

Further Archaeological Research Around Misimbo Lake, Rufiji region, Tanzania.

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Introduction

The Archaeological study of Rufiji is an on going process for a decade now. In the context of this report, other colleagues have also previously excavated some parts of Misimbo Farm (Chami 2001; Bufure and Vakolavene 2010; Valerian and Chami in this issue). As reported in the previous reports of works in the Misimbo area, the main aim has been gathering/collecting more data on the ancient settlements near and around the Rufiji Delta, with a possible chance of discovering the lost town of Rhapta. It should be noted here that Professor Chami who has been an inspiring figure in this research, believes that the Metropolis of Rhapta reported in various Roman documents was located in the region. Following his scientific belief, sites of that period, now termed as Rhaptanoid (Chami 2006), which is a culture of Early Iron Working period, have been found in good numbers in this region, some with ancient trade goods (Chami 2006). The colleague's effort to excavate near lake Misimbo, known as Londo, expanded Chami's earlier excavation.

This research, however attempted to trace evidence for trade and house structures. As reported earlier (Bufure and Vakolavene 2010) more potsherds of the ancient period were collected although they were few compared to what was expected. The idea of moving closer to the lake, in this case, became fundamental with the inspiration of recovering important houses. Furthermore, this study strived to respond to early accounts proposed by scholars beforehand. Early studies put in proposition the inhabitation of the Bantu-speakers in the Rufiji. These Bantu-speakers are reported to have taken on farming, iron working, marine exploration as well as transoceanic trade. The end result of these responsibilities was the multiplication of residents in the region. This report accounts for results of the new strategic excavation near the lake.

Some Survey Work

Intensive survey was conducted in the area near the Lake, northwards to the area with bamboo trees which indicated the gap. Having identified this gap, it became necessary to conduct a survey in this part of Misimbo A site, mainly Misimbo A northern part. Since the area around the lake had its forest cleared by the Misimbo