**Mother Tongues**

There are two thousand languages in Africa among the six thousand in the world, so roughly one third, sometimes you see fifteen hundred. I think the reason why we have such extraordinary linguistic diversity in Africa is because people have been there a long time. The other side that has to contribute to this is isolation from each other. There people don’t have contact and they go off in their own direction. Languages are going involved in different ways. African languages use tongue. In fact, much of what we know about the way tongue works in languages comes from very detailed, very important work by linguists on tongue systems.

The main language groups found in the area of Oceania are the Austronesian languages, the Australian languages and the Papuan languages. There is about twelve hundred languages in the Austronesian group and roughly seven hundred Papuan languages and roughly two hundred Australian languages. The Austronesian languages are … they constitute about a quarter of all the world’s languages and they are spoken by about 0.1% of the people of the world.

Sanskrit is the classical language of India. It served a sort of the same purpose in India culturally that Latin served in Europe until very recently. The people that brought the language are usually known as Vedic Arians. The term Arian, of course, is been misused ferociously in the 20th century, but its proper application is to the bearers of the Vedic language in India and the bearers of the early Eastern Arian languages: Hindi, Bengali, Marathi, Gujarati and many other languages of Northern and Central India are descended from Sanskrit in the same way as Romance languages are descended from Latin. [Jay H. Jasanoff. Harvard University]