### Abstract

Iron Age research in the southern Lake Malawi area has been concentrated on two proto-historic sites, Nkudzi and Mtemanankhokwe 1, excavated by Ray Inskeep and Yusuf Juwayeyi respectively. Following the thorough re-examination of the ceramic material in the collections of the National Museums of Malawi and the National Museums of Zambia, the present paper reconstructs the underlying cultural dynamics that led to the emergence of social distinctions. It concludes that geography, the presence of abundant natural resources and the creativity of the people themselves were responsible for the emergence of social distinctions. It summarizes the results of the archaeological research carried out at the two sites. At Nkudzi Bay, the site with the larger deposits and the greater proportion of artifacts, 12 burials were excavated. At Mtemanankhokwe 1, one burial was excavated. These burials were excavated in 1982 and 1983 respectively and have not been published before in the technical literature. Nkudzi Bay was found to be more compact than Mtemanankhokwe 1. Both burials were made of a type of stone. At Nkudzi bay, shell and copper beads were also found. The bulk of the burial goods consisted of pottery and iron implements. Some of the metal objects at Nkudzi bay had cloth and reed imprints on them. At Mtemanankhokwe 1, One burial, that of a female, had eight pots in her grave one of which contained a pre-cooked whole maize cob with glass beads. The bulk of the burial goods consisted of pottery and iron implements. Some of the metal objects at Mtemanankhokwe 1 were made of a type of stone. A few iron implements included agricultural and hunting tools such as hoes, axes, arrowheads,欧洲工具。The geographic location of the area made it a natural crossroads for traders and travelers between the hinterland and the east African seacoast. The area benefited economically from these interactions. The economic control on the other hand was in the hands of local merchants and artisans who produced and developed the technology to make and distribute objects more efficiently than the imported goods. All these levels of society worked together to create the prosperity that so impressed Livingstone.

### Other Finds

- **Coarse pottery**
- **Red and black burnished pottery**
- **Other finds of Malawi type include copper items used as ornaments and spindle whorls for use in cotton weaving.**
- **The copper spindle whorls have decorative impressions on them, possibly of a type used for spinning.**
- **Metal objects at both Nkudzi Bay and Mtemanankhokwe 1 were used as ornaments and probably for hunting.**
- **Some iron implements included agricultural and hunting tools such as hoes, axes, arrowheads, and hunting tools.**
- **European-made imported glass beads were preferred to local beads which were made with a type of stone.**

### The Iron Implements

- **European-made imported glass beads were preferred to local beads which were made with a type of stone.**
- **Metal objects at both Nkudzi Bay and Mtemanankhokwe 1 were used as ornaments and probably for hunting.**
- **Some iron implements included agricultural and hunting tools such as hoes, axes, arrowheads, and hunting tools.**
- **European-made imported glass beads were preferred to local beads which were made with a type of stone.**

### The Finds

- **At Mtemanankhokwe 1 were made of a type of stone. At Nkudzi bay, shell and copper beads were also found. The bulk of the burial goods consisted of pottery and iron implements. Some of the metal objects at Nkudzi bay had cloth and reed imprints on them. At Mtemanankhokwe 1, One burial, that of a female, had eight pots in her grave one of which contained a pre-cooked whole maize cob with glass beads. The bulk of the burial goods consisted of pottery and iron implements. Some of the metal objects at Mtemanankhokwe 1 were made of a type of stone. A few iron implements included agricultural and hunting tools such as hoes, axes, arrowheads, and hunting tools.**
- **The geographic location of the area made it a natural crossroads for traders and travelers between the hinterland and the east African seacoast. The area benefited economically from these interactions. The economic control on the other hand was in the hands of local merchants and artisans who produced and developed the technology to make and distribute objects more efficiently than the imported goods. All these levels of society worked together to create the prosperity that so impressed Livingstone.**

### Conclusion

- **The geographic location of the area made it a natural crossroads for traders and travelers between the hinterland and the east African seacoast. The area benefited economically from these interactions. The economic control on the other hand was in the hands of local merchants and artisans who produced and developed the technology to make and distribute objects more efficiently than the imported goods. All these levels of society worked together to create the prosperity that so impressed Livingstone.**

### References cited

- **Juwayeyi, Y.M. (1991). Late Iron Age burial practices in the southern Lake Malawi area.**