

Taiwan as an Austronesian Homeland: New Evidence and an Interpretation from Shell Midden Remains

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Archaeologists and linguists have long recognized Taiwan as homeland to those so-called Austronesian speaking peoples. However, the arguments remain unsettled. The main purpose of this paper is to report the archaeological data unearthed from Tainan Science-based Industrial Park (TNSIP) between 1996 and 2008. Up to now, 58 archaeological sites have been found and salvage excavations have been conducted at 34 archaeological sites. The artifacts in TNSIP yielded from sites covering a time span of 4800 to 200 B.P. and have been chronologically divided into 6 phases: Tapenkeng Culture, Niuchoutzu Culture, Tahu Culture, Niaosung Culture, Siraya Culture, and recent Han Chinese Culture. This paper is intended to focus on the archaeological evidence uncovered from the sites of Nan-kuan-li and Nan-kuan-li East. Together with the archaeological remains and ethnographic materials, I would like to propose an alternative interpretation to provide essential information for discussing the homeland and dispersal of Formosan aborigines in Taiwan.