix (KAPA) containing~~

368 ~~using 200nM of each primer, 12.5µL of KAPA Hifi HotStart Ready Mix and 2.5 µL 4µL~~ of

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369 DNA template, in a final volume of 25 μ L. and 25 cycles of PCR. The conditions of reactions
370 were- 95°C for 3min followed by 25 cycles of 95°C for 30sec, 55°C for 30sec and 72°C for
371 30sec. Then a final elongation was done at 72°C for 5min. Each amplification product was
372 checked on an agarose gel to verify that there was specific amplification only. For some of
373 them, a bioanalyzer verification was also performed. Then, all the replicates were pooled by
374 sample before purification and to proceed to the further preparation of the library according to
375 the protocol outlined by Illumina (« 16S metagenomic Sequencing Library Preparation »),
376 n°15044223 Rev.B. The pooled library was PE-sequenced using the Illumina MiSeq reagent
377 kit version 3 for 600 cycles (2x300pb) by Biofidal (Vaulx enVelin, France).
378 The sequencing data in FASTQ format were processed and analyzed with the QIIME2 software
379 suite version 2021.11+8.8 (50). The raw Illumina reads were imported into QIIME2,
380 demultiplexed, and then denoised, trimmed and filtered with DADA2 pipeline to remove noisy
381 and chimeric sequences, to construct denoised paired-end sequences and to dereplicate them
382 (51). This produced a table containing representative sequences also called amplicon sequence
383 variant or ASV. The taxonomy assignment ~~of ASVs~~ was then performed by using feature-
384 classifier classify-sklearn, ~~against the database Greengenes 13_8. For that, reads from the Silva~~
385 138 SSURef NR99 reference database were extracted to match on the primer set 341F/805R.
386 The Naive Bayes classifier has been trained before the classification (99% OTUs from
387 515F/806R region of sequences) (52-53). A taxa barplot has been done on all the data with
388 “qiime taxa bar plot” (except chloroplast sequences that have been removed; Dryad,
389 <https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.547d7wm91> and a heatmap has been produced only on field
390 samples for major taxa with “qiime feature table heatmap” (Figure 1).

391

392 **Primer design**

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393 We designed new primers for Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus~~Hemipteriphilus~~ using sequences
394 available in Genbank (20) with the Primer3 software (<https://bioinfo.ut.ee/primer3-0.4.0/>). We
395 aligned sequences of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ with sequences of
396 *Rickettsia* from *B. tabaci* in order to design primers specific to Ca. Hemipteriphilus
397 asiaticus~~Hemipteriphilus~~ that do not amplify sequences from *Rickettsia*. These primers were
398 tested on individuals harbouring *Rickettsia* but not ~~Hemipteriphilus~~Hemipteriphilus
399 asiaticusCa. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus and we didn't detect any amplification. Multiple
400 sequence alignments were done using the MUSCLE algorithm (54) implemented in CLC DNA
401 Workbench 8.0 (CLC Bio). Three sets of primers targeting three different genes of Ca.
402 Hemipteriphilus asiaticus~~Hemipteriphilus~~, ADNr16S16S rRNA, the citrate synthase *GltA* and
403 the chaperonin *GroEL* were designed (Table 2).

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405 **Phylogenetic analysis of ~~Hemipteriphilus~~Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus-asiaticus strains**

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406 PCRs targeting *GltA*, *GroEL* and 16S rRNA~~ADNr16S~~ genes of Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus
407 ~~Hemipteriphilus~~ were carried out on 20 positive samples (Table 1) with sets of primers designed
408 specifically for this study (Table 2). DNA was amplified in a final volume of 25µL containing
409 200µM dNTPs, 200nM of each primer, 0.5IU DreamTaq DNA polymerase (ThermoFisher) and
410 2µL of DNA. All PCR amplifications were performed under the following conditions: initial
411 denaturation at 95°C for 2min followed by 35 cycles at 94°C for 30sec, 56°C for 30sec, 72°C
412 for 1min and a final extension at 72°C for 10min. PCR products were sequenced using the
413 Sanger method by the platform Biofidal (Vaulx en Velin, France).

414 The nucleotide polymorphism was analyzed by aligning the sequences obtained using the
415 MUSCLE algorithm (54) implemented in CLC DNA Workbench 8.0 (CLC Bio) and inspecting
416 them by eye. Moreover, we studied the phylogenetic relationships of the Ca. Hemipteriphilus
417 asiaticus ~~Hemipteriphilus-asiaticus~~ strains found in our samples with the reference strain

418 described in *B. tabaci* (isolate YH-ZHJ; 20) as well as other symbionts belonging to the
419 Rickettsiales family, *Rickettsia*, *Orientia tsutsumagushi* and *Sitobion miscanthi* L Type
420 *Symbiont* (SMLS). Phylogenetic trees were constructed with CLC DNA Workbench 8.0 (CLC
421 Bio) using maximum-likelihood method for each sequence separately and for the concatenated
422 data set (substitution model: GTR + G + T, chosen by using the “Model Testing” tool of CLC
423 DNA Workbench 8.0). The robustness of nodes was assessed with 100 bootstrap replicates. We
424 also constructed a phylogenetic tree with Bayesian inference using the program MrBayes
425 (version 3.2.6) and a GTR+G model (55). For these concatenated gene dataset, 20000
426 generations were run and the first 25% of these were discarded as burn-in.

428 Prevalence of bacterial endosymbionts

429 Three hundred and thirty four individuals were screened for the presence of the P-symbiont Ca.
430 Portiera aleyrodidarum ~~*Portiera aleyrodidarum*~~ and six secondary symbionts, *Hamiltonella*
431 *defensa*, *Arsenophonus* sp., *Cardinium hertigii*, *Rickettsia* sp., *Wolbachia pipientis* and Ca.
432 Hemipteriphilus asiaticus ~~*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~ (hereafter *Portiera*, *Hamiltonella*,
433 *Arsenophonus*, *Cardinium*, *Rickettsia*, *Wolbachia* and Ca. Hemipteriphilus
434 asiaticus ~~*Hemipteriphilus*~~) using specific PCR primers (Table 3). We did not check for the
435 presence of *Fritschea bemisiae* in these individuals because this bacterium was not detected in
436 the 16S rRNA metagenomic metabarcoding analysis. We also amplified one host gene (actin)
437 using the following primers: wf-B actin-For:5'-TCT-TCC-AGC-CAT-CCT-TCT-TG-3' and
438 wf-B actin-Rev: 5'-CGG-TGA-TTT-CCT-TCT-GCA-TT-3' to ensure the quality of DNA
439 extractions. DNA was amplified in a final volume of 10µL containing 5µL of Sso Advanced
440 SYBR Green Supermix (Bio-Rad), 2µL of water, 0.5µL of each primer (final concentration of
441 500nM) and 2µL of DNA samples. The reaction conditions for amplification were 95°C for
442 30sec followed by 40 cycles of 95°C for 10sec, 55°C to 63°C (according to the primers' set)

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443 for 30sec (see Table 3 ; 63°C for Actine) and 72°C for 30sec. The specificity of the amplified
444 products was controlled by checking melting curves (65°C to 95°C). To assess the efficiency
445 of the reaction, standard curves were plotted using dilutions of previously amplified and
446 purified PCR products. Amplification and detection of DNA were done on the real-time CFX96
447 instrument (Bio-Rad).

448

449 **Statistical analysis**

450 Data analysis were performed using the R statistical software [version 3.2.2](http://www.R-project.org) ([http:// www.R-](http://www.R-project.org)
451 [project.org](http://www.R-project.org)).

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452 The infection status of *B. tabaci* individuals was graphically represented using the Mondrian
453 shiny application (Siberchicot, Charif, Terraz & Vavre: [https://cran.r-](https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/Mondrian/)
454 [project.org/web/packages/Mondrian/](https://cran.r-project.org/web/packages/Mondrian/)).

455

456 **Data availability**

457 Nucleotide sequences obtained in this study are accessible in GenBank database under
458 accession numbers MW353022 and MW353023 for *GroEL* (MED and ASL species
459 respectively), MW343733 for *16S_rRNA* and MW353021 for *GltA*.

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460 All datasets generated and analyzed on the bacterial community characterization are available
461 in Dryad at: <https://doi.org/10.5061/dryad.547d7wm91>.

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469 metabarcoding part.

470

471 **Conflict of interest disclosure**

472 The authors of this article declare that they have no financial conflict of interest with the content

473 of this article. Fabrice Vavre and Laurence Mouton are ones of the PCI Zool recommenders.

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Tables and figures

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Table 1: Samples used for the phylogenetic analyses of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*

asiaticus~~*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~

Locality	Host plant	Sample name	Biotype
Tanghin/Ouagadougou	Eggplant	TangO22	MED-Q1
	<i>Lantana camara</i>	TangOE56	MED-Q3
	Potato	TangO14	ASL
	Tomato	TangOE35	ASL
Tiebele/Pô	Chilli pepper	TiebPE11	MED-Q1
	Potato	TiebP13	ASL
Boulmiougou/Ouagadougou	Bell pepper	BoulOE33	MED-Q1
	Cucumber	BoulOE44	MED-Q3
	Cucumber	BoulOE46	MED-Q3
	Zucchini	BoulOE51	MED-Q3
	Tomato	BoulOE15	ASL
Boulbi/Komsilga	Eggplant	BoulkE11	MED-Q1
	Eggplant	BoulkE33	MED-Q3
	Zucchini	BoulkE39	MED-Q3
Koubri/Kombissiri	Bell pepper	KoubKE11	MED-Q1
	Zucchini	KoubK45	MED-Q3
Werra/Koudougou	Eggplant	WerrkE24	MED-Q1
	Tomato	WerrE11	ASL
Lumbila/Oubritenga	Chilli pepper	LoumOE14	MED-Q1
Bonyolo/Réo	Eggplant	BonyRE13	MED-Q1

679 **Table 2:** PCR primers and conditions used for phylogenetic analysis of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus*
 680 *asiaticus*/*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*
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Targeted gene	Primers	Primer sequences	Annealing temperature/ Product size
<i>GltA</i>	HA_GltA_62F HA_GltA_259R	5'- AGCAGCAGGTATTGCCTCAT -3' 5'- TGCCCTGGGATCATAAATTCTT -3'	56°C / 198bp
16S rRNA-AD Nr-16S	HA_16S_36F HA_16S_555R	5'- ATTAGTGGCAAACGGGTGAG -3' 5'- CTCTAGCCTAGCAGTTTTAG -3'	56°C / 519bp
<i>GroEL</i>	HA_GroEL_318F HA_GroEL_1008R	5'- GCCAATGGCGATAGTGAGAT -3' 5'- GCACTGCTACACCAAGTTTGC -3'	56°C / 691bp

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All these primers have been designed in this study.

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Table 3: PCR primers and conditions used for symbionts' screening (qPCR)

Symbiont	Targeted gene	Primers	Primer sequences	Annealing temperature/ Product size	Reference
<i>Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum</i>	16S rRNA4D Nr16S	Port73-F Port266-R	5'- GTGGGGAATAACGTACGG -3' 5' - CTCAGTCCCAGTGTGGCTG - 3'	60°C / 193bp	Caspi-Fluger <i>et al.</i> , 2011
<i>Rickettsia</i>	<i>GltA</i>	GltA 375F_Rick GltA 574R_Rick	5'- TGGTATTGCATCGCTTTGGG-3' 5'- TTTCTTTAAGCACTGCAGCACG-3'	60°C / 199bp	Caspi-Fluger <i>et al.</i> , 2011
<i>Hamiltonella</i>	<i>dnaK</i>	dnaK-F dnaK-R	5'- GGTCAGAAAAAAGTGGCAG -3' 5'- CGAGCGAAAGAGGAGTGAC -3'	60°C / 155bp	Moran <i>et al.</i> , 2005
<i>Cardinium</i>	16S rRNA4D Nr16S	CFB-F CFB-R	5'-GCGGTGTAAAATGAGCGTG-3' 5'-ACCTMTTCTTAACTCAAGCCT-3'	59°C / 395bp	Weeks <i>et al.</i> , 2003
<i>Wolbachia</i>	<i>FtsZ</i>	F2 R2	5'- TTGAGAGCTTGGACTTGAA -3' 5'-CATATCTCCGCCACCAGTAA-3'	55°C / 400bp	Vavre <i>et al.</i> , 1999
<i>Arsenophonus</i>	23S rRNA4D Nr23S	ArsF3 ArsR3	5'- GTCGTGAGGAARGTGTTARGGTT -3' 5'- CCTYTATCTCTAAAGGMTTCGCTGGATG -3'	63°C / 765bp	Duron <i>et al.</i> , 2008
<i>Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus</i>	<i>GltA</i>	HA_GltA_62F HA_GltA_259R	5'- AGCAGCAGGTATTGCCTCAT -3' 5'- TGCCCTGGGATCATAATTCTT -3'	56°C / 198bp	This study

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Figure 1: Heat-map showing the major taxa identified in the metabarcoding analysis

Heatmap showing differences in bacterial communities based on taxonomic classifications of DNA 16S amplicons generated in QIIME 2 using the SSU SILVA 138 taxonomy. The heatmap was generated from the log-transformed relative abundance values of the 7 major taxa at the genus level (level-6). The relative abundance of each genus is indicated by a gradient of color from darkest (low abundance) to lightest color (high abundance).

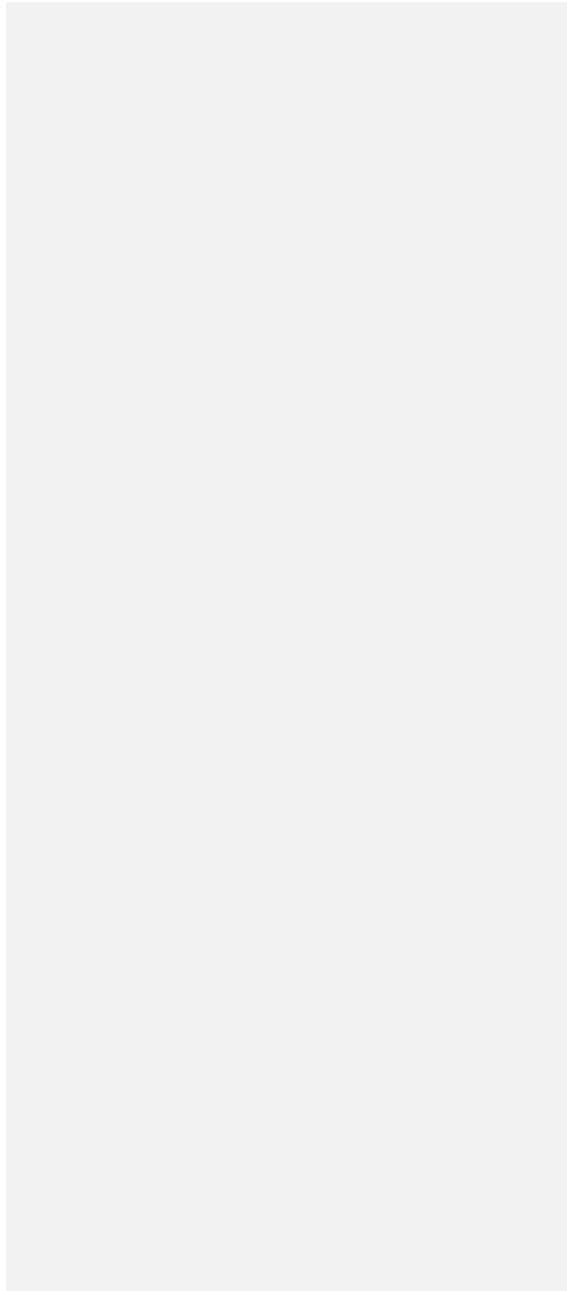
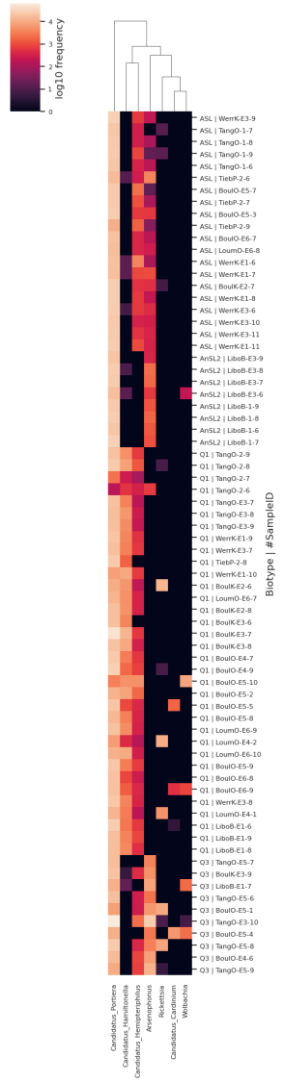
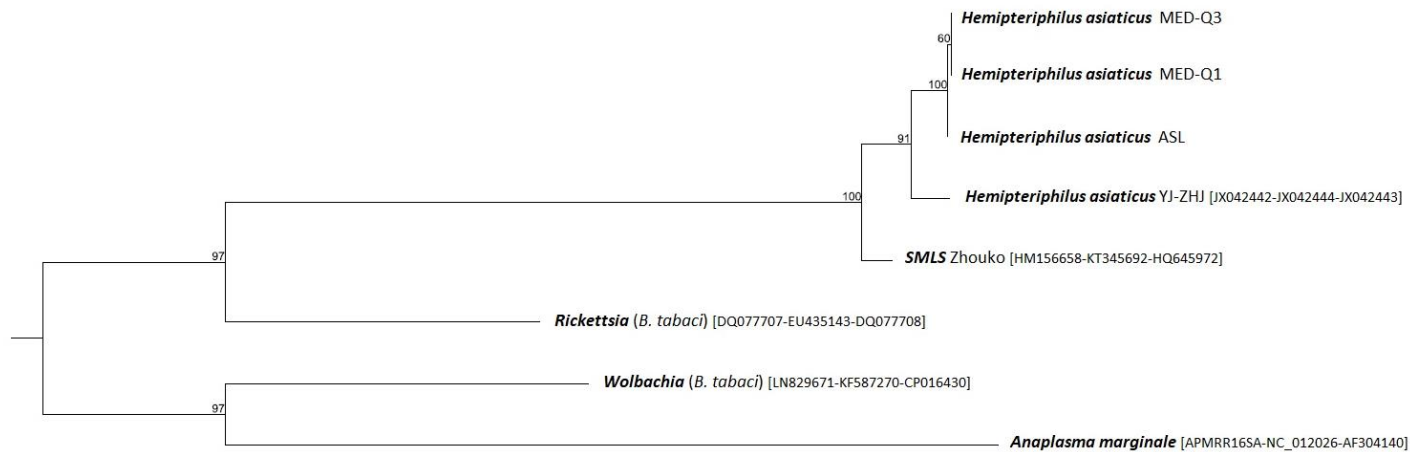


Figure 21

Phylogeny constructed using Maximum Likelihood analysis (model GTR + G + T) based on the trimmed and concatenated sequences of three genes, ~~16S rRNA~~ ~~16S+DNA~~ (483bp), *GroEL* (269bp) and *GltA* (190bp) (942bp in total). Bootstrap values are shown at the nodes (100 replicates). Sequences obtained from *Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* found in the present study in *B. tabaci* from Burkina Faso (indicated by the biotype of their host, MED-Q1, MED-Q3, ASL) were compared to the YH-ZHJ strain found in China biotype individuals of *B. tabaci* from China and to other closely related symbionts belonging to the Rickettsiales family: *Rickettsia* and *Sitobion miscanthi* L Type Symbiont (SMLS) and *Orientia tsutsumagushi*. The genbank accession numbers of the sequences obtained from other studies are indicated in the brackets.

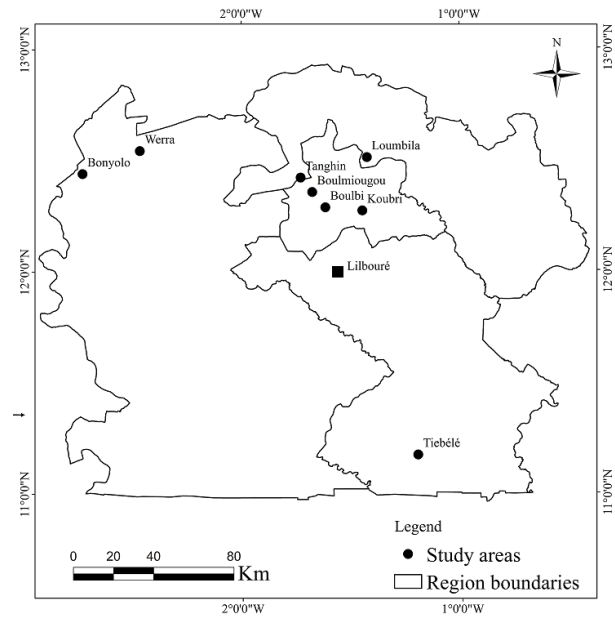
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Figure 32: Sampling localities in Burkina Faso



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Both prevalence of symbionts and phylogenetic analysis of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* ~~*Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*~~ were done on individuals from the nine localities indicated except Libouré (indicated by a square) for which no sample was used for the phylogenies.

711 **Figure 43**

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713 Infection status of *Bemisia tabaci* individuals collected in Burkina Faso according to their biotype, determined through specific qPCRs. Each graph

714 corresponds to one biotype, with the different bacterial symbionts shown on the x-axis. Each bacterium is represented by a colour (red: *Ca. Portiera*

715 *aleyrodidarumPortiera* (P), blue: *Rickettsia* (R), green: *Hamiltonella* (H), purple: *Cardinium* (C), orange: *Wolbachia* (W), yellow: *Arsenophonus*

716 (A), brown: *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticusHemipteriphilus* (HA)) and the corresponding coloured bar indicates its prevalence. On the y-axis host

717 individuals are ranked and grouped together according to their infection status: when the graph is read horizontally, the colour combinations

718 represent individuals sharing the same symbiotic community. n indicates the number of individuals checked.

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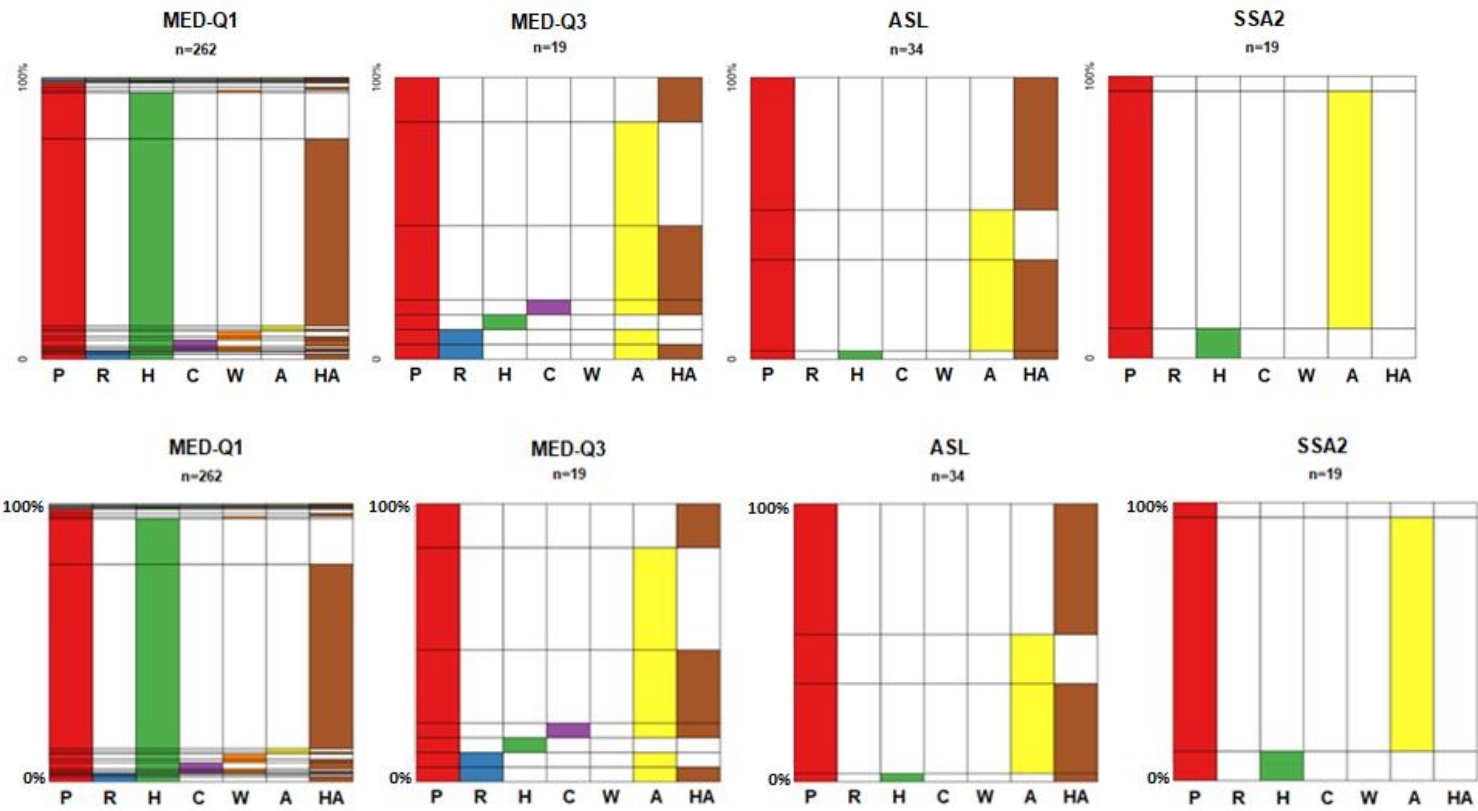
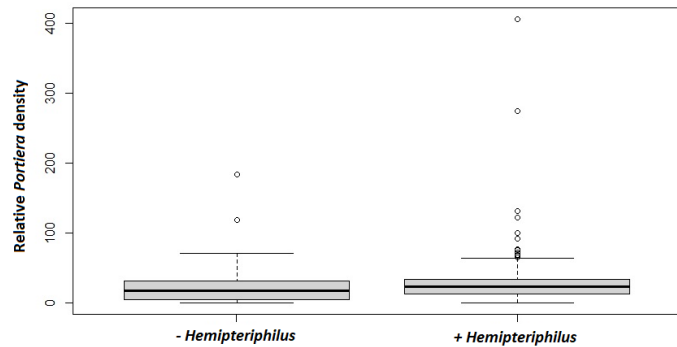


Figure 4: *Portiera* densities according to the presence of *Hemipteriphilus*

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Relative *Portiera* densities (ratio of the number of copies of *Portiera* (ADNr16S) and host (actine) genes) in absence (-) or presence (+) of *Hemipteriphilus* within the same host individuals.

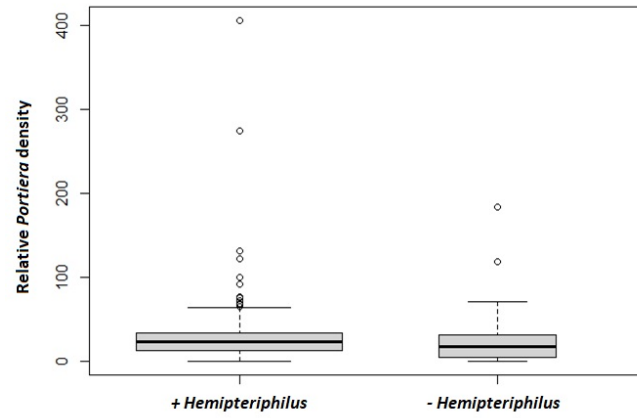


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Figure 5: *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum* densities according to the presence of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus*

Relative *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum* densities (ratio of the number of copies of *Ca. Portiera aleyrodidarum* (16S rRNA) and host (actine) genes) in absence (- ; n=69) or presence (+ ; n=213) of *Ca. Hemipteriphilus asiaticus* within the same host individuals. The width of the box plots reflect the number of samples for each modality.

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