

# **Ancestry of Languages and of Peoples**

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## **Abstract**

Whereas we inherit genes from our parents at conception in a single instant, we acquire languages from diverse sources throughout our lifetime. Methods for representing these distinct phylogenies must therefore be correspondingly different. Trees and waves have been useful as simple metaphors, representing respectively the two major modes of language transmission - vertical and horizontal. I will explore other methods which can better capture some of the complex realities of language evolution.