

Celebrating a Pan-African Intellectual: Paul Tiyambe Zeleza at 70

# ZELEZA CONFERENCE

May 21-22, 2025

Digital Auditorium, Blackburn Center  
Howard University

*Livestreaming on [youtube.com/c/HUCenterAfrica](https://youtube.com/c/HUCenterAfrica)*

# PROGRAM



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[cfas.howard.edu/conference-zeleza-70th](https://cfas.howard.edu/conference-zeleza-70th)

# Conference Program

## Conference

May 21 – 22, 2025

Digital Auditorium at the Armour J. Blackburn Center, Howard University  
2397 6th St NW, Washington, DC 20059

## Livestreaming on

The HU Center for African Studies YouTube Channel

[youtube.com/c/HUCenterAfrica](https://youtube.com/c/HUCenterAfrica)

*The Conference will be followed by*

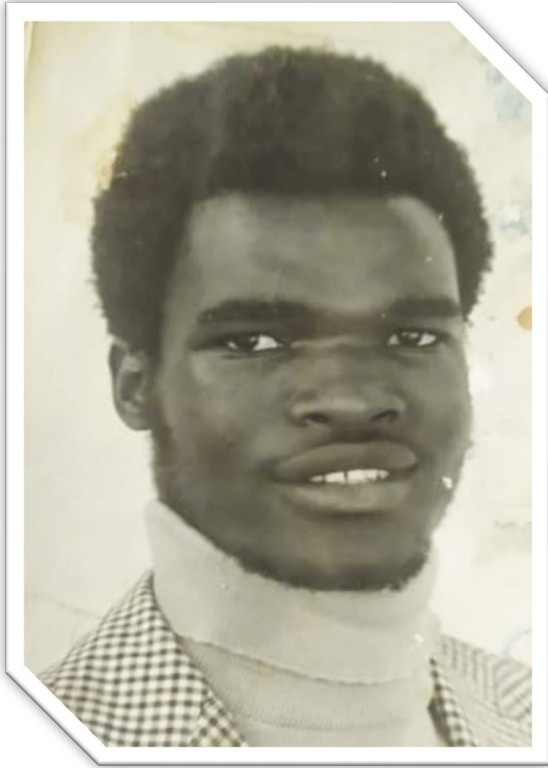
## Reception

May 22 | 6 - 8 pm

Center for African Studies at Howard University  
in the Progression Place (UNCF) Building  
1805 7th Street NW, 7th floor, Washington, DC



# Biography of Prof. Zeleza



Paul Tiyambe Zeleza is Senior Advisor for Strategic Initiatives and Professor of African Studies at Howard University. Previously he was Associate Provost and the North Star Distinguished Professor at Case Western Reserve University (2021-2023), after serving as Vice Chancellor (President) and Professor of the Social Sciences and Humanities at the United States International University (USIU) in Kenya from 2016-2021. Prior to that he held distinguished academic and administrative positions as College Principal (Trent University, Canada), Director of the Center for African Studies (University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign), Professor of History and African and African American Studies (Pennsylvania State University), Chair of the Department of African American Studies (University of Illinois at Chicago), Dean of the College of Liberal Arts (Loyola Marymount University), and Vice President for Academic Affairs (Quinnipiac University).

He received his bachelor's degree (with distinction) at the University of Malawi, master's at the University of London in Britain, and PhD at Dalhousie University in Canada. He started his academic career at the University of the West Indies in Jamaica, followed by Kenyatta University in Kenya. In the early 2000s, he worked as a consultant for the Ford and MacArthur foundations on their initiatives to revitalize higher education in Africa. His research project on the African academic diaspora conducted for the Carnegie Corporation of New York in 2011-12 led to the establishment of the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program in 2013 that has to date sponsored more than 600 African born academics in the United States and Canada to work with more than 170 universities in nine African countries.



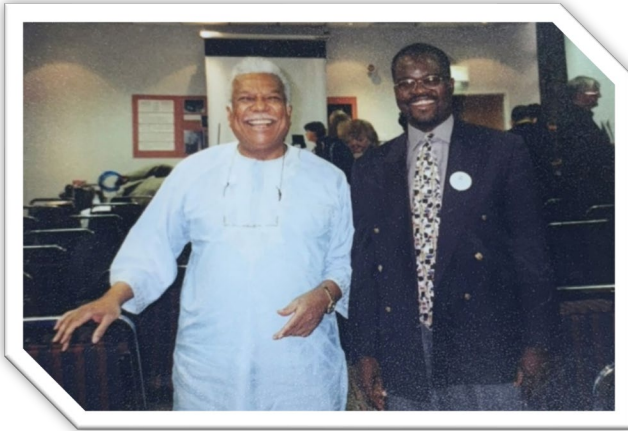
An interdisciplinary scholar, his work covers the fields of African economic history, development studies, intellectual history, diaspora studies, gender studies, human rights studies, cultural studies, and literary studies. He has published more than 400 journal articles, book chapters, encyclopedia entries, reviews, short stories, and online essays and authored or edited 28 books and five short monographs. Several of his books have won international awards. His most recent book is *Re-envisioning African and American Academies* (2024). He is currently editing *The Chronicles of African University Leaders, a volume of reflections by former vice chancellors of some of Africa's leading universities*. He has published two collections of short stories and an acclaimed novel that is being turned into a movie.

A much sought-after speaker, he has presented over 300 keynote addresses, papers, and public lectures at leading universities and international conferences in 32 countries. He has also served on the editorial boards of more than two dozen journals and book series. He currently serves as Editor-in-Chief of the Oxford Bibliographies Online in African Studies. He has received numerous awards from major universities and various organizations for his scholarship. In July 2013, he was recognized in *The New York Times* as one of 43 Great Immigrants in the United States. In May 2015, he was awarded an honorary Doctor of Laws at Dalhousie





University for outstanding personal achievement. In 2015, he was a fellow at Harvard University during which he wrote *The Transformation of Global Higher Education, 1945-2015* (2016). In 2018, he received the Thabo Mbeki Award for Leadership. In 2022, he was awarded the W.E.B. Dubois Fellowship at Harvard to work on *The Long Transition to the 21st Century: A Global History of the Present*.



He has held the positions of Honorary Professor at the University of Cape Town since 2006 and at the Nelson Mandela University since 2019. He has served in more than two dozen international and national associations, most recently on the Administrative Board of the



International Association of Universities, the Advisory Board of the Alliance for African Partnership, University of Ghana



Council (Board of Trustees), Chair of the Advisory Council of the Carnegie African Diaspora Fellowship Program, and Chair of the Board of Trustees of the Kenya Education Network. In 2008-2009, he served as President of the U.S. African Studies Association. He has raised tens of millions of dollars for institutional advancement and personal research. He is most proud of the \$63.2 million grant from the Mastercard Foundation USIU received in 2020 to provide scholarships for 1,000 students from across Africa for ten years.

# Day 1: Wednesday, May 21, 2025

## Arrival and Registration

8:00 AM

## Light Breakfast

8:30 AM – 8:55 AM

### Opening Remarks

WEDNESDAY

9:00 AM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

**Mohamed Camara**, Chair of Conference & Department of African Studies,  
Howard University

**Rubin Patterson**, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences, Howard University

**Lanisa Kitchiner**, Associate Vice President for Global and Diaspora  
Engagement, Howard University

**Anthony Wutoh**, Provost, Howard University

Introduction of **President Ben Vinson III** by *Provost Anthony Wutoh*

**President Vinson's** Remarks

## Panel I

WEDNESDAY

10:00 AM - 11:30 AM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

### PAN-AFRICANISM AND AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

**Chair: Sipho Sithole**, Howard University

1. The African Renaissance: African Freedom in Cairo, 1957-1964  
**Presenter: Anaheed Al-Hardan**, Howard University
2. Pawns to Players: Transforming the African Identity  
**Presenter: Mkawasi Mcharo Hall**, Howard University
3. Paul Zeleza: Africa, African Diasporas, Pan Africanism and the Issue of Definitions  
**Presenter: Shomarka Keita**, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, DC
4. The African Development Agenda and the African Renaissance: Insights from Paul Tiyambe Zeleza  
**Presenter: Oluwakemi Damola Adejumo-Ayibiowu**, University of South Africa

## Panel II

WEDNESDAY

11:40 AM - 1:10 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

### PEACE AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

**Chair: Krista Johnson**, Howard University

1. Patterns of Relapse in Post-Intervention States: A Critique of the African Peace and Security Architecture  
**Presenter: Muema Wambua**, United States International University—Africa (*Virtual*)
2. For the Ones who are Left: A Traumatized Systems Theory Perspective of Dr. Paul Zeleza's Scholarship on African Conflict  
**Presenter: e. christi cunningham**, Howard University
3. Struggles Across Borders: The Influence of Insecurity and Conflict on Diasporic Identity  
**Presenter: Talitha Tukura-Pam**, University of Michigan
4. Mandela's One Five-Year Term: A Lesson for Africa's Sit-Tight Leaders in Zeleza's Perspective  
**Presenter: Ekanade Israel and Rakubu Kholofelo**, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa
5. Geopolitical Realignment, Human Security and Sociopolitical Change in a Volatile World: Responses to the Threats of War, Conflict, and Climate Change in the African World  
**Presenter: Alem Hailu**, Howard University

## Lunch Break

1:10 PM – 2:10 PM

### Panel III

WEDNESDAY  
2:15 PM - 3:30 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

#### KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTION AND HIGHER EDUCATION

**Chair: José Jackson-Malete**, Michigan State University

1. Decolonizing Knowledge: The Transformative Impact of Paul Tiyambe Zeleza's Scholarship

**Presenter: Geoffrey Kimotho**, Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology, Kenya (*Virtual*)

2. Reimagining PhD Training in African Higher Education Institutions: Challenges and Opportunities for Innovation

**Presenters: Tawana Kupe**, Michigan State University, **Anthony K. Wutoh**, Howard University, **Robert Wamala**, Makerere University, and **Amy Jamison**, Michigan State University

### Panel IV

WEDNESDAY  
3:40 PM - 4:45 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

#### RESEARCH AND MENTORSHIP

**Chair: Ambachew Anjulo**, Howard University

1. Professor Zeleza's and the Africa Diaspora Research and Mentorship

**Presenter: David Mwambari**, KU Leuven University, Belgium

2. Professor Paul Tiyambe Zeleza's Impact on Students: A Retrospective

**Presenters: Chidima Chidoka**, **Yaw Asare**, **Hellen Maleche**, **Grace Mkomwa**, and **Amartey Laryea**, Howard University



## Keynote Address

WEDNESDAY  
4:45 PM – 5:45 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

**Chair: Dean Dana Williams**, Howard University

**Speaker: Adebayo Olukoshi**, Distinguished Professor, Wits School of Governance, South Africa

## FILM

### *Zeleza: Zones and Zests*

6:00 PM – 7:00 PM

Produced by Ndirangu Wachanga, University of Wisconsin-Whitewater

# Day 2: Thursday, May 22, 2025

## Arrival and Registration

8:00 AM – 8:25 AM

## Light Breakfast

8:30 AM – 8:55 AM

### Keynote Address

THURSDAY

9:00 AM – 10:00 AM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

**Chair: Melanie Carter**

**Speaker: Funmi Olonisakin**, King's College, London (*Virtual*)

### Panel I

THURSDAY

10:10 AM - 11:35 AM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

### WOMEN AND WORKERS' MOVEMENT

**Chair: Nathalie Frédéric Pierre**, Howard University

1. Paper: Transnational Roots of Kenya's Strike Movement: Railway Construction Workers' Struggle in East Africa

**Presenter: Norman Aselmeyer**, University of Oxford (*Virtual*)

2. Paper: Struggles for Space: The Impact of the Group Areas Act on Women's Activism and Social Justice in Apartheid South Africa

**Presenters: Kabir Abdulkareem and Dee Khosa**, Tshwane University of Technology, South Africa

3. Paper: Renovating African Perspectives on Gender through Professor Zeleza's Scholarly Legacy

**Presenter: James Mwita**, Catholic University of Eastern Africa

## Panel II

THURSDAY  
11:55 AM - 1:15 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

### DEVELOPMENT AND ECONOMIC HISTORY

**Chair:** Ademide Adelusi-Adeluyi, Howard University

1. Reimagining Africa's Economic Futures: Engaging with Paul Tiyambe Zeleza's Contributions to Economic History and Development Studies

**Presenter:** Edward Luwanja, Match Foundation, Malawi (*Virtual*)

2. African Historiography: Corollaries of the Lacuna of the Griot Libraries in the Postcolonial Library

**Presenters:** Lukman Adewale Quadri and Christopher Afoke Isike, University of Pretoria (*Virtual*)

3. Africa: Challenges of Development and AfCFTA

**Presenter:** Gallous Atabongwoung, Academia Sinica, Taiwan (*Virtual*)

4. The Beautiful Bride: Summit Diplomacy and Africa's Quest for Sustainable Development

**Presenters:** Babajide A. Tella and Mouhamadou M. Hoyeck, Howard University

## Lunch Break

1:20 PM – 2:20 PM



## Panel III

THURSDAY  
2:30 PM - 4:00 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

### CREATIVE WRITING AND DIGITAL HUMANITIES AND HEALING PRACTICES

**Chair: Michael Ralph**, Howard University

1. A Writer with an Ear: Paul Tiyaambe Zeleza

**Presenter: Melvin E. Page**, East Tennessee State University (*Virtual*)

2. Exploring Postcolonial Migration in Paul Tiyaambe Zeleza's *The Joys of Exile*

**Presenter: Violet Khama Gumbwa**, University of Malawi (*Virtual*)

3. The 1619 Diaspora: Placing Eyes at the Source

**Presenter: Gerald J. Rizzo**, Afriterrra Cartographic Library

4. Laissez Faire and the Age of Transformational Black Travel

**Presenter: Kayla Harley**, The Beebodi Marketplace

5. Challenging Stereotypes and Building Bridges: Exploring Racial Narratives Between Africans, African Americans, and Caribbean Scholars in the United States and Africa

**Presenters: Barikisu Issaka, Denise Troutman, Isaac Kalumbu, and Jose Jackson-Malete**, Michigan State University

6. Hip-Hop Studies and the Decolonization of African Studies

**Presenter: Msia Kibona Clark**, Howard University

7. Sport, Youth Empowerment, and Sustainable Development: A Pan-African Perspective

**Presenter: Leapetswe Malete**, Michigan State University

## Fireside Chat

THURSDAY  
4:10 PM - 5:00 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

**Chair: Carole Boyce Davies**, Chair, English Department, Howard University

**Speaker: Amina Mama**, Professor of Gender, Sexuality and Women's Studies, University of California-Davis

## Closing Remarks

THURSDAY  
5:05 PM - 5:10 PM

Blackburn  
Digital Auditorium

**Mohamed Camara**, Chair of the Conference & Department of African  
Studies, Howard University

# Reception

6:00 PM – 8:00 PM

Center for African Studies at Howard University  
in the Progression Place (UNCF) Building  
1805 7th Street NW, 7th floor, Washington, DC

# Organizing Committee

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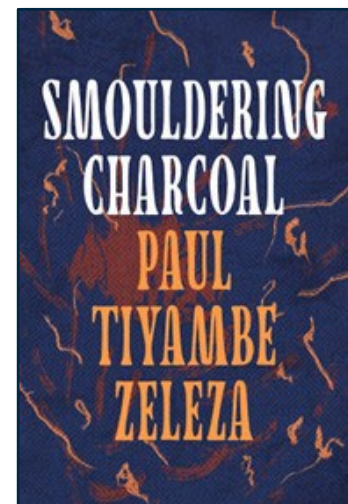
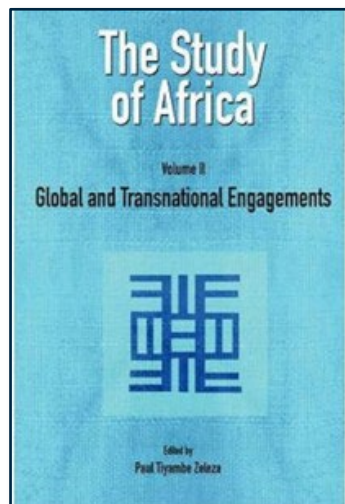
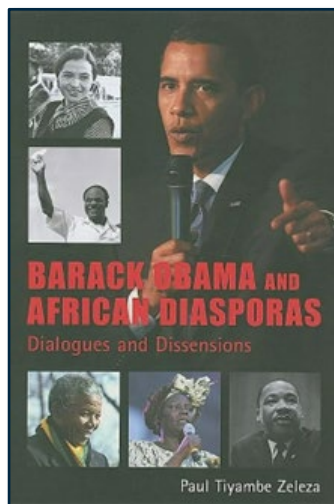
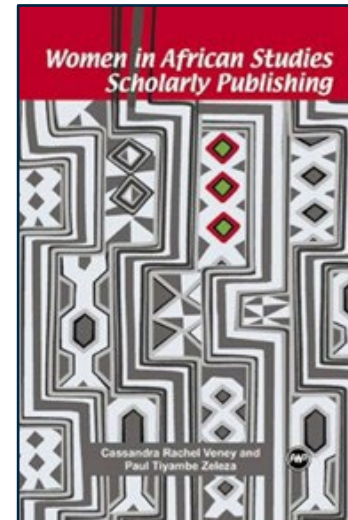
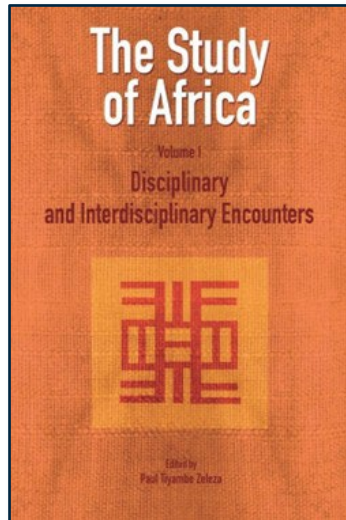
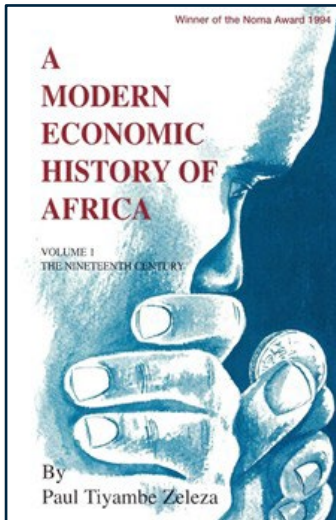
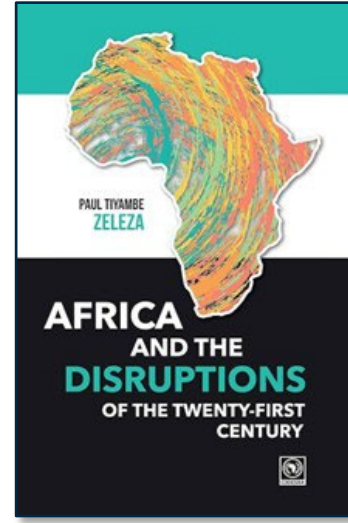
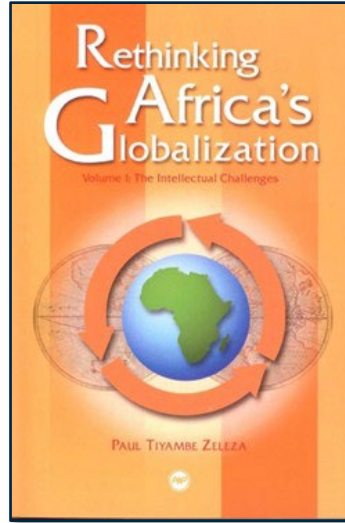
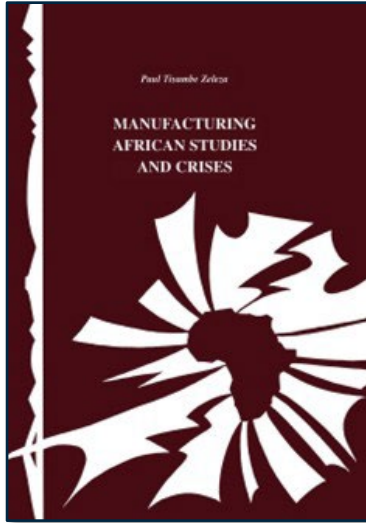
Moorland-Spingarn Research Center

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*Following the Conference*

*Join us*  
*for the*

*Reception*  
*celebrating*

*Prof.* **ZELEZA'S**

**70<sup>th</sup>**

**May 22 | 6 - 8 pm**

**Center for African Studies at Howard University  
in the Progression Place (UNCF) Building  
7th floor**

**1805 7th Street NW, Washington, DC 20001**

