

Malayic Sea-People crews on shipping across the Indian Ocean

(approximately 400 BCE-500 CE)

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presentation for:

“Ancient Indian Ocean Corridors”

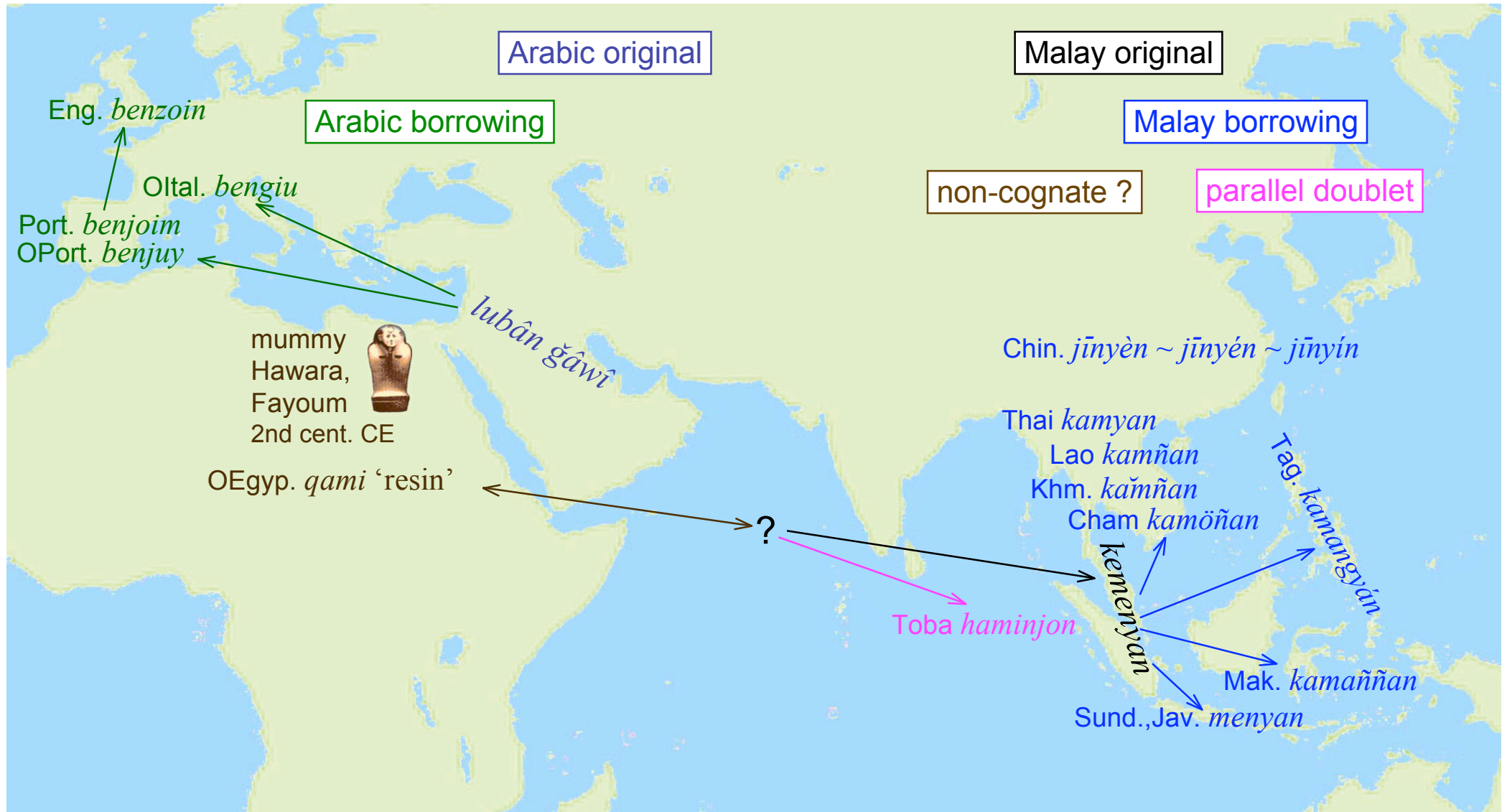
Joint University College London and University of Oxford conference,
at the School of Archaeology, Oxford, November 7, 2009



Borrowed renderings of Malay *kapur* [*barus*] ‘camphor [of Baros]’



Borrowings of Malay *kemenyan* 'benzoin' and Arabic *lubân ġâwî* (lit. 'Malayan incense')



Borrowed renderings of Malay *bunga-lawang* 'clove' (archaic meaning), lit. 'nail flower'



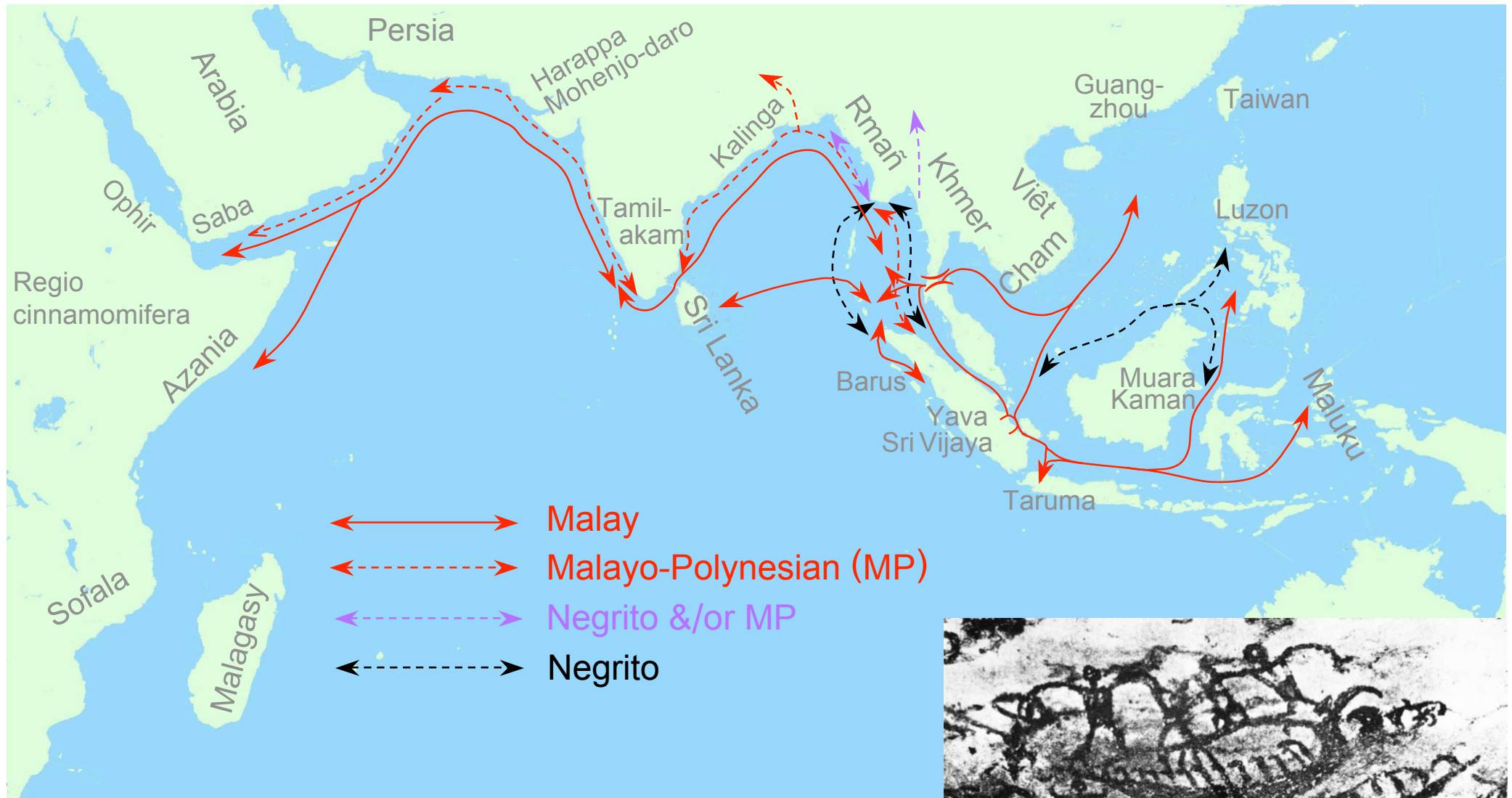
*-a**b**a- > Javanese, Malay -a**w**a-; Aceh, Gayo, Karo, Toba, Simalur -a**b**a-;

***b**- > Javanese **w**-; Malay **b**-; Aceh, Gayo, Karo, Toba, Simalur **b**-.

Examples of Malay mediation in the distribution of Sanskrit loan-words in the Archipelago



Hypothetical routes of pre-500 CE maritime communication by Malayo-Polynesian and Negrito shipping



Niah Cave
(Sarawak)



Early transportation of cinnamon in the Arabian Sea

... cinnamomum idemque cinnamum nascitur in Aethiopia Trogodytis conubio permixta. Hi mercantes id a conterminis vehunt per maria vasta natibus, quas neque gubernacula regant neque remi trahant vel inpellant, non vela, non ratio ulla adiuvet: omnium instar ibi sunt homo tantum et audacia. Praeterea hibernum mare exigunt circa brumam, euris tum maxime flantibus. Hi recto cursu per sinus impellunt, atque a promunturii ambitu argestae in portum ...

‘... cinnamon actually grows in Ethiopia [whose inhabitants are] intermingled by marriage with the Trogodytes. These buy it from their neighbours and sail over the vast sea on rafts which are neither steered by rudder, nor moved by oars or driven by a sail, or by any other means: all this is replaced by man alone and his valiance. Furthermore it is in winter that they sail the sea around the time of the shortest days, for then mostly blows the southeasterly. It drives them straight into the bay, and after doubling the promontory, they run with the northwesterly into the port ...’

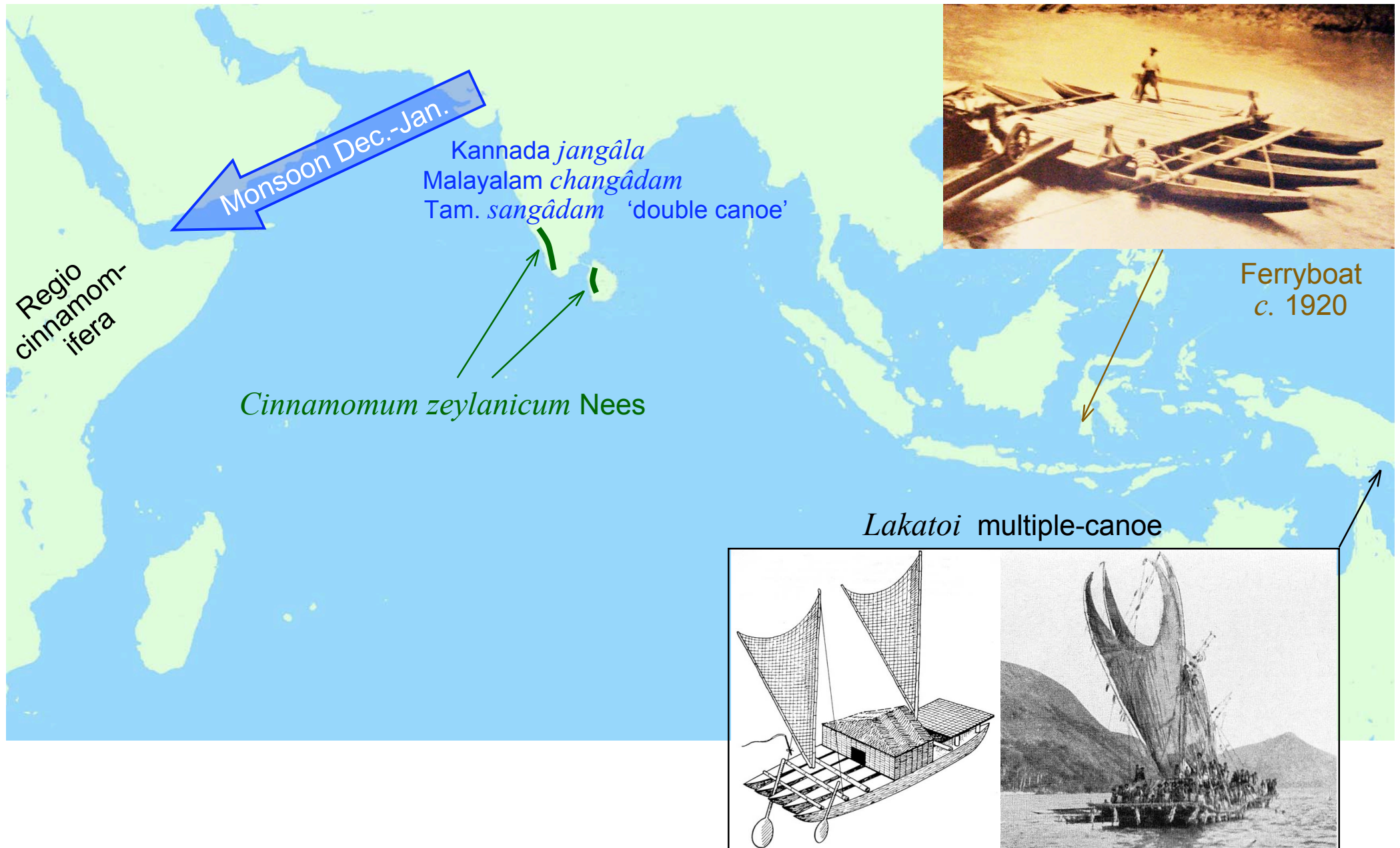
(Pliny the Elder, *Naturalis Historia* XII.86–87, 77 CE)

... εν ‘οῖς τοπικὰ μέν ἐστιν πλοῖα μέχρι Λιμυρικῆς παραλεγόμενα τὴν γῆν, ‘έτερα δ’ ἐκ μονοξύλων πλοίων μεγίστων ‘αφαῖς ἐξευγμένα, λεγόμενα σάγγαρα ...

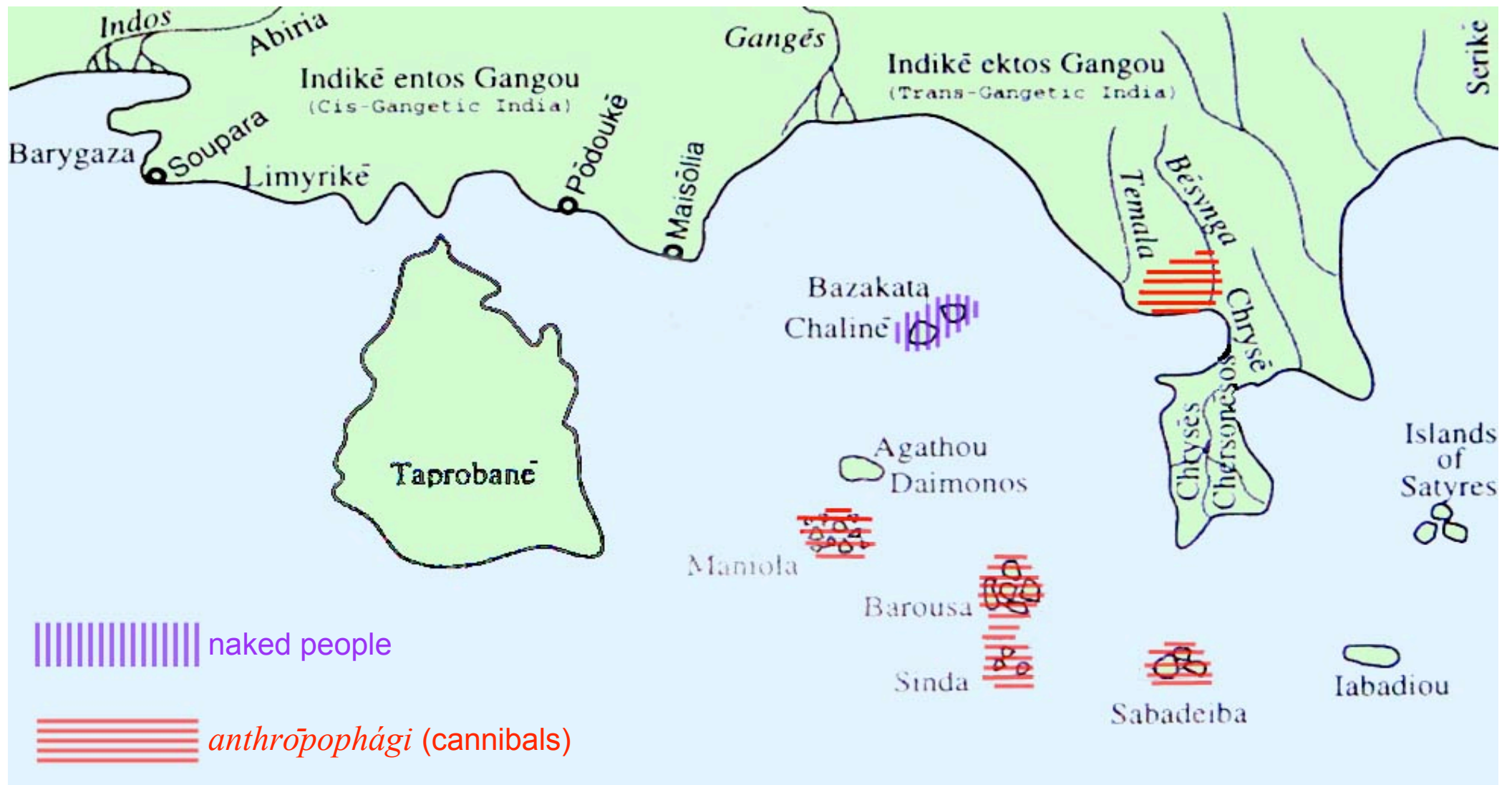
‘... where are local ships that sail along the coast up to *Limyrikê*, also others which are very large ships of single logs bound together, called *sánggara* ...’

(*Περίπλους τῆς Ερυθρῆς θάλασσης* [*Periplus of the Erythraean Sea*] LX, c. 60 CE)

Circumstantial evidence around the cinnamon transport



Ptolemaic atlas of the Indian “Sea”



Some Indic and Myanmar sources

21. ... take me to lonely and lovely *Ramanîyaka* on the ocean bay that is the country of the *Nâga*-s ...
22. ... And as *Indra* rained, the *Nâga*-s were transported with joy, and Earth was everywhere filled with water.
23. ... they soon came to the island which was encompassed by the waters of the ocean strew showers of blos-soms on the *Nâga*-s that dwelt there.

(*Mahâbhârata*, Book I. *Adiparva* 'The Beginning')

Nâga “sea pirates” in the Bay of Bengal submitted to emperor *Asoka* after the latter adopted the Buddhist religion (c. 260 BCE).

(according to *Kṣemendra*)

The Mons called these sea rovers *Raksasa* ‘cannibal demons’

In Burmese tradition they were called *Bilù* ‘kind of monster which eats human flesh and possesses super-human eyes’



Moken “sea people”

An early Chinese description of Malay ships (*Kūnlún-bó*)

破 舶。下 音 白。司 馬 彪 注 莊 子 云。海 中 大 船 曰 舶。廣 雅 舶 海
舟 也。入 水 六 十 尺。駟 使 運 載 千 餘 人 除 貨 物。亦 曰 崑 崙 舶。
運 動 此 船 多 骨 論 爲 水 匠。

pò bó • xià yīn bó • Sīmǎ Biāo zhù Zhuāngzǐ yún • hǎizhōng dà-chuán
yuē bó • Guǎngyǎ bó hǎizhōu yě • rùshuǐ liù-shí chǐ • zū-shǐ yùnzài
qiān yú rén chú huòwù • yì yuē Kūnlún bó • yùndòng cǐ chuán duō
Gǔlún wéi shuǐjiàng



Stone relief (C. Java, c. 800 CE)

‘Expose *bó*: the latter is pronounced *bó*. Sima Biao (lived 240-305 CE) writing the *Zhuāngzǐ* says: high sea big ships are called *bó*. *Bó* in the *Guǎngyǎ* (230 CE) is sea ship too. The draught is six-ten feet. [It is] used to transport a thousand [or] more persons, apart from cargo. [It is] also called *Kūnlún-bó*. Running such a ship are mostly *Gǔlún* serving as seamen.’

(Hui Lin, *Yīqiè jǐngyīn yì*, 817 CE)

bó < 6th-7th cent. *baʔk (cf. Favorlang *abak*) ⇐ *qabang ‘boat, ship’

..... and of their *Gǔlún* crews

崑崙語。上音昆下音論。時俗語便亦作骨論。
南海州島中夷人也。甚黑裸形。



Kūnlún yǔ shàng yīn kūn xià yīn lún • shí sú yǔ biàn yì zuò
Gǔlún • Nánhǎi zhōu dǎozhōng Yírén yě • shén hēi
luǒ xíng •

‘The *Kūnlún* language (i.e. Malay): the former is pronounced *kūn*, the latter *lún*; this commonly used language is ordinarily also called *Gǔlún*. These are *Yi*-people amidst islands of the South Sea region; entirely black and naked-bodied.’

(Hui Lin, *Yīqiè jǐngyīn yì*, 817 CE)

Within the period from 206 BCE till 24 CE:



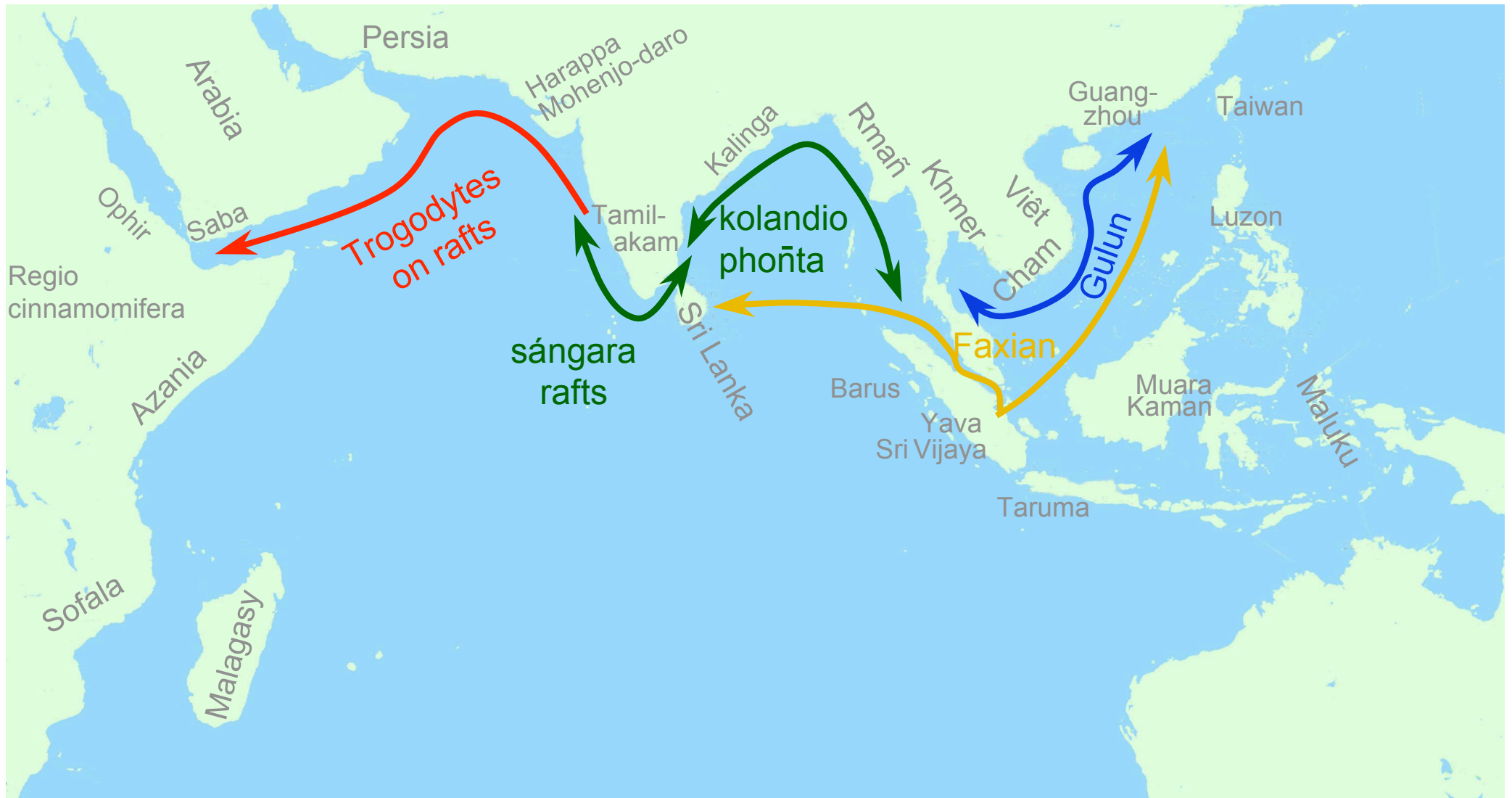
蠻夷賈船轉送致之

Mán-Yí gǔchuán chuǎnsòng zhìzhī

‘Barbarian *Yi* merchant ships convey
[one] to [one’s] destination.’

(*Qiánhànshū*, 111 CE)

Reported pre-500 CE sailing routes



Who were the *Gǔlún* people?

Gǔlún < 6th-7th cent. *kuətluən (read: *kûllûn*)

Proto-West-Indonesian *qulun > Lampung, Bintulu, Maanyan *ulun*,
Malagasy *ólona* ‘person’;
Ach. *ulôn* ~ *lôn* ‘person, servant, me’;
Malay, Cham *hulun* ‘servant, me’;
Moken *kolon* ‘person, servant’.

Old Malay *hulun haji* ‘the king’s vassal subjects’

PWI *q > *k* is an exclusive feature of the Moken-Moklen language group



Some characteristic sound correspondences of Moken

1. Malay *h*- — Moken *k*- (< **q*-)

Malay *hulun* 'servant, me' — Moken *kolon* 'person' (< **q*ulun)

Malay *hujan* 'rain' — Moken *kujan* 'rain' (< **q*uZan)

2. Malay *-awa-* — Moken *-aba-* (< **-aba-* / **-awa-*)

Malay *bawah* 'under, below' — Moken *babak* 'low, short' (< **ba*baq)

Malay *kawan* 'friend, flock' — Moken *aban* 'company, flock' (< **ka*ban)

Malay *ular sawa* 'python' — Moken *olan chaba* 'python' (< **ula*R sa~~w~~a)

3. Malay *[-]s-* — Moken *[-]ch-* (< **[-]s-*)

Malay *esa* 'one' — Moken *cha* 'one' (< **es*a)

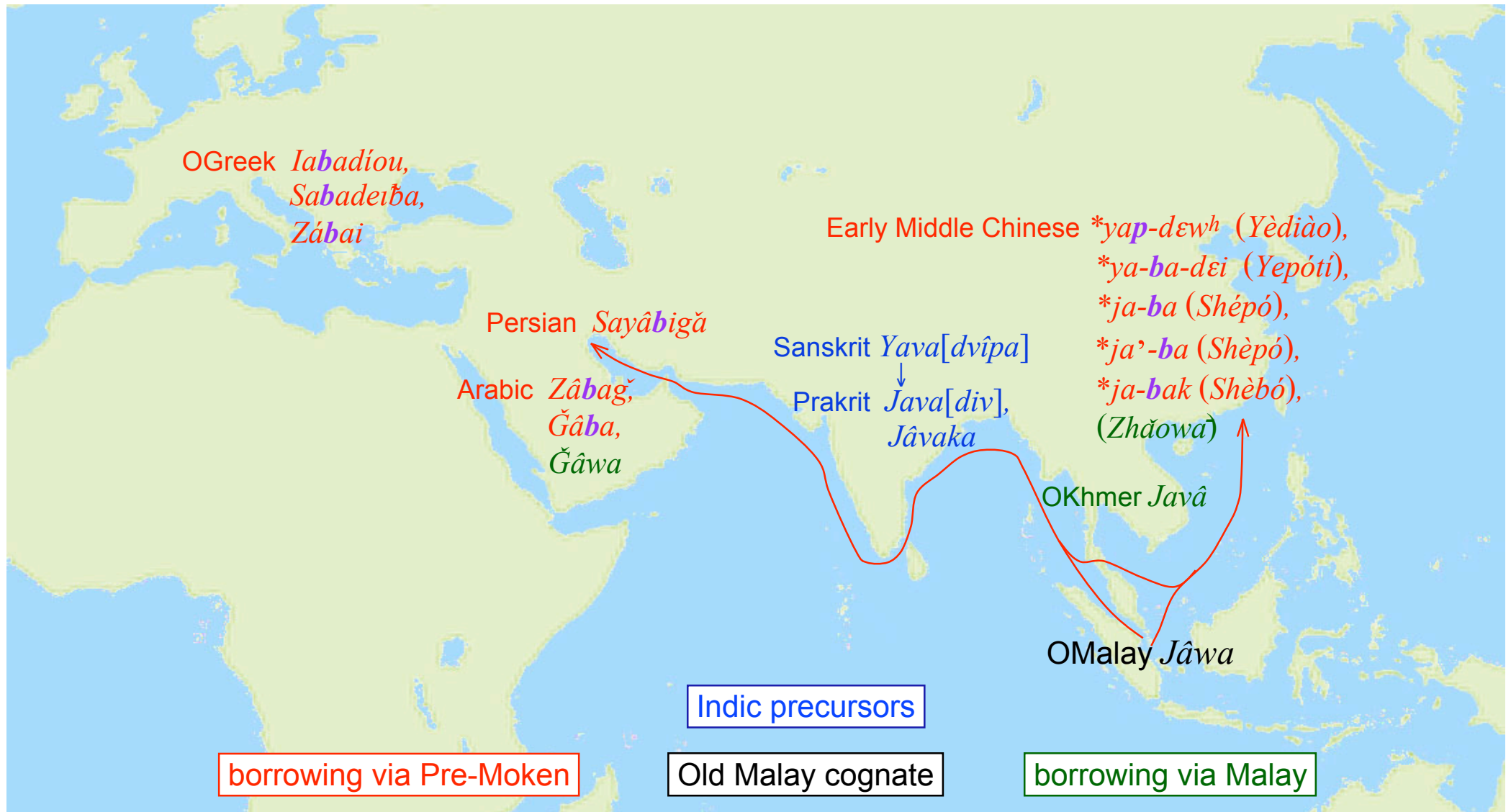
Malay *pisang* 'banana' — Moken *pèchang* 'banana'

Malay *susu* 'breasts, milk' — Moken *chochoi* 'breasts, milk' (< * *susu*)

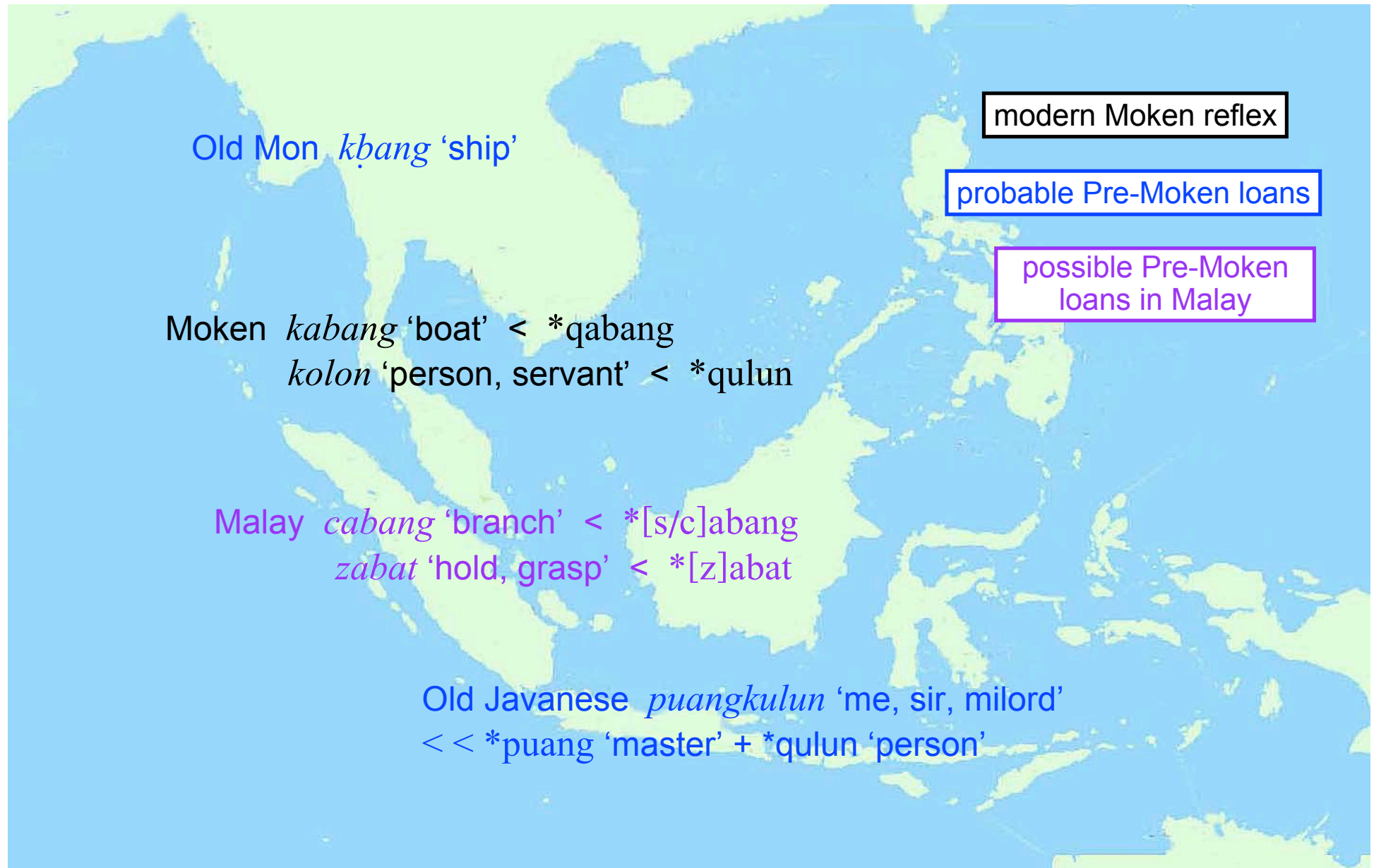
Borrowed renderings ultimately originating from Sanskrit *yava* 'barley'



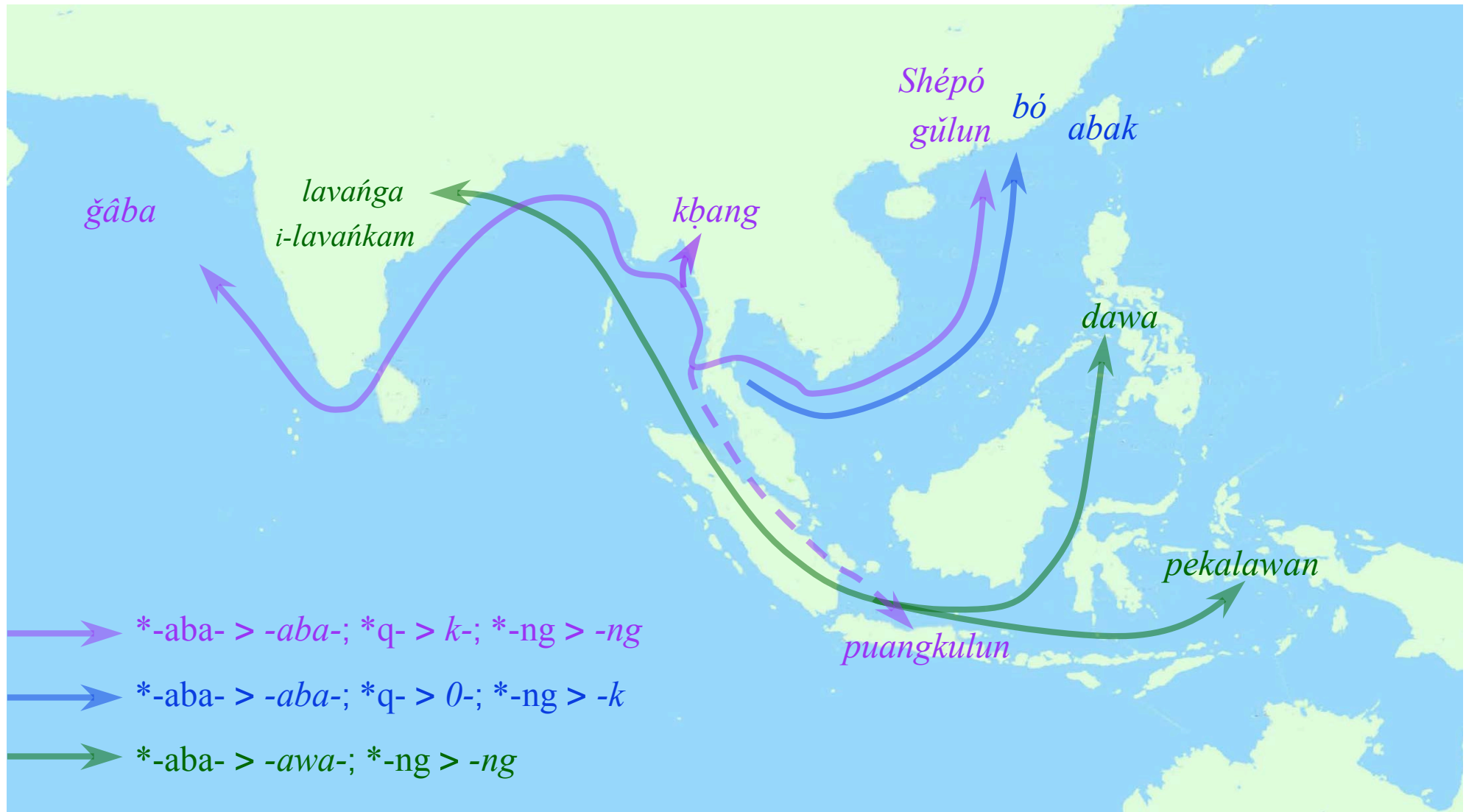
Early renderings of the name of the polity of *Yava*[*dvîpa*]
probably situated in the Batang Hari river basin (Sumatra)



Other likely loan-words from Pre-Moken



Sea-People dialects with variant sound laws on different maritime routes





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