

Indonesia

abandoning tradition to create a new national standard

islands maintain ethnolinguistic variation

- ◆ More than half of Indonesia's population live on Java, and the Javanese are the nation's largest ethnic group, while the remainder of the population inhabit **6,000 other islands**.
- ◆ This separation of people has created and maintains ethnolinguistic diversity.
- ◆ Its **700 languages** are not mutually intelligible

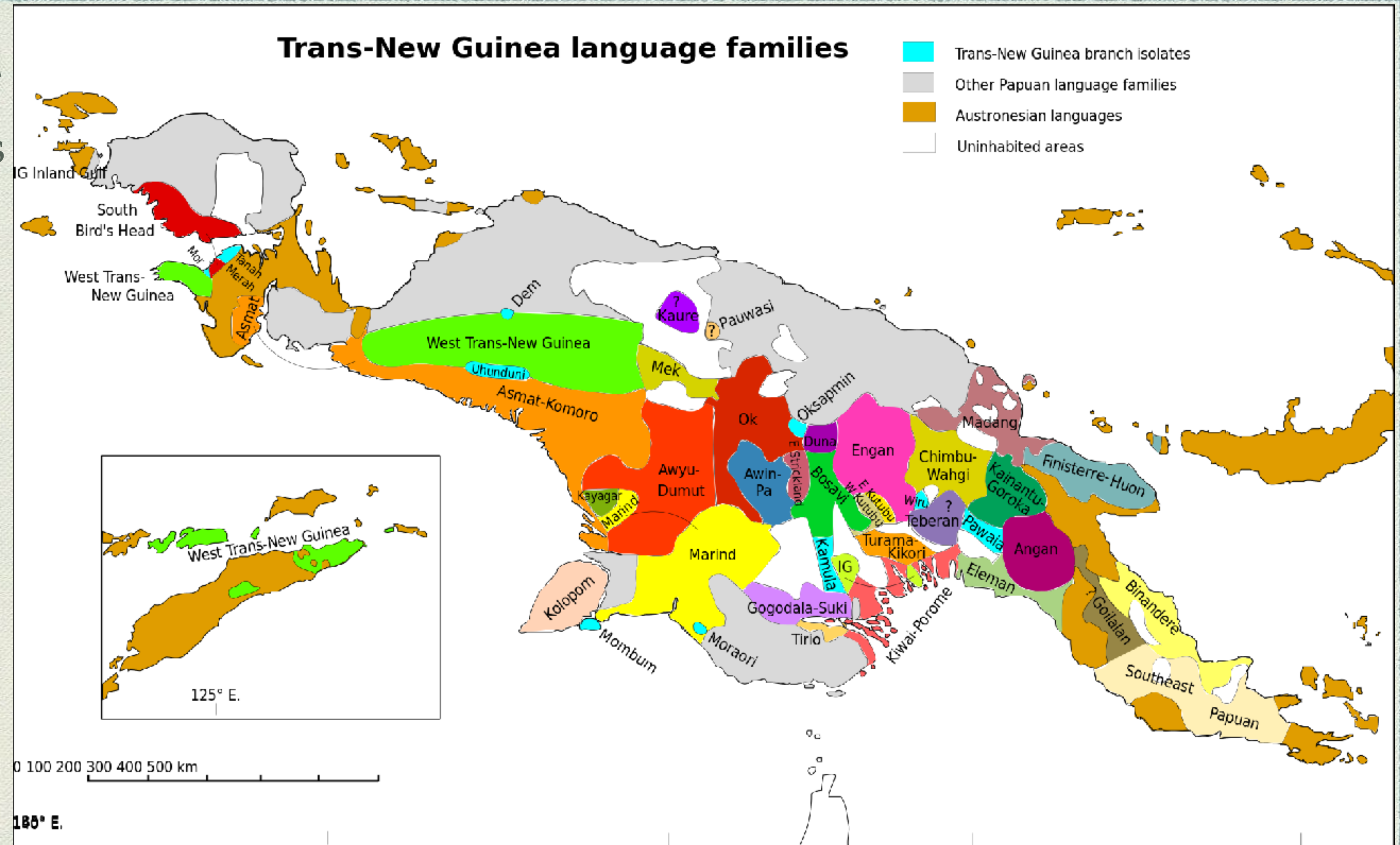


over 300 recognized ethnic groups



old language families in West New Guinea

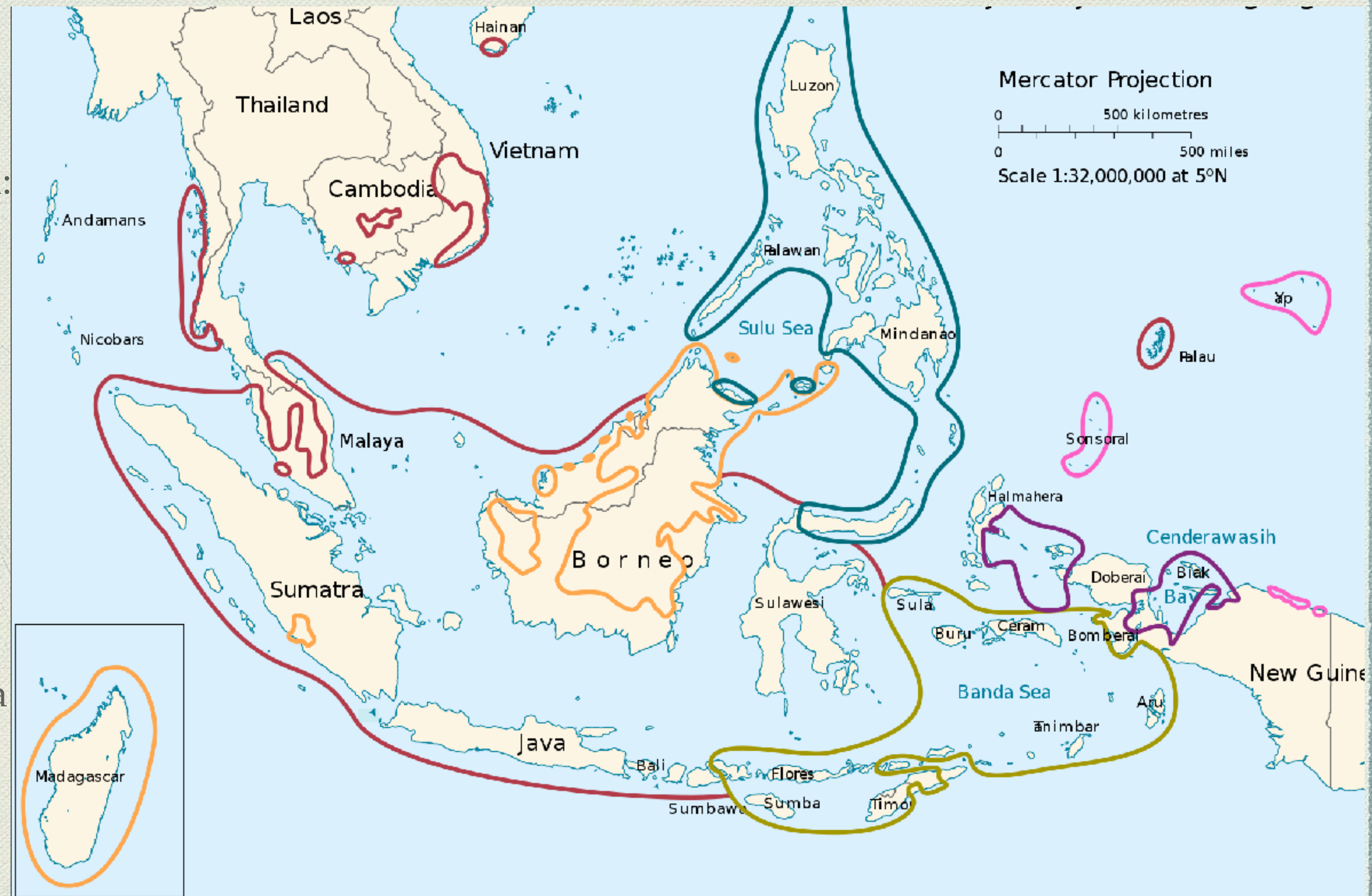
- ❖ Over 200 languages are spoken in the provinces of Papua and Western Papua, including Ternate, Dani, Ekari, and Yali.
- ❖ The Papuan peoples are the descendants of people who arrived over 40,000 years ago.



Malayo-Polynesian language subgroups

- ◆ Having arrived **about 5,000 years ago**, all of the Malayo-Polynesian language subgroups are represented in Indonesia:

- ◆  Philippines
- ◆  Borneo and Madagascar
- ◆  Sunda-Sulawesi
- ◆  Central Malayo-Polynesian (Bandanesian)
- ◆  South Halmahera-West New Guinea (South Halmahera-Geelvink Bay)
- ◆  Oceanic



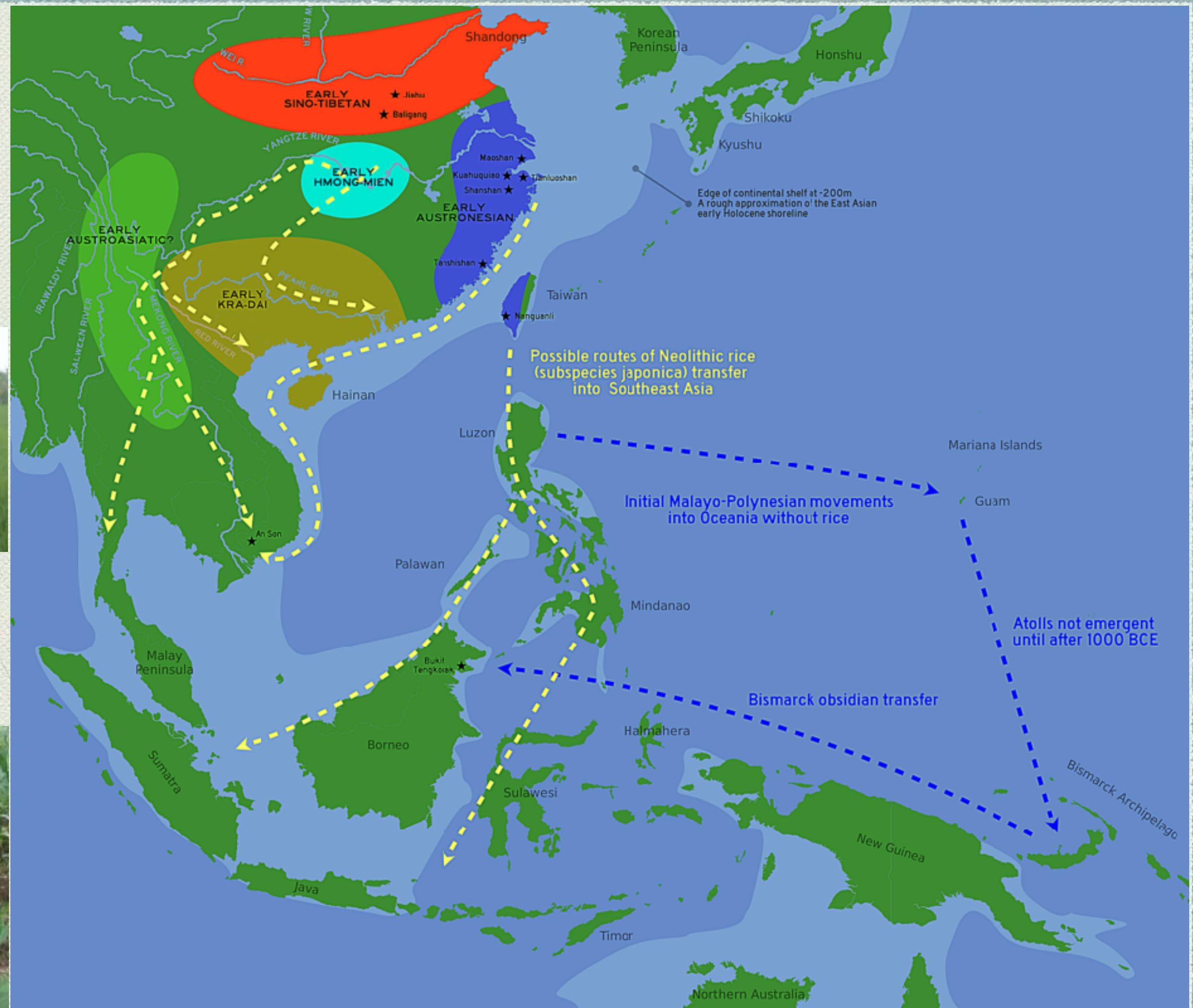
Austronesian expansion brought rice

- ❖ Language is typically associated with other aspects of culture.

- ❖ Along with their Malayo-Polynesian languages, neolithic migrants brought Japonica **rice** to southeast Asia and Indonesia.



- ❖ **Taro** cultivation is strongly associated with the much older Papuan population.



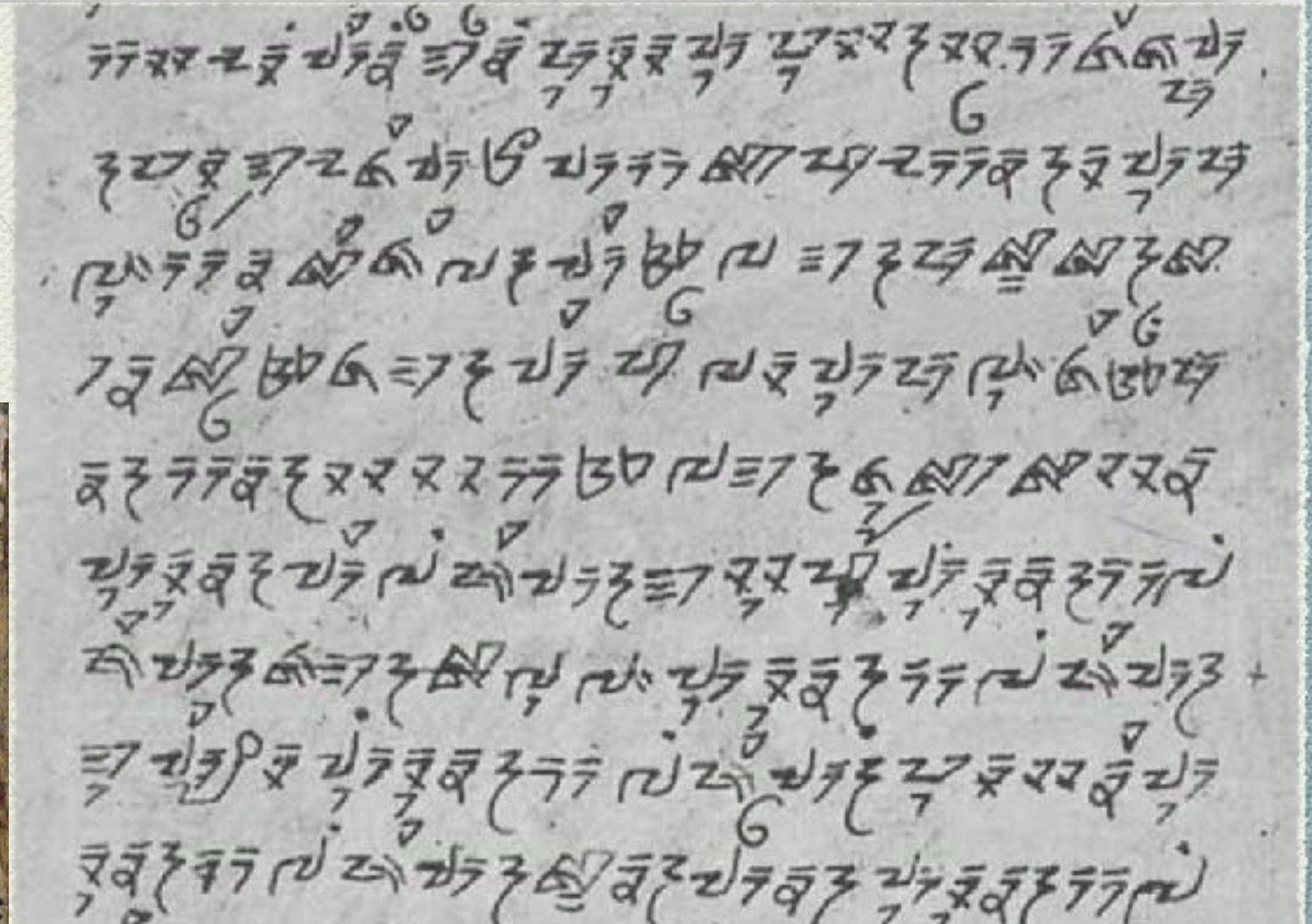
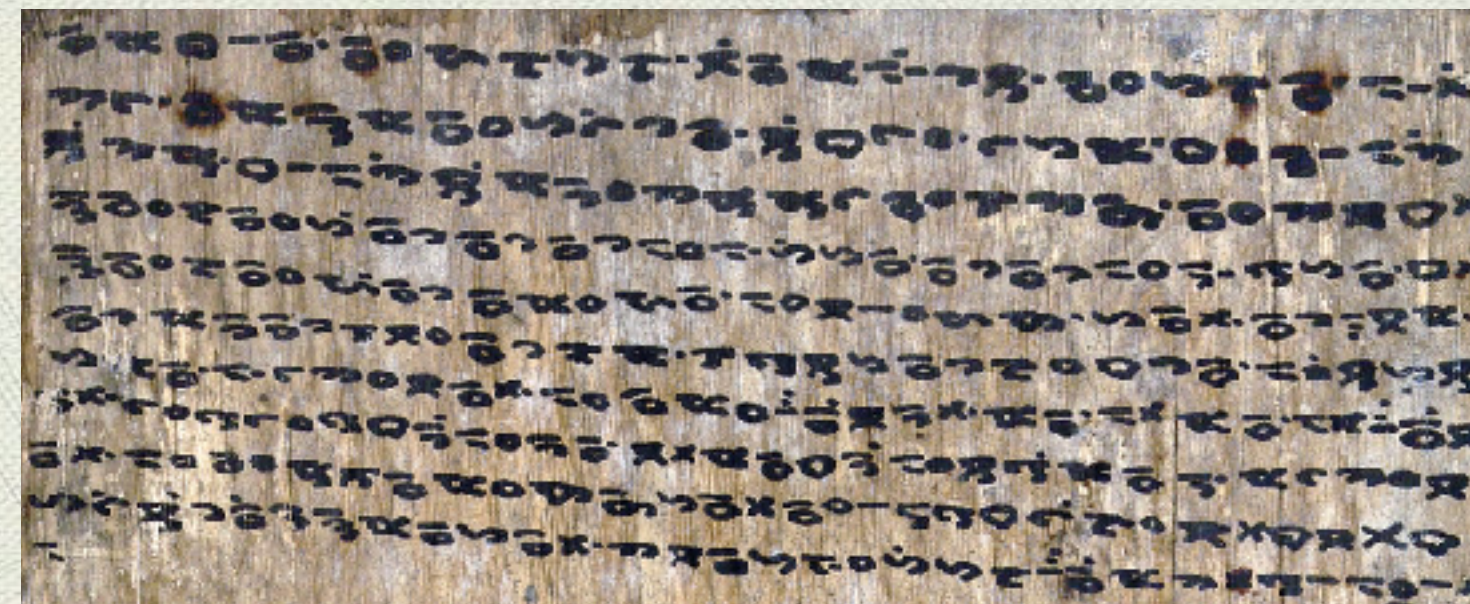
Malay, an old lingua franca

- ◆ Most Indonesians speak a Malayo-Polynesian language at home, and the Malayic (red) language **Malay** has official status in Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, and Indonesia.
- ◆ Malay has been a regional **lingua franca** for hundreds of years.
- ◆ Today, the most important standard varieties of Malay are called **Bahasa Indonesia**, **Bahasa Malaysia**, and **Bahasa Melayu**.



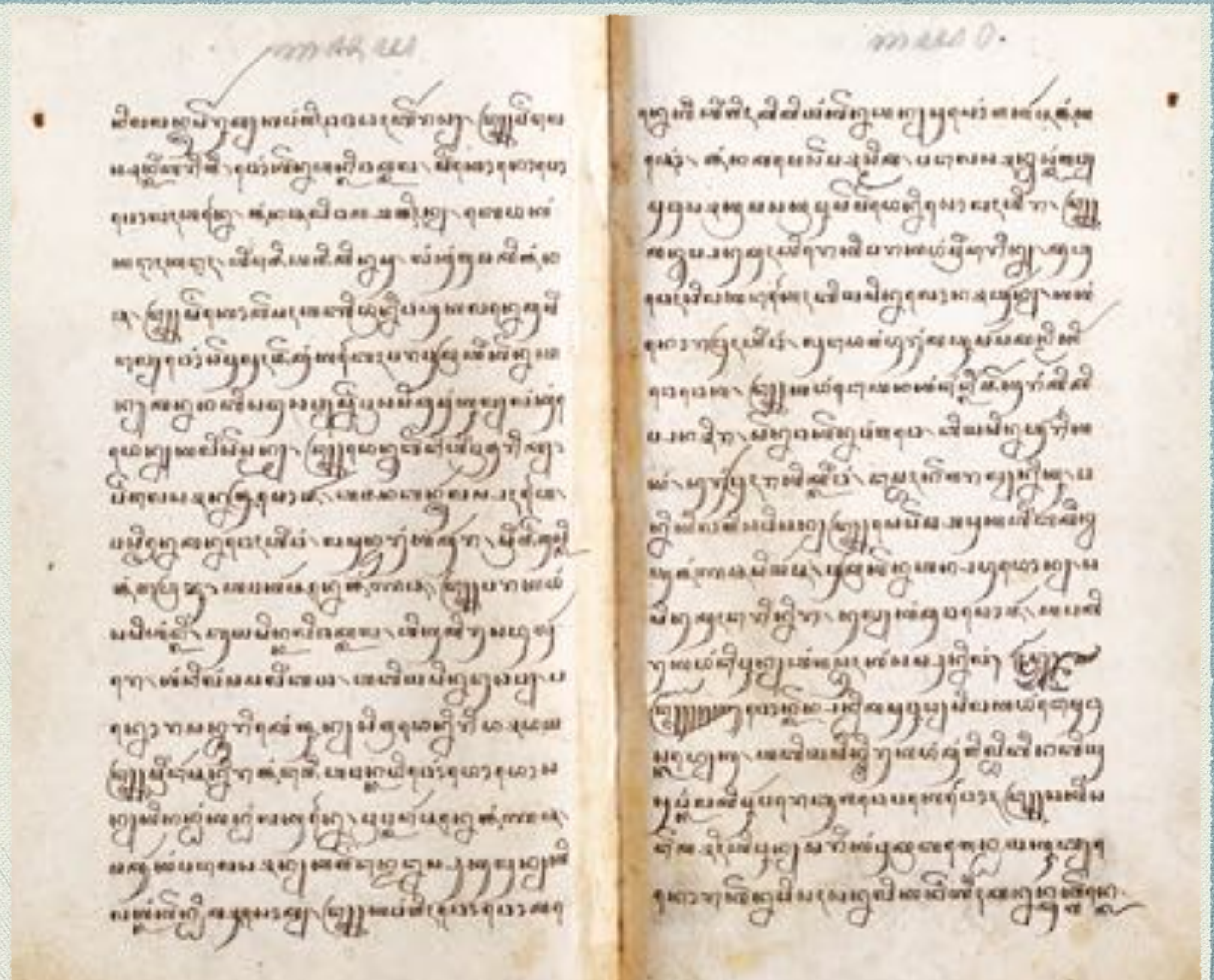
Bahasa Indonesia Baku

- ❖ Bahasa Indonesia Baku, “Standard Indonesian”, is the standard language of Indonesia, and it is now taught in all schools.
- ❖ Most Indonesians do not speak Standard Indonesian most of the time. **Most people speak their local language most of the time.** Even school children will deviate from standard usage outside of the classroom.
- ❖ Some local languages have very rich traditions, so it is quite natural that Javanese, Sundanese, Minangkabau, and other languages continue to be used.



Javanese

- ◆ Today, Indonesia's Malayo-Polynesian language with the second greatest number of speakers is Javanese.
- ◆ Javanese is one of the world's classical languages, with over a millennium of literary history.
- ◆ Javanese script is currently taught in the schools of three provinces where Javanese is spoken: Central Java, East Java, and D.I. Yogyakarta.



forgetting old scripts and literature

- ◆ For five centuries, until about a century ago, the Javanese script was routinely used by all sorts of Javanese people.
- ◆ A similar but different script is traditionally used in Bali.
- ◆ Despite their long tradition, use of the Javanese and Balinese scripts has declined due to the Indonesian government's promotion of Bahasa Indonesia written with the Latin script.
- ◆ The promotion of Latin script for Bahasa Indonesia was politically motivated as an easy-to-learn script and language for unifying the country.



Malay chosen as the national language

- ◆ In 1945, Indonesia declared its independence, and it chose Malay as its national language. In 1945, **Malay** was the native language of **only 5%** of the Indonesian people.
- ◆ **Dutch** was the colonial language of Indonesia, but it was not widely spoken, so it was not chosen as the national language. Also, the use of Dutch had been forbidden during the Japanese occupation.
- ◆ **Javanese**, spoken by about **45%** of the people, was a lingua academica with a respected history and a widely used script. The Javanese script was even used to write Malay. However, Javanese was not known throughout the country.
- ◆ Malay had long been a lingua franca known throughout Indonesia, and the number of second-language (L2) speakers of Malay was **nearly half** of Indonesia's population. Malay's wide use and political neutrality resulted in its being selected as the official Indonesian language.
- ◆ Having selected Malay to be **Bahasa Indonesia**, the government began codifying and standardizing Bahasa Indonesia, and it also began teaching Bahasa Indonesia throughout the country.

Rubin: language standardization steps

In *Language Planning Processes*, Joan Rubin described the developmental steps in the standardization of a language such as Bahasa Indonesia:

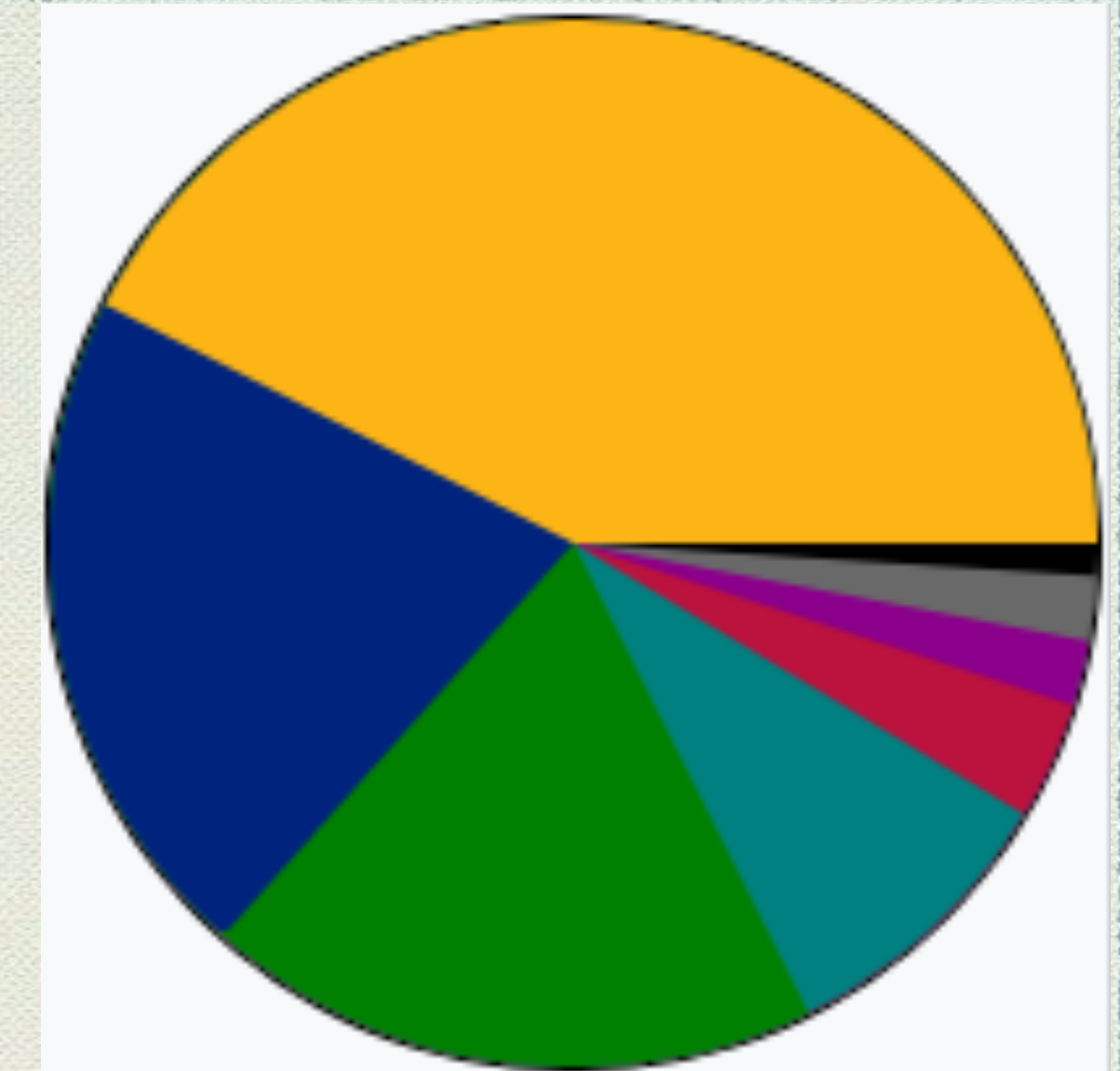
1. A reference point or system is set up or comes into being, i.e., a norm is isolated.
2. Value is assigned to the reference point or system, i.e., a judgement is made by some significant group of people that the reference point or system is 'good' or 'correct' or 'preferred' or 'appropriate'.
3. Specification is made or comes into being regarding when and for what purpose the norm is to be used.
4. Some agreement occurs with regard to points 1, 2, and 3 above.
5. Points 1, 2, and 3 serve as a basis for comparison.
6. There is some span of time during which 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 are in effect.

neglect of English language education

- ◆ The government's effort to promote Bahasa Indonesia has helped unify the nation. All literate people now know it, and **20%** of the people now speak Bahasa Indonesia even at home. However, increased home use of Bahasa Indonesia is reducing the use of many local languages.
- ◆ School emphasis on Bahasa Indonesia has also resulted in a **neglect of English** language education. English study is not required in Indonesia's public schools, and students have "low" English proficiency according to EF Education First testing. In 2019, Indonesia ranked 61st in English proficiency, much lower than Singapore (5th) and Malaysia (26th).
- ◆ The lack of English skills nationwide is a problem because English skills are required for many government and corporate jobs. Consequently, there is good English education at private schools and in urban areas, and this is exacerbating income disparities between "global" and "local" Indonesian workers.

borrowing and blending into one

- ❖ Bahasa Indonesia has borrowed words from many foreign languages: Dutch (42%), English (21%), Arabic (19%), Sanskrit/Hindi (9%), Chinese, Portuguese, Tamil, Persian, etc.
- ❖ Dutch loanwords are one of the differences between Bahasa Indonesia and Bahasa Malaysia; for example, *tinta* ~ *dakwat* “ink”.
- ❖ The many words borrowed from Javanese are not considered to be foreign words, but these also distinguish Indonesian from Malaysian.
- ❖ Overall, Bahasa Indonesia serves, not only as a lingua franca for diverse ethnolinguistic groups, but also as a **symbol of national identity** and even pride, especially for Indonesians traveling in foreign countries.



A pie chart showing percentage of other languages contribute on loan words of Indonesian language.

