

# CALL FOR PAPERS

## African Philosophies of Language

February 18-19, 2021

A Conference Organized by the African Studies Center, UCLA

Co-Hosted by the Departments of Philosophy, Linguistics and Anthropology

Why do African languages matter to philosophy, and to the human and social sciences more generally? In pursuing this question apropos specific African languages, we invite explorations of indigenous ideas about discourse, grammar, meaning, agency, invocation, incantation and language use. From multiple disciplinary perspectives including linguistics, philosophy, anthropology, art history, literature, religious studies, cultural studies and education, our conference addresses explicit ideas about speech and illocutionary force often associated with ritual power and secrecy in Africa. We will also engage implicit notions of time, number, place, person, gender, thinghood, narrative, and poetic/pragmatic function embedded in grammars broadly construed. Panel themes can range from critical reflections on African “philosophies” of language, “grammars” of secrecy, and verbal-visual interfaces to more technical discussions of “language about language” that situate indigenous registers, speech-surrogates and metalanguages in their performative contexts.

Motivating our collective effort are the linked convictions that African philosophies of language are rich intellectual and cultural resources from which we have much to learn; that they have been systematically marginalized and overlooked by the western academy; and that meaningful inquiry into their reflexive frameworks requires a renewed commitment to the pedagogy of African languages.

Please send your name, email, position and institutional affiliation together with a 150-250 word abstract of your proposed paper to: [africa@international.ucla.edu](mailto:africa@international.ucla.edu)

Please use (upper case) “APL CONFERENCE” in the subject heading.

We look forward to hearing about your proposed contribution to this important initiative.