

Hans Zell's engagement with publishing and the book in Africa - A timeline

Period/Year	Activity/Publications	Position held/Role
1965-1967	Establishment and management of a new university bookshop at Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, Sierra Leone.	Manager
1967	“Writings by West Africans” exhibition, British Council, Freetown.	Organizer
1971-1974	Management of University of Ife [now Obafemi Awolowo University] Bookshops at the university's Ibadan and Ile-Ife campuses, and setting up of the University of Ife Press .	Managing Director, University of Ife Bookshop Ltd; and Editor, University of Ife Press
1972	“Printed & Published in Africa” book exhibition, held at Ibadan and Ile-Ife, Nigeria.	Organizer
1973	International Conference on Publishing and Book Development in Africa, University of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, 16-20 December, 1973.	Convener and Conference Director
1975	Conference proceedings of the above published by the University of Ife Press, entitled <i>Publishing in Africa in the Seventies</i> .	Joint Editor, with Edwina Oluwasanmi and Eva McLean
1975	1st edition of <i>African Books in Print/Livres Africains Disponibles</i> published by Mansell Information/Publishing Ltd., London, in association with the University of Ife Press.	Editor
1975	Volume 1, no. 1, (1975), first issue of the quarterly <i>African Book Publishing Record (ABPR)</i> published by Hans Zell Publishers, Oxford; in later years published by Bowker-Saur. Hans Zell edited the journal from 1975 to 2002, and since that time it has been edited by Cécile Lomer. It is now published by de Gruyter in Berlin, and is currently in its 42nd year of publication.	Founding Editor and Publisher
1977	1st edition of <i>The African Book World & Press: A Directory/Répertoire du Livre et de la Presse en Afrique</i> , published Hans Zell Publishers, Oxford; Gale Research Company, Detroit; France Expansion, Paris; and Verlag Dokumentation, Munich.	Editor and Publisher
1978	2nd edition of <i>African Books in Print/Livres Africains Disponibles</i> , 2 vols., published by Mansell Information Publishing Ltd, London, and Meckler Books, Westport, Conn.	Editor

1979	<p>Inaugural meeting at the University of Ife, Ile-Ife, Nigeria, of the Managing Committee (the Jury) of the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa, chaired by Professor Eldred Jones of Sierra Leone.</p> <p>The principal aim of this new award – sponsored by Shoichi Noma, former President of the Japanese publishing house Kodansha – was to be the encouragement of publication <i>in</i> Africa of works by African writers and scholars. Hans Zell acted as Secretary to the Noma Award Managing Committee (and as a Trustee of the Noma Award charitable trust) from 1979 to 1995, when he was succeeded by his deputy Mary Jay.</p>	Convener, and Secretary to the Managing Committee (to 1995)
1980	<p>First presentation of the Noma Award for Publishing in Africa during the 1980 Frankfurt Book Fair, whose focal theme was “Africa” during that year.</p> <p>The late Mariama Bâ was the first recipient of the award for her novel <i>Une si longue lettre</i>, published by Les Nouvelles Editions Africaines, Dakar, in 1979, which is now considered a classical statement on the female condition in Africa, and which was subsequently translated into 17 languages.</p>	
1980	<p>2nd edition of <i>The African Book World & Press: A Directory/Répertoire du Livre et de la Presse en Afrique</i>, published Hans Zell Publishers, Oxford; Gale Research Company, Detroit; France Expansion, Paris; and K.G. Saur Verlag, Munich.</p>	Editor and Publisher
1982	<p>First "Bookweek Africa" held at the Africa Centre, London, 8-10 June, 1982.</p> <p>Book exhibition and events.</p>	Joint organizer
1983	<p>3rd edition of <i>The African Book World & Press: A Directory/Répertoire du Livre et de la Presse en Afrique</i>, published Hans Zell Publishers, Oxford; Gale Research Company, Detroit; France Expansion, Paris; K.G. Saur Verlag, Munich (this edition co-edited with Caroline Bundy).</p>	Editor & Publisher
1983	<p>Acted as a consultant to the organizers of the 1st Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 1983, and organized the re-showing of ‘Bookweek Africa. An Exhibition of Books and Journals’, held at the Africa Centre in London the previous year (see above).</p>	Consultant
1984	<p><i>Publishing and Book Development in Africa: A Bibliography/L'Édition et le Développement du Livre en Afrique: une bibliographie</i>, published by UNESCO in its “Studies on Books and Reading” series.</p>	Author
1984	<p>Acted as a consultant to the organizers of the 2nd Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 1984, and provided advice about setting up a permanent Book Fair Secretariat.</p>	Consultant
1984	<p>3rd edition of <i>African Books in Print/Livres Africains Disponibles</i>, 2 vols., published by Mansell Information Publishing Ltd, London, and N.W. Wilson Co., New York.</p>	Editor
1985	<p>Acted as a consultant to the organizers of the 3rd Zimbabwe International Book Fair in 1985.</p>	Consultant

1985	Second "Bookweek Africa" held at the Africa Centre, London, 17-19 October, 1985. Book exhibition and events.	Joint organizer with the Africa Centre
1985	"African Publishers' Working Group Meeting on Collective Export Marketing and Distribution", London, 13-16 October, 1985. This meeting led to the founding of the Oxford-based, but African-owned African Books Collective Ltd (ABC), which commenced trading in 1989, see below.	Joint organizer (with Mary Jay)
1986-1995 (part-time)	African Books Collective Ltd., Oxford, Senior Consultant to the ABC Council of Management. Functions included setting up company, providing financial planning and management, supervising administration, establishing an orders processing system, warehousing, offering advice about marketing and promotion, etc., and assuming overall responsibility for day-to-day operations on a part-time basis. Mary Jay took over as the Senior Consultant, and as ABC's CEO in 1995, to 2012. Its current CEO is Justin Cox. Formerly donor supported but now self-financing, and having moved to a largely digital business model, ABC celebrated its 25th year of operations in 2015, and see also http://www.africanbookscollective.com/ .	Consultant (with Mary Jay)
1988	First edition of <i>A Handbook of African Writers</i> published by Hans Zell Publishers, and edited James Gibbs. A new second edition, <i>The African Writers' Handbook</i> , edited by James Gibbs and Jack Mapanje, was subsequently published by African Book Collective Ltd. in 1999, in association with the Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation. Uppsala.	Publisher
1988	First meeting of the Council of Management of African Books Collective, Oxford, June 1988.	Joint convenor (with Mary Jay)
1989	4th edition of <i>The African Book World & Press: A Directory/Répertoire du Livre et de la Presse en Afrique</i> , published Hans Zell Publishers, An imprint of the K.G. Saur Division of Butterworths.	Editor and Publisher
1990	"Africa—The Neglected Continent" published in <i>Logos. The Professional Journal of the Book World</i> 1, no. 2 (1990). For link to online version see CV.	Author
1992	Publication of <i>Publishing and Development in the Third World</i> , edited by Philip G. Altbach, by Hans Zell Publishers, London, in association with Vistaar Publications, New Delhi, and Heinemann Kenya Ltd. Commissioned papers, including many on Africa, presented at the major international seminar on publishing in the Third World, held at the Rockefeller Conference Centre, Bellagio, Italy, in February 1991.	Publisher
1993	4th edition of <i>African Books in Print/Livres Africains Disponibles</i> , 2 vols. published by Hans Zell Publishers, an imprint of Bowker-Saur Ltd., London.	Editor
1993	"Publishing in Africa: The Crisis and the Challenge." published in <i>A History of Twentieth-Century African Literatures</i> , edited by Oyekan Owomoyela, and published by University of Nebraska Press, Lincoln, Nebraska. For link to online version see CV.	Author

1993	Publishing in Africa: The Crisis and the Challenge. Roundtable at the (US) African Studies Association, 36th annual meeting, Boston, December 1993.	Roundtable convenor and chair
1995	Hans Zell's collection of books and journals, and his personal archive relating to 35 years of publishing and book development in Africa, for the period 1960 to 1995, donated to the African Publishers Network (APNET), Harare, Zimbabwe.	Donation
1996	<i>Publishing and Book Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Annotated Bibliography</i> published by Hans Zell Publishers, an imprint of Bowker-Saur, London. Published in association with the African Publishers Network (APNET), Harare, Zimbabwe. Now annotated, this bibliography superseded the earlier UNESCO bibliography published in 1984.	Joint Editor (with Cécile Lomer)
1998	<i>A Handbook of Good Practice in Journal Publishing</i> , 2nd revised edition published by the International African Institute, London and African Books Collective Ltd, Oxford. A comprehensive handbook, and guidelines for good practice, to assist journal editors in Africa to improve their publishing operations.	Author
1999	Commissioned by Book Aid International (BAI) to provide an evaluation of BAI's Publishing Support Programmes, consisting of the "Intra-African Book Support Scheme", and the "Publishers' Resource Pack Project".	Consultant
2000	5th edition of <i>African Books in Print/Livres Africains Disponibles</i> , 2 vols., published by Hans Zell Publishers, an imprint of Bowker-Saur Ltd., London. Note: a 6th edition, edited by Cécile Lomer, was published by K.G. Saur, Munich, in 2006.	Editor
2000	2nd edition of <i>The Electronic African Bookworm. A Web Navigator</i> published by African Books Collective Ltd, Oxford.	Author
2001	<i>Book Marketing & Promotion: A Handbook of Good Practice</i> , published by the International Network for the Availability of Scientific Publications (INASP), London. A compendium of practical advice on all aspects of book marketing and promotion, particularly for publishers and NGOs in Africa and in other developing countries.	Author
2002	<i>The African Publishing Companion: A Resource Guide</i> , print edition and online, published by Hans Zell Publishing Consultants, Lochcarron, Scotland. A documentation and information resource on African publishing and the book trade.	Editor and Publisher
2008	<i>Publishing, Books & Reading in Sub-Saharan Africa. A Critical Bibliography</i> , published by Hans Zell Publishing, Lochcarron, Scotland. Print edition and online. With and introductory essay by Henry Chakava.	Author

Online at <http://www.hanszell.co.uk/pbrssa/index.shtml>

A new, completely revised and fully updated edition of the earlier *Publishing and Book Development in Sub-Saharan Africa: An Annotated Bibliography* published in 1996 (see above). The content and focus of the new edition was substantially recast in several ways. Annotations and abstracts – which are often quite extensive – are now more evaluative rather than descriptive and much greater emphasis is placed on the relative significance of the material included, thus offering a more critical dimension in reviewing the available literature on the topic. Contains over 2,500 critically annotated entries, including almost 500 resources that are available online, most of them freely accessible. (For reviews see <http://www.hanszell.co.uk/pbrssa/reviews.shtml>.)

- 2008/09 “Publishing in Africa: Where Are We Now?”, an extensive two-part article, published in *Logos. Forum of the World Book Community* 19, no. 4 (2008) and 20, no. 1 (2009). Also published (part one and part two combined) in *The African Book Publishing Record*, 35, no. 4 (2009). Also available at Academia.edu, see CV for links. Author
- 2013 Published “Print vs Electronic, and the ‘Digital Revolution’ in Africa.” in *The African Book Publishing Record* 39, no. 1 (2013). Preview version uploaded on Academia.edu, see CV for link. Author
A critical look at the print vs digital debate in Africa, taking stock of the current [2013] position as it relates to electronic publishing and the use of electronic reading devices in (English-speaking) sub-Saharan Africa, and the rapidly changing publishing environment on the continent. It describes and critically examines a number of projects and initiatives that are concerned with digital printing and publishing, and provision of e-book reading devices.
- 2013 Published “How Many Books are Published in Africa? The Need for More Reliable Statistics.” *The African Book Publishing Record* 39, no. 4 (2013). Pre-print online version at Academia.edu, see CV for link. Author
This article calls for more reliable statistical information about African book publishing output. In much of the literature on publishing in Africa numerous writers of articles and reports on the state of the book sector in Africa have raised the issue of Africa’s total book production, comparing it with that of the rest of the world. Almost always they have cited the figure to be between 2-3% of the world’s publishing output. This is the figure that has been cited perpetually for the last two decades at least, and is based on statistical analysis published the UNESCO Institute of Statistics (UIS). Those figures, in turn, came from the statistical data presented in the ‘Culture and Communication’ domains in the now discontinued UNESCO Statistical Yearbooks from 1963 to 1999, and which, as the author demonstrates in this article, have been chronically patchy, unreliable or suspect for a number of reasons.
- 2015/16 “Book Donation Programmes for Africa: Time for a Reappraisal? Two Perspectives.” *African Research & Documentation. Journal of SCOLMA (the UK Libraries and Archives Group on Africa)*, no. 127 (2015). [Published July 2016] Co-author (with Raphaël Thierry)
Pre-print online versions on Academia.edu, see CV for links.
Part I: Book Donation Programmes in English-speaking Africa, by Hans M. Zell
Part II: Le don de livre, mais à quel prix, et en échange de quoi? Un regard sur le don de livre en Afrique francophone, by Raphaël Thierry.
A wide-ranging and provocative two-part study that attempts to shed more light on current book donation practices, and provides an analysis and profiles of the work of the principal book aid organizations active in the English-speaking parts of sub-Saharan Africa. In particular, the study seeks to find out how many African-published books are included in current donation schemes. Part II examines book donation practices in francophone Africa.

2015	Hans Zell's further collection of books, monograph series, journals, articles and other documents on publishing and book development in Sub-Saharan Africa, for the period 1996 to 2014, is donated to Kwara State University Library, Malete, Nigeria.	Donation
2016	Migration of the <i>Publishing, Books & Reading in Sub-Saharan Africa</i> online database, consisting of over 3,000 fully annotated records, to Kwara State University Library; to be re-launched by them on an improved (Drupal-based open access/open source) digital platform in 2016. Prior to launch some 300 new records will be added to the database.	Donation
2016	<p>“Publishing & the Book in Africa: A Literature Review for 2015” published in <i>The African Book Publishing Record</i> 42, no. 1 (2016). Pre-print online version at Academia.edu, see CV for link.</p> <p>The first in a new series of annual reviews of select new literature in English that has appeared on the topic of publishing and book development in Africa published during the course of the preceding year.</p>	Author
	<p>“Indigenous Publishing in Africa – The Need for Research, Documentation, and Collaboration.” Contribution of a chapter in <i>Coming of Age. Strides in African Publishing. Essays in Honour of Dr. Henry Chakava at 70</i>, edited by Kiarie Kamau and Kirimi Mitambo. Nairobi: East African Educational Publishers Ltd, 2016.</p> <p>Pre-print online version at Academia.edu, see CV for link</p> <p>This paper sets out the need for more systematic and more vigorous research and documentation, data gathering, and analysis of the African book sector. It also argues for the desirability for more collaboration, knowledge sharing, and information and skills exchange within Africa; as well as the possible development of North-South links and partnership programmes, such as for example a programme to establish a North-South research group, a new research cluster or network bringing together suitable academic and research institutions in Africa, Europe, and North America. A final section offers some pointers for reinvigorating research, and possible forms of collaboration.</p>	Author