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#### Megaliths in Eastern Taiwan Reconsidered

This chapter addresses the issue of megaliths in eastern Taiwan from the perspective of disciplinary history. In the past few decades, research on this topic has undergone several intellectual shifts leading to the recognition that treating all megalithic stones as a coherent category equivalent to an archaeological culture or phase is incorrect. Based on available evidence, the wide variety of megaliths obviously did not evolve hand-in-hand and from place to place. Megaliths are better regarded as long-lasting material traditions that were adopted unevenly by local groups. Furthermore, diffusionist suggestions that megaliths spread spatially, either northward or southward, should be abandoned. To explore the nature of megaliths, a holistic settlement archaeology clearly offers a more promising approach, because megaliths provided different functions that can only be deduced from context. However, they share a wish for permanence and generally require social labor beyond the individual house.

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