

## Decomposing Tones in African Languages

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There is no doubt that African tone systems have played a significant role in phonological theory (Hyman 2008). What is in stark contrast is how little African languages have figured in our understanding of the phonetic structures of tonal categories and, consequently, the phonetics-phonology interface for tones. What also remains underexplored is how contextual phonetic variation and phonological alternations serve to signal higher-level information, such as cuing sentence structure and encoding information structure (Downing & Rialland 2017 and references therein). Answers to these questions potentially shed light on the deeper and more general issue of speech variation and linguistic representation (Chen 2012).

For this panel, we invite contributions based on experimental data that investigate the phonetic structures of lexical tones and utterance-level tonal variations. The goal of this panel is to bring us closer to understanding the universality and diversity of the forms and functions of speech melody in African tone languages.

Researchers wishing to participate in the Decomposing Tones in African Languages workshop should submit abstracts following the abstract submission guidelines for WOCAL10 and include TONE in the “keywords” field. Abstracts should be submitted via the easychair link by November 30<sup>th</sup>.

### References

1. Chen, Yiya. (2012). Message-related variation: Tonal variation. In Cohn, A., Fourgeron, C., and Huffman, M. (eds.), *Oxford Handbook of Laboratory Phonology*. pp. 103-115. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
2. Downing, Laura & Annie Rialland (2017). *Intonation in African Tone Languages*. Berlin & Boston: De Gruyter Mouton.
3. Hyman, Larry. (2008). Issues in African Language Phonology. *UC Berkeley PhonLab Annual Report 4*: 90-109.