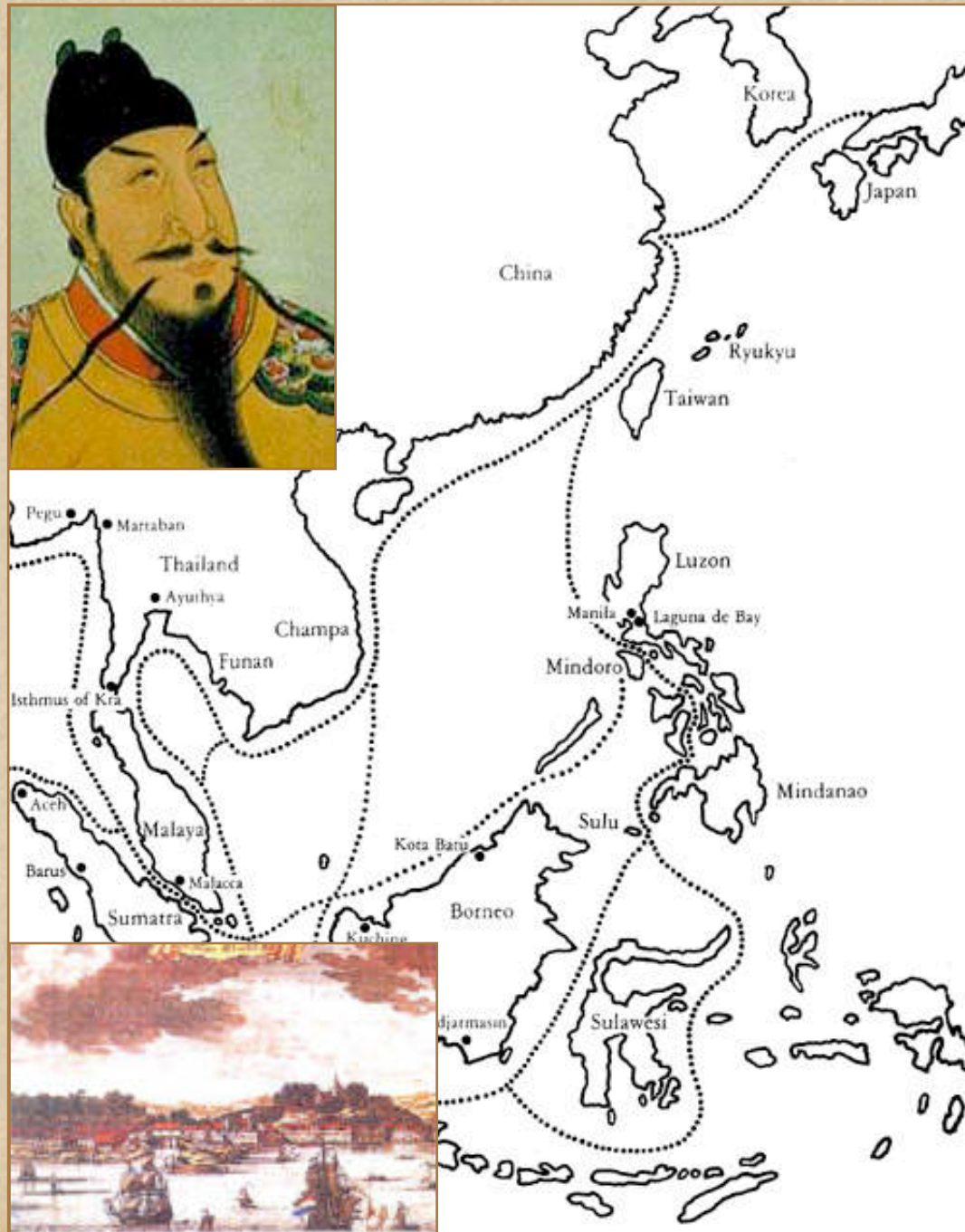


Why Columbus
Wasn't Chinese





Emperor Yongle
1403-24



Malacca

“With the virtue of a sage and placed in the seat of a sage, [my father, Emperor Hung-wu] had a controlling power over Heaven, Earth, and Man, thus harmonizing yin and yang and protecting all that exists, understanding everything in the universe, inclusive even of that which is beyond Heaven and Earth.”



The Ming Emperor Yongle

The Emperor's glorious envoy received the divine commands,
"proclaim abroad the silken sounds, and go to the barbarous lands".
His giant ship on the roaring waves of the boundless ocean rode;
afar, o'er the roaring billows vast and limitless, it strode....

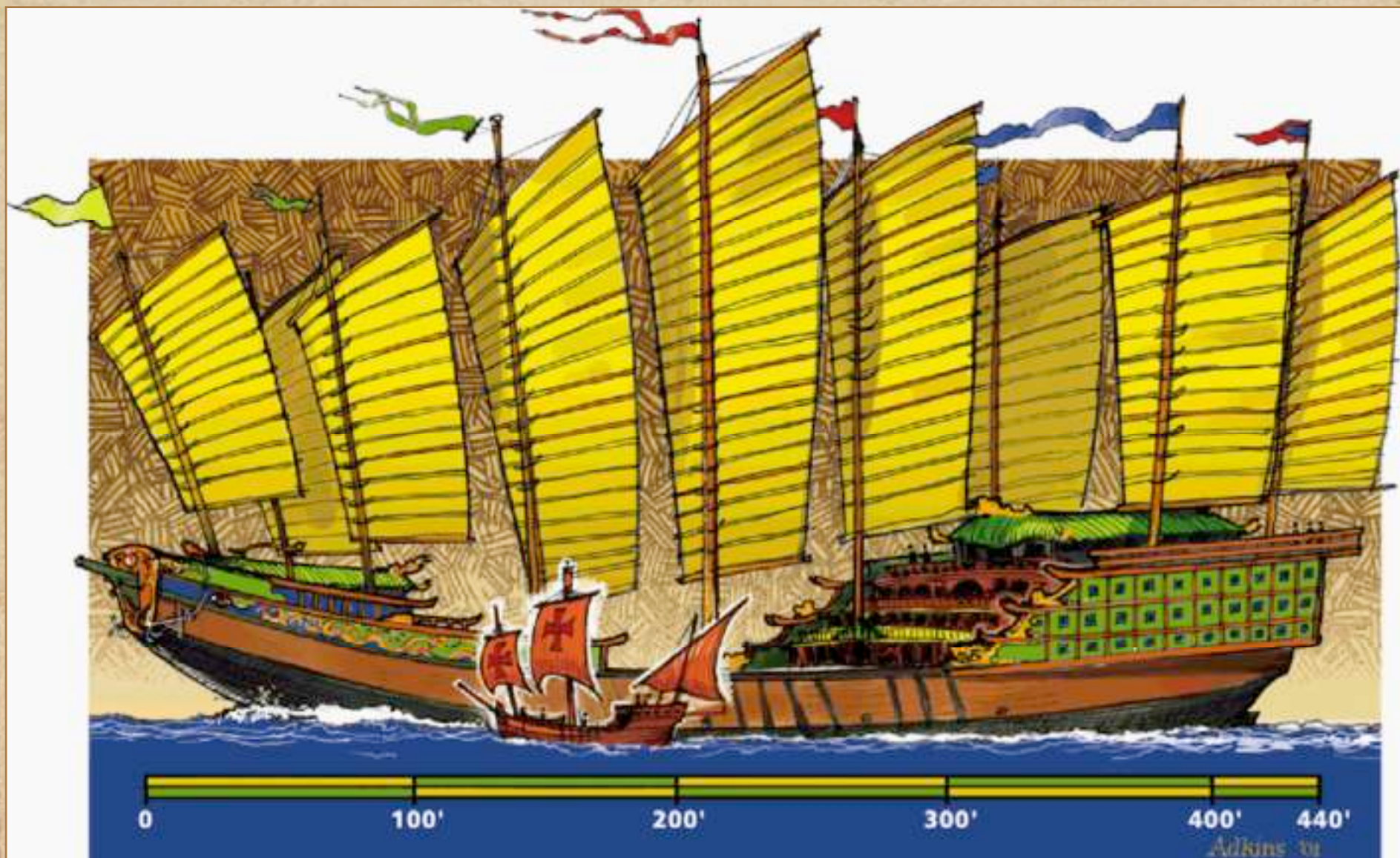
Here when the heavenly writing came, a happy clamour meeting,
chieftains and heads of the barbarous tribes all tried to give it greeting.
Tribute of southern gold, rare gems, from distant parts appear;
grateful, admiring our virtue, they show themselves loyal, sincere....

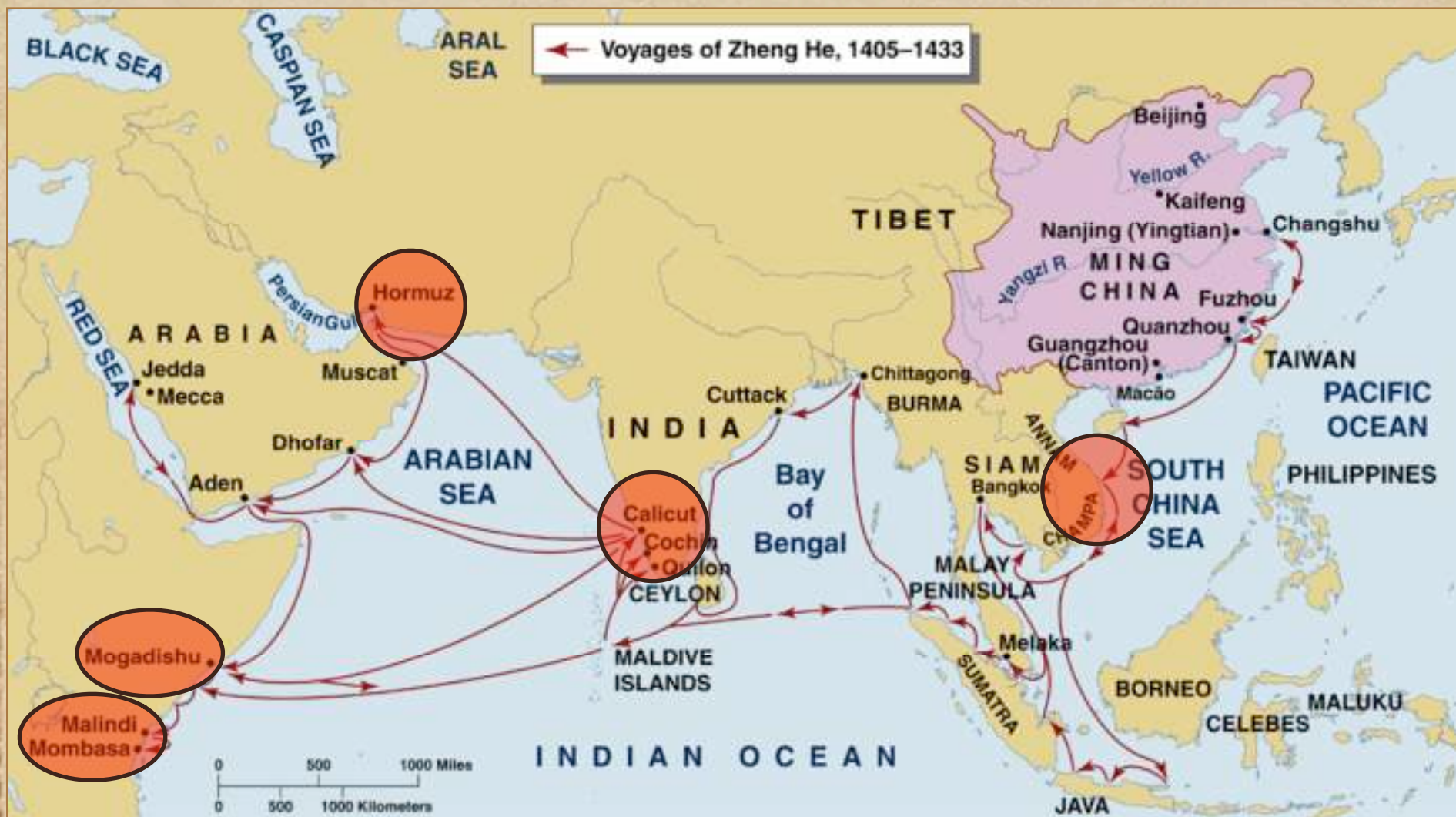
Above to heaven and down to earth I looked - no boundary ran;
to heaven's ends and earth's extremes each one is the sovereign's man.
Union under imperial Ming our grand and great land shares;
from time forgotten until now no other land compares....

— Ma Huan, 1416 Poem commemorating Zheng He's 1413-14 voyage

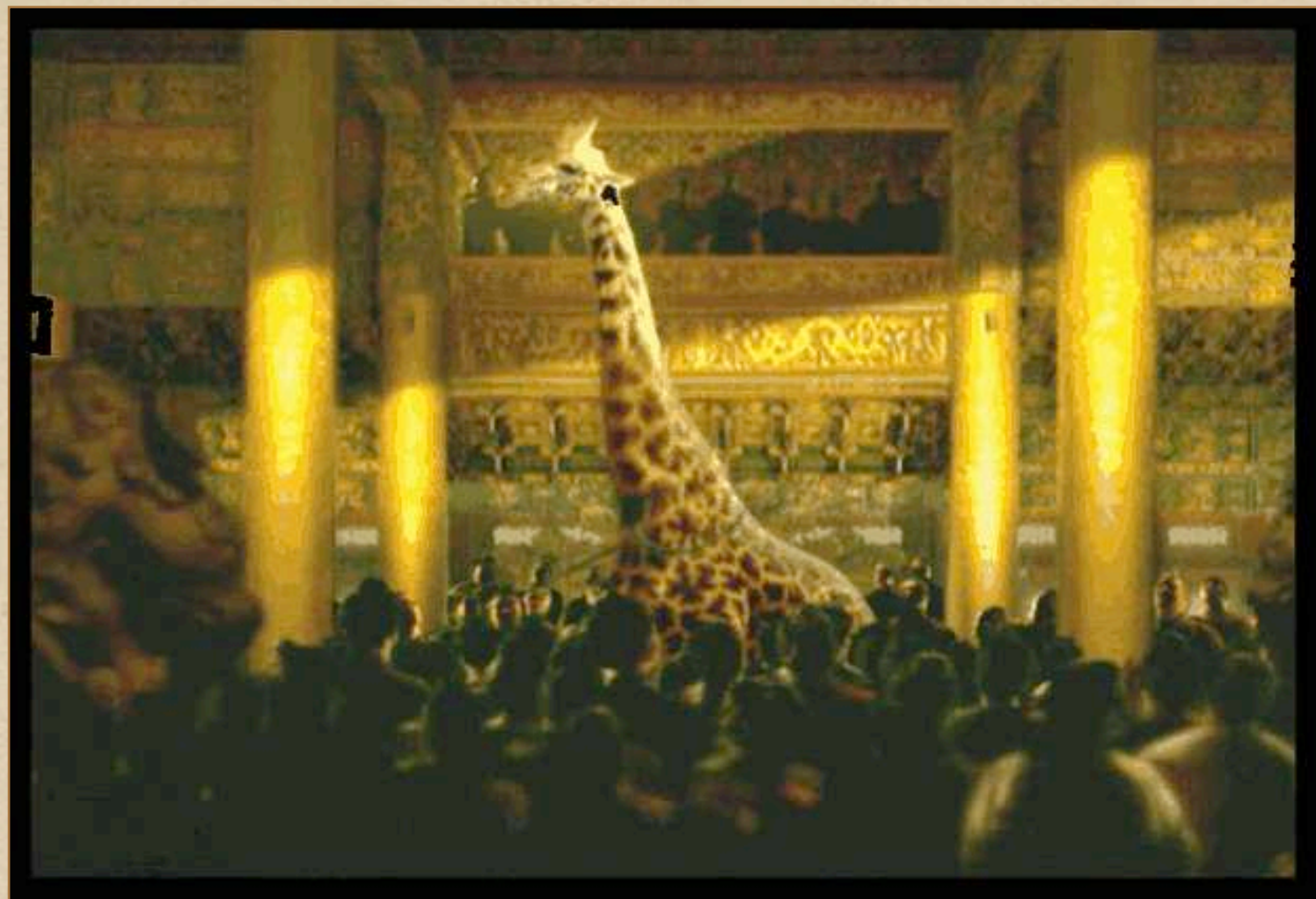
The Chinese Muslim Admiral Zheng He





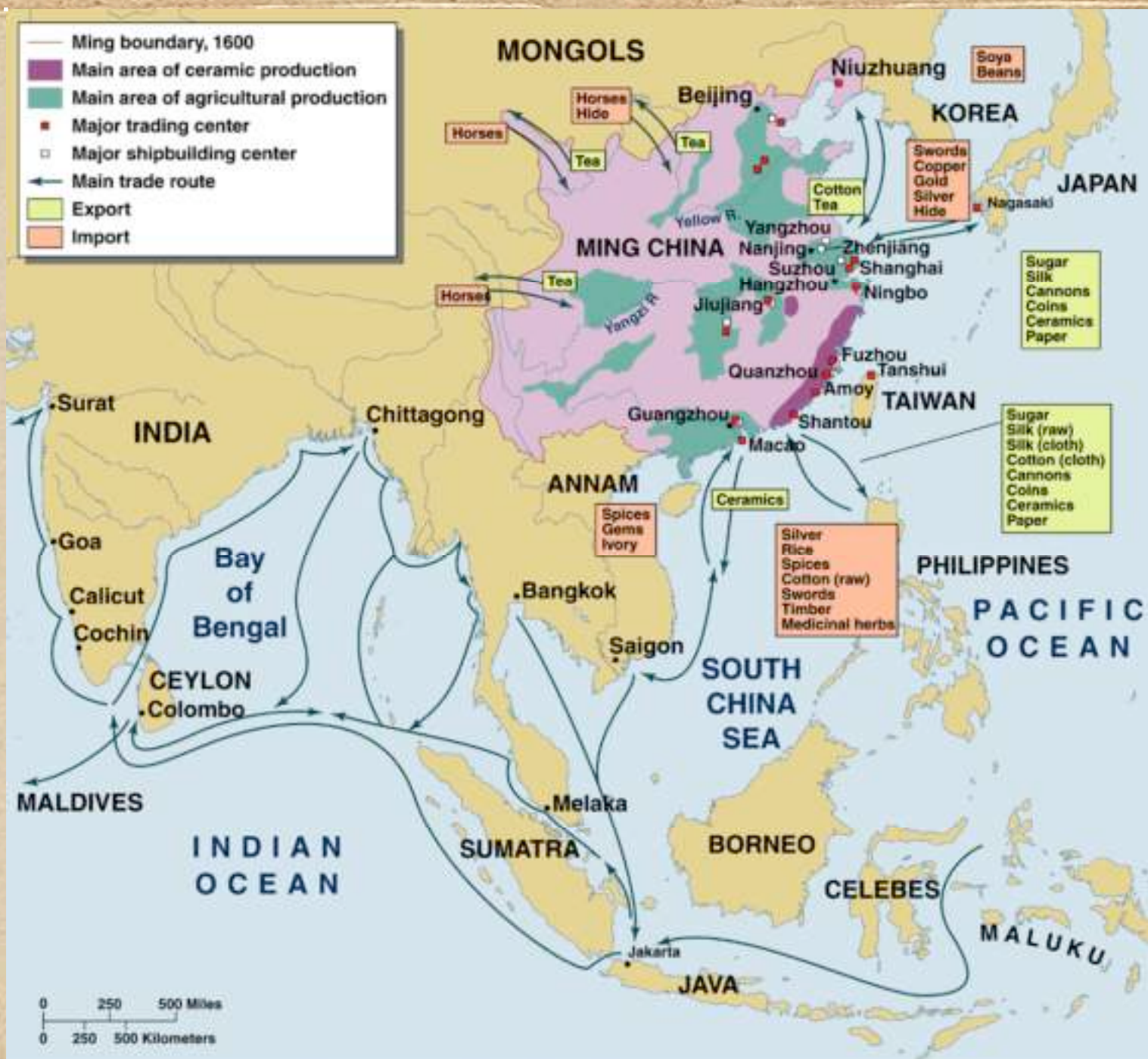


MAP 2-6 VOYAGES OF ZHENG HE, 1405-1433









MAP 3-1 TRADE AND PRODUCTION IN MING CHINA