

RE - Excavation misimbo.Rufiji Delta

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Introduction

This paper reports one of the largest archaeological areas survey in the Rufiji area between June and July 2008. Professor Felix Chami sponsored the field work through African Archaeology Network and also participated in the survey work. The authors are among students of the University of Dar-es Salaam field school which took place in Rufiji region in 1996, also led by Professor Chami. The field school found numerous sites in the Rufiji area which required intensive and extensive survey, mapping and excavation. The observation of the archaeology of this region has led us to request funds to continue with the work which was not accomplished then.

Further to this, the team aimed at stretching evidences to authenticate various suggestions that were put forward by numerous scholars about the sites found then. It was a result of the analytical work of the previous accounts conveyed by early scholars about the subsistence economy, settlement and culture of Later Stone Age (LSA) and Early Iron Age (EIA) people in the Rufiji (see Casson 1989, Chami 1997, Chami 1999, Chami 2001). Scholars also refer to the people of Rufiji as having been traders (inland and transoceanic) and later, facilitators of the growth and flourishing of the emporium, Rhapta (see Casson 1989, Chami and Msemwa 1997, Chami 1997, Chami 1998a, Chami 1999, Chami 2001, Chittick 1982, Chittick 1974, Freeman-Grenville 1975, Huntingford 1980, Horton 1990, Sanders 1969, Sheriff 1981 and Sutton 1990).

Their propositions raised numerous questions which encouraged the undertaking of this research (See Chami 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001a&b). In his attempt to trace evidence of what were inferred by scholars as far as Rufiji is concerned, Chami and his companions initiated research which has responded to some questions. Some of the evidences have been recovered. Others are yet to be recaptured; thus appealing for more researches on numerous wards and villages of the Rufiji.