

15-ICAL

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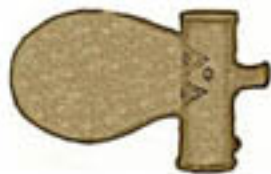
“Lexical roaming: how cognates of a word
for ‘bronze adze’ were dispersed over
China, India, Southeast Asia,
and Polynesia”

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The Yuè Bronze Ceremonial Adze



Late Shang (Yin) period
(1300 – 1046 BCE)



Western Zhou period until Warring States period
(1045 – 770 BCE)



(475 – 221 BCE)

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Late Shang

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Western Zhou

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100 – 1000 CE

戉

modern

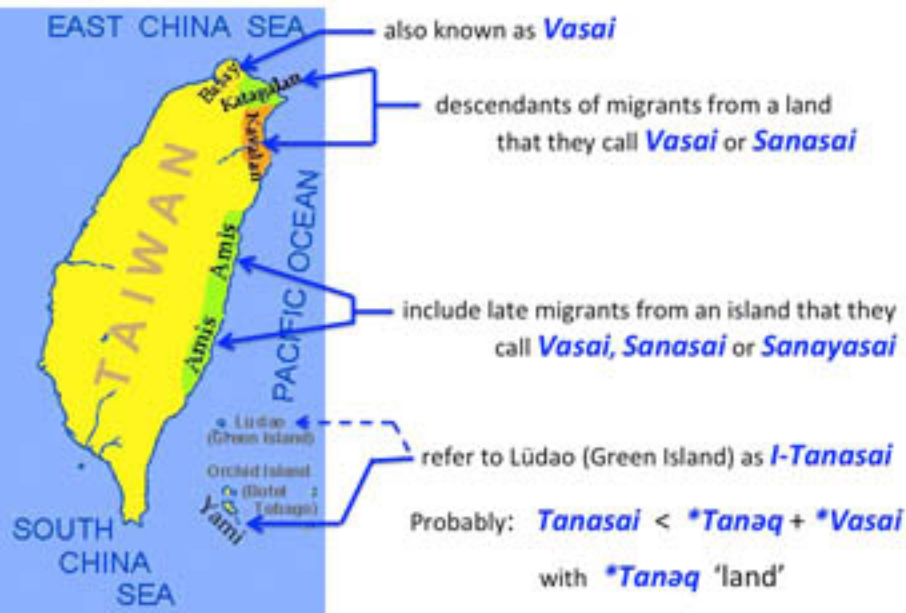
越 / 戉 Pinyin *yuè* < Middle Chinese *hjuwot* < Old Chinese **wjat*

(Baxter, William H. 1992. *A Handbook of Old Chinese Phonology*.
Berlin-New York: Mouton de Gruyter)

Mainland Dispersal of Yuè Peoples



Peoples with Legends of a *Vasai* Homeland



Insular Dispersal of *Yuè* Cognates

Proto-West-Malayo-Polynesian **wásay* >

Philippines: Yami *wasay*, Itbayaten *wasay*, Ilokano *wásay*,
Isneg *wátay*, Bontok *wásay*, Kankanay *wásay*, Ifugaw *wáhay*,
Kasiguran Dumagat *wasáy*, Aklanon *wásay*, Hanunóo *wásay*,
Cebuano-Bisaya *[hu]wásay*, Maranao *oasai*,
West-Bukidnon Manobo *wasey*, Tboli *asay* 'adze, axe';

Sangir-Talaud & Sulawesi: Bare'e *wase*, Suwawa *wuati*,
Balanipa *uhase*, Buginese *uwase*, Mandar *wáse* 'adze, axe';
Sangir *uwase*, Ratahan *uasey*, Ponosakan *oase*,
Bola'ang-Mongondou *uato*y, Tondano *uasey*, Tonsea *uasey*,
Tontamboan *uasey*, Tonsawang *oasey* 'iron';

Borneo/Kalimantan: Maloh *wase*, Kelabit *uay* 'adze, axe';
Sampit *uasi* 'iron';

Overland Route of *Yuè* Transmission



Zhāng Qiān (張騫) traveled the route *ca.* 122 BCE, almost 1000 years after *vāṣī* 'adze' in Sanskrit.

At Dàxià (大夏) — i.e. Bactria — he reports regular trade with Shēndú (身毒) — i.e. Sindhu.

The route proceeded from Dian (滇), where archaeological remains of *yuè* adzes were found.

So not a Chinese but a Yue word for 'adze' was transmitted to India.



Dian
150–50 BCE

Yuè–Cognate Dispersal via India

Sanskrit *vāsi*, Pali *vāsi*, Prakrit *vāsi*, Bengali *bāsi*, Odia *bāsi* 'adze'

In the 10th Mandala of the *Rigveda*:

Agnī devā vāśīmāntam 'To the adze-armed god Agni'

Tamil *vācci*, *vāycci*, *vātcī*; Malayam *vācci*; Kota *vac*;

Kannaḍa *bāci*; Tulu *bāci*, *bāji* 'adze'.

Malay *bāsi*, Aceh *bāsi*, Toba-Batak *bāsi*, Karo-Batak *bāsi*, Rejang *bāsəy*,
Krui-Lampung *bāsi*, Sundanese *bwsi?*, Javanese *wāsi*, Madurese *bāsə(h)*,
Balinese *bāsi*, Sasak *bāsi*, Iban *bāsi*, Melanau *bāsi*, Bintulu *bāsi*,
Mamuju *bāsi*, Ngaju *wāsi*, Malagasy *vi*, Buli *bāsi*, Buginese *bāssi*,
Makassarese *bāssi*, Tae' *bāssi*, Mandar *bāssi*, Selayar *bāssi*,
Belu-Tetun *bāsi*, Termanu-Rotinese *bāsi*, Bima *βāsi*, Kambara *bāhi*,
Komodo *bāsi*, Manggarai *beci* 'iron'.

Proto-Aceh-Chamic **bāsey* > Aceh *bwəə*, Rade *māsei*, Jarai *pāsəi*,
Chru *pāsəi*, North Roglai *pisəi*, Haroi *pāsōi*, West Cham *pasəy*,
Phanrang-Cham *pithəy* ~ *pathəy*, Classical Cham *basēi* 'iron'

Ironwood in Oceania

English *ironwood*, Dutch *ijzerhout*



Vernacular Malay *kayu basi*
(non-vernacular *pohon merbau*)

Fiji *vesi* 'Pacific teak (*Intsia bijuga*)'

Rotuman *fesi*, Tonga *fehi*,
East Futuna *vesi*,
East Uvea *fehi*, Tikopia *fesi*



Overview of the Yuè-Cognate Dispersal



• Thank you •

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