

# **The Archaeology of Taiwan**

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A reliable documentary history of Taiwan has only four hundred years, beginning from the early seventeenth century when, in 1624, the Dutch occupied the southwestern coastal region. The four hundred years of recorded history in Taiwan saw the history of four main groups of literate people -- the Dutch, the Spanish, the Chinese, and the Japanese. Before these groups entered Taiwan, however, the island had long been inhabited by the indigenous peoples who spoke Austronesian (Malayo-Polynesian) languages. Because these Austronesian-speaking peoples had no written language, investigation of the island's history before the seventeenth century must rely upon archaeological studies. Therefore, it is important for the students who study Taiwan's Austronesian-speaking peoples to have knowledge of Taiwan archaeology. The course presents an overview of archaeological research undertaken in Taiwan from 30000 years ago to the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Emphasis will be placed on the chronological development of prehistoric cultures in Taiwan, Major archaeological discoveries and current state of archaeological research in Taiwan, and special issues relating to the origins and expansions of Taiwan's Austronesian-speaking peoples and cultures. In addition to the classroom, field trips to visit archaeological sites and museums will also be arranged.