AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF UMHAH-ABISI HILL-TOP SETTLEMENT SITE, LERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE

BY

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Declaration

I declare that the work in this dissertation entitled An Archaeological Survey of Umhah-Abisi Hill-top Settlement Site in Lere Local Government Area, Kaduna State, Nigeria has been carried out by me in the Department of Archaeology. The information derived from literatures has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of references provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any institution.

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Certification

This dissertation entitled ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF UMHAH-ABISI HILL-TOP SETTLEMENT SITE, LERE LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, KADUNA STATE, NIGERIA by Lawrence AFUWAI meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master of Arts in Archaeology of the Ahmadu Bello University, and is approved for its contribution to knowledge and literary presentation.

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Almighty God, the source of life, my helper and maker of who I am today.

Acknowledgments

I thank God Almighty for the grace and enablement to successfully complete this research. My sincere appreciation goes to my able supervisors Dr. (Mrs.) B.N Mangut and Prof. M.K Aliyu who encouraged me and dedicated their time to this research by correcting, suggesting and making positive inputs to its success. I also appreciate all the lecturers in the Department of Archaeology, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

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Abstract

The focus of this research is to conduct an archaeological survey of Umhah-abisi hill-top settlement site located in Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna state, Nigeria. The aim is to reconstruct the history of the Abisi people using the archaeological materials on the site. This was achieved with the following objectives which include; to study and document archaeological evidence found on the site through archaeological survey, to collect and document the oral tradition about the Abisi people, to produce an archaeological map for the site which will show the spatial distribution of finds and features, that can serve as a reference point for further research works. The methods that were adopted during the research includes the use of written records which were very helpful because they helped in our knowledge about the history of the people, the use of oral tradition which strongly suggest that Umhah-abisi was the earliest settlement of the Abisi people, it was also used to understand the meaning and functions of finds and features found on the site. Archaeological survey helped in the identification and documentation of finds and features, and finally classification and analysis of finds and features were employed in the research. The research revealed finds and features on the site which includes; potsherds, lower grinding stone, house foundations, monoliths, graves, sacred stones, water grove, shrine and buried pots which were the cultural materials used by the Abisi people on settlement. The study conducted on Umhah-abisi hill-top settlement site, shows that the hill-top served as security for the Abisi people. The study has provided useful information and also further research is needed in explaining the historical knowledge about the Abisi people.

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This is the first archaeological research embarked upon in order to study and document the archaeological materials on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site in Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna State. The Umhah-Abisi settlement falls between latitude 10° 01' 35.1"N and longitude 08° 37' 48.1"E. The settlement site is historically linked to the settlement history of the Abisi people. Hence, the word Umhah in Abisi language means hill-top, while Abisi is the name of the people who are also known as Piti people and are said to have settled on the Umhah-Abisi settlement. According to an oral source (John per. com., April 15, 2014), the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site was inhabited by the Abisi people because of its conducive environment and security against any external forces. None of the informants knew precisely when the study area was first inhabited by the Abisi people. Most simply, a comment is made along the lines, a very long time ago, during the time of our forefathers, and 'we do not have records'. However, nearly all respondents claimed that the study area was once occupied by Abisi people.

The abandonment of the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement was a gradual process because the movement down the hill-top was due to inadequate arable farm lands to cultivate on the hill-top and the decline of inter-ethnic conflicts. The Abisi people settled in small settlement clusters at the foot of the hill presently known as Rigertin. Thus, the archaeological survey of Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site is imperative because of the archaeological potentials which are important for the reconstruction of the past life ways of the Abisi people. Therefore, the evidence (finds and features) of past human occupation and activities that were found on the Umhah-Abisi

hill-top settlement site which include: potsherds, buried pots, lower grinding stone, house foundations, graves, sacred stones, water pool, monoliths, granary and shrine. These archaeological evidence corroborates the claim by oral tradition that the ancestors of the present people inhabiting Rigertin once settled on the hill-top known as Umhah-Abisi. However, this research was conducted from an archaeological perspective.

1.2 Statement of Research Problem

The Abisi people are grouped into seven villages at the foot of the hill (Umhah-Abisi) and oral tradition (Gayya per. com., April 15, 2014) claims they all migrated from the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement. There are however, no written documents about the site in particular except for works on the general history of the Abisi people as carried out by Meek, (1931), Gayya (1985), Nengel (2007) and Muller (1980).

As such, this research attempts to study the cultural materials abandoned on the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement and see if there is any correlation between the present and past settlement of the Abisi people which will help in the reconstruction of the history of the Abisi people with a special emphasis on spatial behaviours.

1.3 Significance of the Research

The site (Umhah-Abisi) is an important settlement to the Abisi people. According to available oral information (Albertin per. com., Dec. 15, 2015), the site served as a source of security against external conflict, provided them with economic trees both for herbs and building. Stones were got from the hill for constructions and also the availability of game for both commercial and personal consumption.

The significance of the research will bring to lime light the ruins of the abandoned settlement of the Abisi people which has the relics of archaeological evidence (finds and features) in terms of potsherds, monolith, shrine, water pool, granary foundation, circular house foundation among others. This will also help to add to the existing document about the settlement history of the Abisi people. In other words, this investigation is capable of pushing back the frontiers of knowledge with respect to the changing faces of human spatiality including sociality. More so, the situation of the site Umhah-Abisi (presently in terms of threats to archaeological features coming daily as a result of human activities in form of; cattle rearing, bush burning and other natural agent's erosion) makes this research a necessity as opposed to an option. This is central to cultural resource management in sustainable scale.

1.4 Scope of the Research

This research was conducted mainly on the archaeological landscape of Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site, Lere Local Government Area, Kaduna State. In this research, no excavation was conducted and there was no scientific laboratory observation and dating of archaeological finds and features found on the site. In addition, collection of oral tradition and consultation of written documents were conducted with a view to having an insight into their early history and origin. We hope that gaps existing in the available written document can be bridged to some degree by archaeology. In terms of archaeological survey, the research identified, studied and documented finds and features found on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site.

1.5 Literature Review

The Abisi as a people have a limited number of written sources on their history and traditions, among them are; Meek (1931), Gayya (1985), Umar (2011), Nengel (2007), Muller (1980). These written works were based on historical perspectives and concentrated on the origin, tradition and political history of the Abisi people. These few historical records cannot really tell much about the history especially the earlier phase without studying their material evidence left behind by their forefathers on their earliest settlement.

Meek (1931) discussed the Abisi people in a single chapter. He gave a general historical background about the Abisi people. According to him, the Abisi belong to a division of Janji of the Sudanic family and the name Abisi also appeared as a clan name among the Kurama ethnic group who are said to have migrated from Kano to North-central Nigeria alongside the Abisi people. He further explained the ties that existed between the Abisi people and their nieghbours such as; Kataf, Chawai, Kurama and Rukuba people. However, he pointed out some of the beliefs, values and norms of the Abisi people which are peculiar to them. For example, the social organization in Abisi land consists of seven units or clans which historically are said to be related. These clans are as follows;

Ward	**Clans**	**Population**
Magaji	*Rigertin*	192
San Gari	*Gi-Ribom*	429
SarkinDutsi	*Ukantin*	300
Mikama	*Igallik*	60
Kuka	*Igurisin*	37
SarkinDawa	*Aban*	31
Bado	*Umagan*	23

Source: Meek, (1931).

However, Meek's work was based on historical documentation about the Abisi people and also nothing was mentioned about their earliest settlement history which is very important to our understanding of the history of the Abisi people.

Gayya (1985) is a historian and also a native of the Abisi. He wrote about the history and tradition of the people with views similar to Meek's work. He explained that possibly since the name Abisi appeared as a clan name in Kurama ethnic group, they might have the same route of migration. Gayya's work was also based on historical perspective which relied mostly on oral sources and written sources. He failed to mention Umhah-Abisi as a settlement site despite oral tradition which mentioned the settlement as the earliest settlement of the Abisi people.

The study area has also been noticeable as a Stone Age site, though stone tools were not retrieved on the study site. However, other sites within it are Saminaka, Banke, Mai Lumba and Tibchi which have yielded Middle Stone Age materials. According to Opadeji (2001), three field trips were made to Saminaka and reconnaissance survey and excavation were carried out. Three areas for excavation were identified, the first area SSA 3 is located about 2 km along the river course north-west of the bridge. The second area for excavation, SSA 2 is about 70 m north-east of SSA 3 and the third area SSA 1 which is the most extensive is located on the highest point of the undulating plain north-west of SSA 2. They are all located west of River Rahama.

The general observation by Opadeji (2001) in the cause of his research is that, flakes from Saminaka are smaller in sizes than those from other sites. The reason for the difference can either be technological, chronological or environmental determined. Opadeji (2001) is of the opinion that the small sizes in Saminaka must have been environmentally induced because of the distance between Saminaka and the sources of raw materials. This forced the people to be more

economical in the use of what is available, whereas other sites don't have this problem because of their closeness to raw materials. Consequently, it was not necessary for them to maximize their resources. He also observed through analysis that the middle Stone Age core production technology from site to site dose not differ very much when considered generally but there are a few differences in details.

He concluded that middle Stone Age technology in the north-central Nigeria is homogenous but with distinct local flavour. The archaeological research of Opadeji in this study area has revealed early human settlement and occupation having a long history.

Umar (2011) conducted an ethno-archaeological study on pottery making in Lere town. He emphasized that pottery tradition is peculiar to Lere people and that the town serves as a major commercial centre were pottery tradition was traded both in the past and the present.

However, he failed to attach the pottery making tradition to any particular ethnic group among those inhabiting Lere Local Government Area. Oral tradition collected in the cause of the research claimed that the major tribe who extensively engaged in pottery tradition from the past to this present time are the Kurama people that are presently inhabiting Lere town. It was also confirmed by oral tradition that the Umhah-Abisi people never practiced pottery tradition but purchased their pottery wares from the Kurama people.

A number of researchers have attempted to study past human settlements around the study area through archaeological surveys. These include Abimbola (2014) his research focused on archaeological reconnaissance of Aluwalo abandoned settlement in Lere L.G.A. He made effort to study the history and document the archaeological evidence found in Alumalo abandoned settlement within the study area. Another research conducted is Kagomi (2009) also

made an effort using archaeological reconnaissance to document finds and features within Gure abandoned settlement in Lere L.G.A. Gure is a settlement of the Kurama people who engaged in trades with the Abisi people in the past. Bulus (2014) attempted to reconstruct the history of Uwere Na Chiki abandoned settlement through archaeological survey. He documented the finds and features of past human settlement found on the settlement. All these settlements once engaged in trade with the Abisi people both in the past and present.

Nengel (2007) studied the traditional security structure among the politics of northern Jos plateau in north-central Nigeria. He talked about the traditional rulers among the tribes found in the regions such as Abin, Abisi, Kurama, Amap and Atsam on security matters prior to the advent of British colonialism in Nigeria. However, he explained the roles played by traditional rulers in organizing local arrangement for the purpose of protecting and maintaining themselves against natural and social threats. The author only focused on the traditional polities and relationships among the tribes of north-central Nigeria. In addition, the author also failed to provide information in regards to origin and migratory history of the Abisi people as a whole which are very important in the understanding of more information about the traditional rulership of the Abisi people.

Muller (1980) studied polygymous/polyandrous marital forms of the Jos plateau. This is an anthropological study on the ethnic groups found in north-central region of Nigeria. The author examined five different models concerning marriage system and also the integration and relationships of these groups such as Abisi, Kadara, Kurama, Chawai and Rukuba. The author talked about the marriage system of the Abisi people as the fifth model and grouped them entirely as exogamous (primary and secondary types of marriage). According to oral tradition, the marriage institution of the Abisi people is very important because it's an aspect of the people

which is highly respected and it reveals more of their socio-cultural tradition. However, the author failed to provide more information in regards to other aspect of the Abisi people which can throw more light in our understanding of the marriage system of the people.

However, the few written sources about the history of the Abisi people mostly relied on oral sources, linguistic and anthropological evidence which are inadequate to be used in isolation towards our understanding of the Abisi people, especially their earliest settlement history which was neglected and has a lot to add to the history of the people. Thus, this researcher aimed at to studying and documenting the material evidence found on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site from an archaeological perspective.

1.6 Aim and Objectives of the Research

This research is aimed at reconstructing aspects of the history of the Umhah-Abisi people using archaeological materials, in order to bridge as much as possible the gap created by available historical accounts. This aim was achieved through the following objectives;

1) To document and study archaeological evidence found on the site through surface survey.
2) To collect and document the oral tradition of the Abisi people with a special emphasis on their settlement history.
3) To produce an archaeological map for the site which will show the spatial distribution of finds and features, that can serve as a reference point for further researches in the locality.

1.7 Theoretical Framework

This research adopts Historical Archaeology as an interpretative model. The concept emerged as a distinct sub-discipline in North America, in the mid-twentieth century (Deetz,

1977). Historical archaeology is a form of archaeology dealing with places, things, and issues from the past or present where written records and oral traditions can inform and contextualize cultural materials. These records can both complement and conflict with the archaeological evidence found at a particular site (Hall and Silliman, 2006). Initially, historical archaeology focused primarily on the study of the archaeological remains of buildings, artefacts and settlements associated with European colonization, for which period documentary sources were available (Lane, 2007 cf. Thomas, 2012). Since its inception, a key feature in the practice of historical archaeology has been the attempt to marry written sources with material traces of human activities, and critically assess these against one another.

However, as the discipline continued to grow and expand geographically, there has been a sense of dissatisfaction amongst scholars regarding definitions and subject matter, as well as with some of the methods and practices of historical archaeology. As a result, several definitions and perceptions of historical archaeology have been presented, reviewed and refined; a situation that prompted Hall and Silliman (2006), to argue that "historical archaeology means different things to different people". Deetz (1977), viewed historical archaeology "as the archaeology of the global spread of European societies since the fifteenth century, and their subsequent impact on indigenous people in all parts of the world". He clearly specifies that historical archaeology studies the time periods and events for which written sources are available, and thus, societies that have developed a literate tradition.

These definitions have also been criticized from a methodological point of view, for considering the presence of written records as central to the practice of historical archaeology. Such a perception implies an absence of historical processes and events in the non-Western/non-literate world prior to the advent of a literary tradition (Connah, 2007). Lane (2007 cf. Thomas,

2012) argues that regardless of which definition is preferred, historical archaeology should seek to integrate and interrogate archaeological sources (such as artefactual, ecofactual, structural and architectural remains and their contextual, spatial and temporal associations and characteristics) with other non-archaeological sources that can broadly be defined as "historical" which includes various types of written texts and documents (such as formal histories; unpublished archival records; personal letters and newspaper accounts), pictorial and cartographic materials (such as drawings, maps, and photographs), different forms of orally-transmitted information (such as myths, oral traditions, praise songs, king lists, interview responses and personal memories) and information gleaned from historical linguistic analysis.

The application of historical archaeology approach as theoretical framework for this study is meant to increase our knowledge about the settlement history of Umhah-Abisi people. The adoption of this approach is very important because sources like written documents such as formal histories; archival material were consulted, pictorial and cartographic materials such as maps, and photographs were also used in the course of the research, different forms of orally-transmitted information such as myths, oral traditions, interview responses and personal memories were also adopted which helped in the analysis, interpretation and documentation of the finds and features found on the study site. Historical archaeology as a model was used to complement the archaeological evidence that was found on the site which has helped in no small measure towards our understanding of the history of the Abisi people.

1.8 Methods of Research

In an attempt to achieve the purpose of this research, the following methods of archaeological enquiry were employed; consultation of written sources, archaeological survey, oral tradition, ethnographic information, classification and analysis of finds and features found

on the study site.

1.8.1 Archaeological survey

Archaeological survey is a systematic search of the landscape for artifacts and sites. There are two kinds of surveys, that is, archaeological reconnaissance and instrumental survey. Archaeological reconnaissance involves systematic field walking in search of artifacts and site on the landscape, while instrumental survey involves making of maps and plans of the places and areas of interest (Price, 2007).

The archaeological survey of the study area (Umhah-Abisi) was conducted on the 17th and 18th of April, 2014, by foot walking around the site with the aid of three informants who also served as guides during the research. The survey helped in the identification and documentation of finds and features like potsherds, buried pots, lower grinding stone, house foundations, graves, sacred stones, water grove, monoliths, granary and shrine. Instruments used during the survey include ranging pole, photographic scale, measurement tapes, global positioning system (GPS), camera which were used in the documentation of the finds and features on the study site. Polythen bags were used to bag the potsherds collected from the site.

1.8.2 Written record

Documentary evidence can be very detailed and specific, or very generalized, or both. Documents can also originate from within a community or be observations from an outsider looking in. Relevant literature and colonial reports with valuable information regarding the history of the Abisi people were consulted. Written materials from personal collections and the

Reference Library, Department of Archaeology A.B.U, Zaria, were very helpful because they assisted in providing relevant information needed for the compilation of this dissertation. However, the consultation of these written sources has enhanced our understanding of the history of Abisi people.

1.8.3 Oral tradition

According to Vansina (1981), oral tradition has been defined as "a testimony transmitted orally from one generation to another". Vansina (1965), observed that, as oral history developed as an academic discipline in Africa from the 1960s onwards, it became an integral and important tool in writing histories of African people. Oral tradition was integrated in this study, and it proved to be of great importance. Oral tradition informed the researcher about the production and uses of various material remains within the study site. This helped the researcher to understand the meaning and uses of the material culture, the people's traditions of origin, political organizations, believes system and socio-cultural activities among others.

The oral tradition was collected through interviews with twenty-five knowledgeable informants (App. 2), the interviews cut across all ages, gender and occupational status. Despite the potential contributions from oral traditions in the research, it was used with caution. Oral information assisted in the location of the study site, important finds and features on the site as well as aided in the interpretation and understanding of the materials found on the site.

1.8.4 Ethnography information

Ethnography has been defined as the work of describing a culture. The essential core of this activity aims at understanding another people's way of life from the emic point of view

(Spradley, 1979:3). Ethnography is the descriptive study of present-day individual society or socio-cultural group. Ethnographic data is derived from the direct observation of human behavior, mainly the social, economic, linguistic and religious aspect. Particular methods are involved in ethnographic study; silent observation and qualitative participation and these set the stage for reasonable questions geared towards clarifying issues not understood in the archaeological data (Okpoko and Aliyu, 2006:66).

Ethnography therefore is the totality of the life ways of extant societies particularly the material dimension of it using other complementary research method; such as oral tradition and linguistic evidence. Ethnographic data were collected in the course of the research which is geared to gain insight into the nature, processes, use and function of pottery vessels.

1.8.5 Classification and analysis

Classification is a matched set of contrasting categories, which are collectively meant to characterize most or all of the entities in a specified body of material (William and Ernest, 1991). The importance of classification to an archaeologist cannot be over emphasized because it provides the working basis for further study of material remains collected. Before an investigator can analyze and interpret collected data, these materials must be arranged and ordered.

Archaeologists classify and analyze artifacts in order to answer specific research questions. According to Price (2007), classification is a way of creating order in a mass of archaeological materials by grouping items into similar category for analysis. Material remains such as potsherds which constituted the major finds were collected on the site and there after analysed, Features were also studied on the site in-situ basically because they were immovable. Classification and analysis has helped to understand the types of pottery used by the Abisi people

in the past and the purpose for which they were made.

CHAPTER TWO

GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Geographical Background

2.1.1 Site location

The Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site is situated in Lere Local Government Area of Kaduna State, Nigeria (figs. 1-4). Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement is about 25km south-west of Mariri town and 200m away from Rigertin. The study site is characterized by rock boulders and gently undulating land which falls within latitude 10° 01' 35.1"N and longitude 08° 37' 48.1"E. The Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site is bordered by Garun kurama to the north-west, Garza and Mariri to the southwest, Badurun-kasa to the east and River Ribang to the west. The nearest town to the study site is Rigertin situated at the foot of the Umhah-Abisi hill. River Ribang flows through the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site and down to the present settlement, Rigertin and then to Mariri town. Historically, River Ribang served the community with water for domestic and other economic activities ranging from drinking water for humans, livestock and domestic uses.

2.1.2 Climate

Umhah-Abisi hill-top falls within the climatic zone characterized by dry and wet seasons. The dry season stretches between November and April. The months between November and January of the following year are usually cold and dusty, the dust being as a result of the north-east trade wind from the Sahara. The temperature rises to its peak between February and March after which the south-west trade wind that brings the rainy season will take over. The wet (rainy) season lasts from April to the beginning of October; the rains reach their peak between the months of July, August and September. This season is ushered in by frequent storms; lateritic-surfaced roads are gullied and become progressively worse with the subsequent rains (Iloeje, 1981). During this period, the temperature is moderate and more conclusive and marks the beginning of the planting season. The farm routine is closely dictated by the climate. It is almost impossible to grow two crops a year on same piece of land as in southern Nigeria, unless irrigation and intensive farming are practiced. Nature has produced staggered harvest; all crops are planted at the beginning of the rains, usually in May. Since the vegetables mature first, then the millet and maize, and finally the guinea corn, (Iloeje, 1981). By October the harvest is over, and the grains are milled, winnowed and well-stored in bins ready for home consumption or sale.

The climate were conducive for the cultivation of crops and the growth of trees that were prevalent on the site and its environs which were used by the Abisi people for domestic and economic purposes. This aided a well settled life on the hill-top and its environs.

2.1.3 Geology and soil

Northern Nigerian rocks are predominantly those of the precambian basement complex with crystalline rocks. The underlying granites appear on the surface in the form of inselbergs (Grant 1978 cf. Aliyu 2014). The bedrock geology of Umhah-Abisi like most parts of north and

central Nigeria is predominantly precambian rocks of the Nigerian basement complex consisting of biotic gneisses and older granites. Deep chemical weathering and fluvial erosion, influenced by bioclimatic nature of the environment have developed the characteristic high undulating plains with subdued interfluves. Rocky granitic residuals form inselbergs of varying sizes and shapes and constituted the main local relief (McCurry, 1979). The geology formation was fully utilized by the inhabitants of the site, whereby the rocks were used for construction of houses, monoliths and grinding stones among others. The entire hill provided some form of defense for the people even when they lived in the open on top of the hill, it was difficult for enemies and enemy horses to climb.

Soil is very important in any archaeological researches, it provides information about the past climate, vegetation and animals that were available to man over the years. And also it serves as a means for the preservation of archaeological data in form of artifacts, features and ecofacts. Soil in most part of the area is predominantly the highly leached red tropical soils that are well drained, fine and medium textured. Skeletal soils occur at the foot of rocky hills and represent the earliest stage of soil formation from materials weathered from granite, schist and gneisses. Lateritic soils are found all over the area, clay and loamy soils are mostly along the wider stream valleys. (Udoh, 1978 cf. Yahaya, 2014).

2.1.4 Vegetation

Vegetation is referred to as the plant cover of the earth consisting of assemblages of plants. Vegetation expresses and reflects environmental conditions in West Africa, six major climatic and vegetation zones are identified; these zones include the sahel, sudanic savannah, guinea savannah, the rainforest, the mangrove and deltaic swap forest. Vegetation is a reflection

of the distribution of rainfall as it is determined by the interactions between two air masses, which are the dry north east continental wind from across the Sahara and the cool humid south-westerly Atlantic air masses (Sowunmi, 1981 cf. Aliyu, 2014).

The vegetation in the Umhah-Abisi area is dominated by large trees, smaller trees and shrubs. The area is also characterized by economic trees like: *Adansonia digitata* (Baobab) which serve different purposes ranging from food to medicinal uses. *Butyrospermum paradoxum* (Shea butter), *Proposis Africana* (Moringa) for soup and medicinal purposes, *Tamarinus indica* (Tamarind) *Magnifera indica* (Mango), *Parkia biglobosa* (Locust-bean).

2.1.5 Relief and drainage

Lere area is entirely on the north-central plateau that covers almost one-fifth of the total area of Nigeria. The ring dyke at the eastern parts of the local government area forms a series of ridges and inselbergs varying in height from 15 to 259metres. The hill tops are flat with rich pastoral grasses which are highly dissected by the action of running water that have acted on them over the years resulting in several streams and rivers such River Ribang. The streams have broken through the ring dyke carving impressive steep-sided, v-shaped gorges in the process (Ologe 1985 cf. Zakariah, 2000). The relief features enable the cultivation of different crops which provides a variety of food crops to the people. The streams are put to various uses by the people near them. For example: fishing, dry season farming and domestic uses among others.

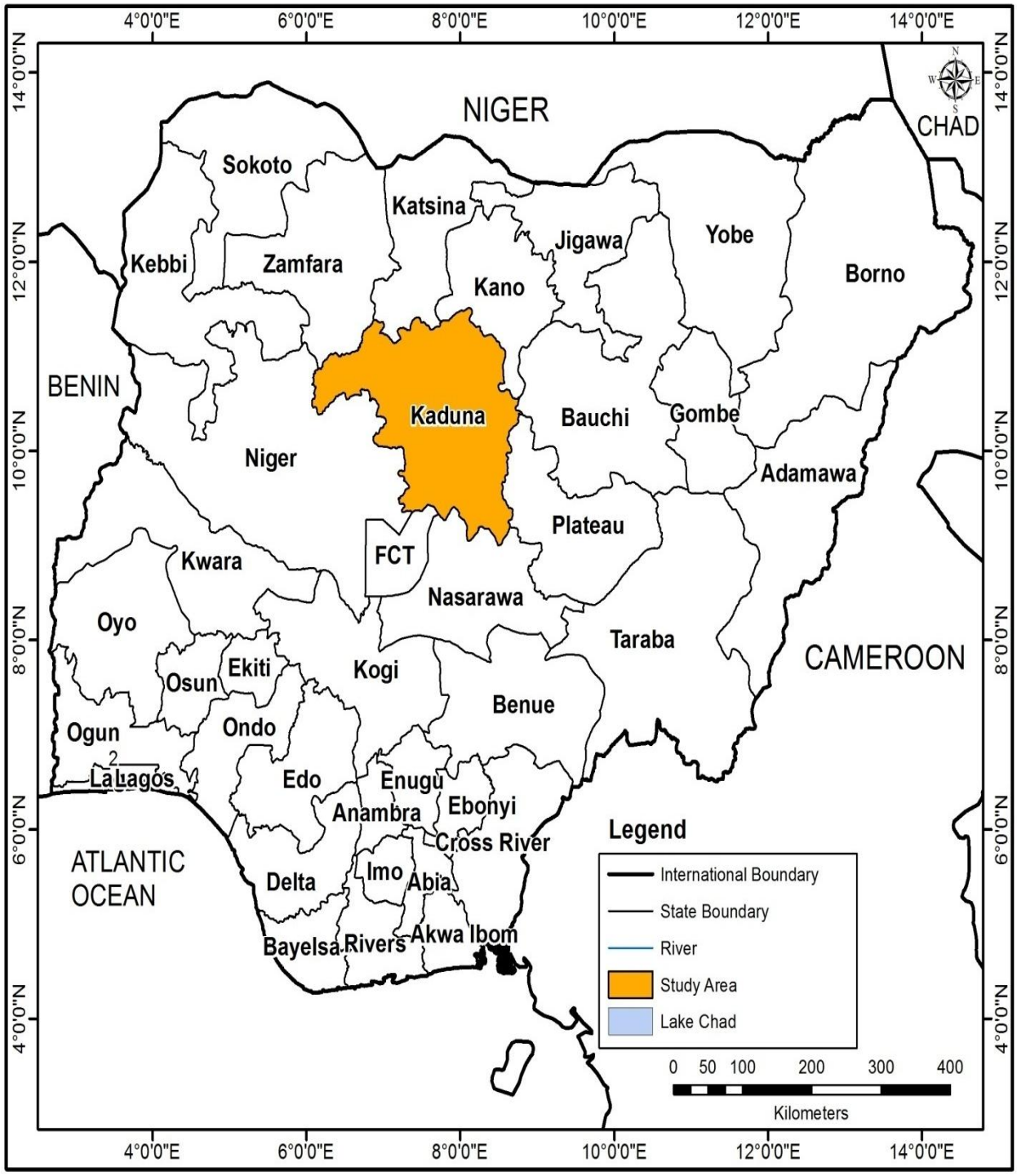


Figure 1: Map of Nigerian showing Kaduna State

Source: Modified from the Administrative Map of Nigeria

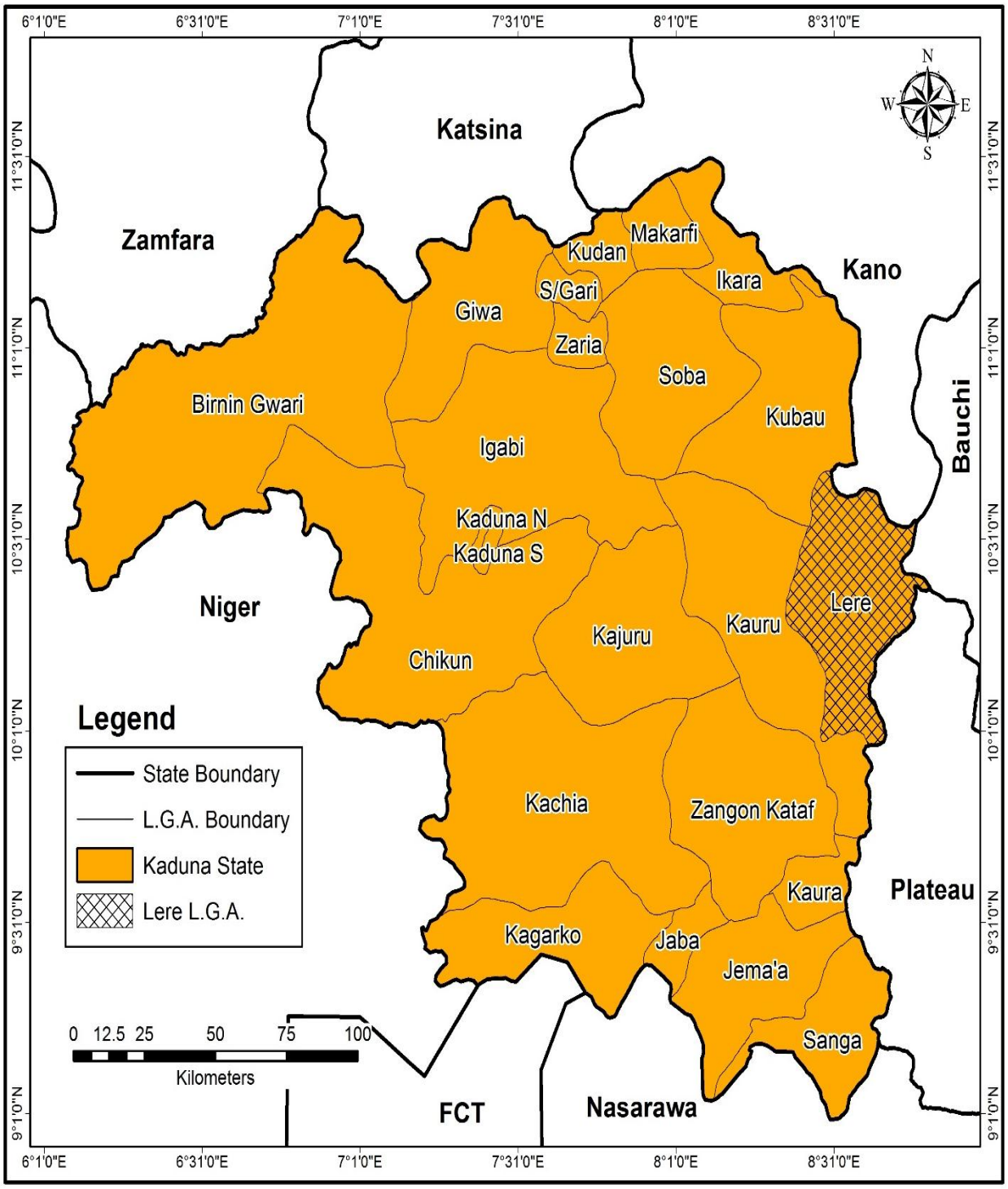


Figure 2: Map of Kaduna State showing Lere L.G.A

Source: Modified from the Administrative Map of Kaduna State

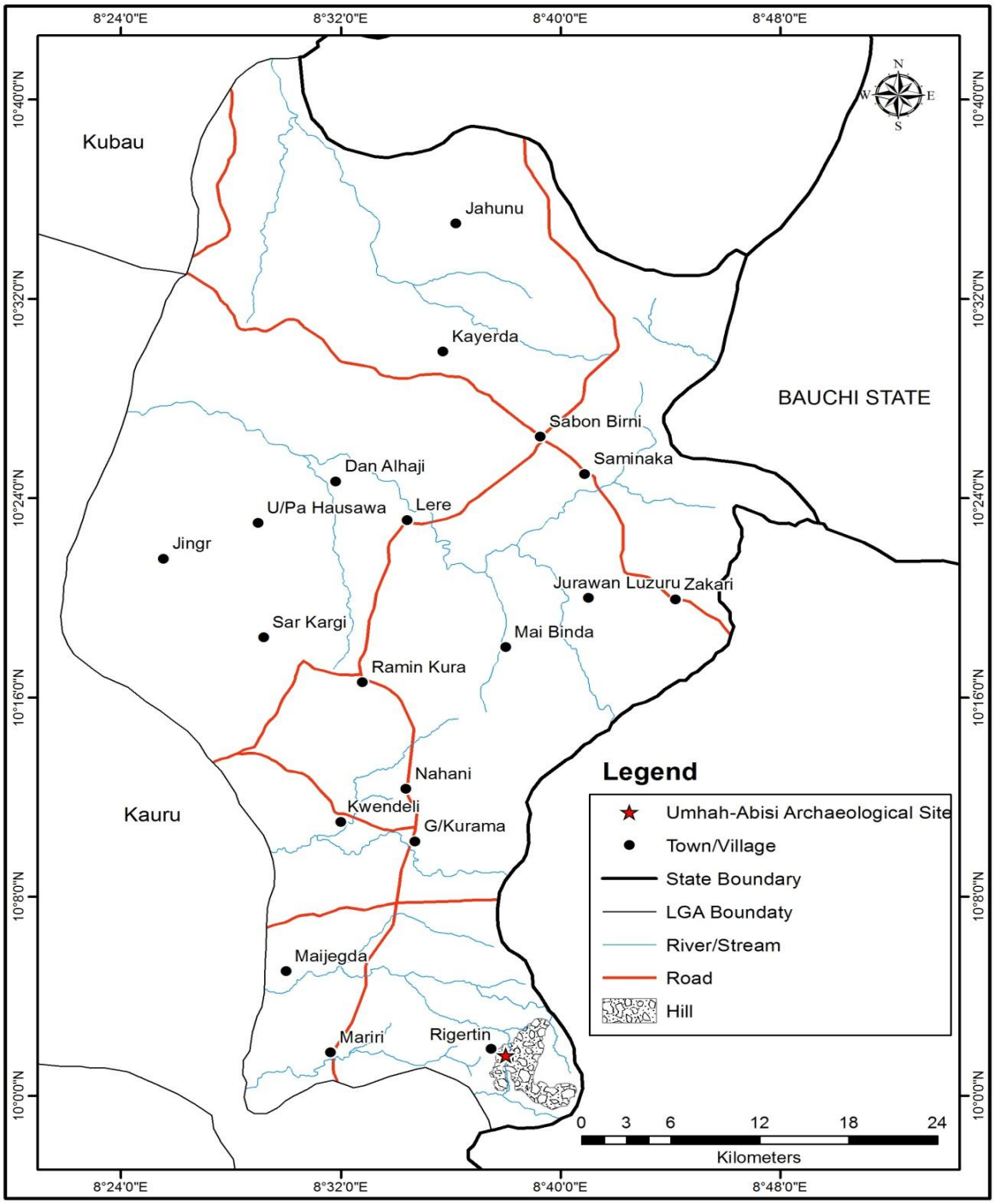


Figure 3: Map of Lere LGA showing the study site

Source: Modified from the Administrative Map of Lere LGA

2.2 Economic activity

The Abisi people are agriculturalist just like most other groups in central Nigeria. This explains the dispersed settlement of the Abisi people which is in order to acquire sufficient and fertile land for agricultural purposes. The Abisi area is characterized by large tracts of sparsely inhabited bush with occasional outcrops. In addition, the Abisi live in large family groups like compounds often with six to a dozen or more male adults and their families and it helps to boost agricultural activities. The Abisi are known to cultivate trees of economic significance such as (baobab tree) *Andasonia oligitata*, (locust bean) *Parkia biglobosa*, (mango) *magnifera indica*, (banana) *Musa spp*. Food crops like (groundnut) *Arachis hypogea*, (yam) *Discorea spp*. (Cocoyam) *Colocosia spp*, (soya beans) *Glycine max,* maize (*Zea mays)*, (sweet potatoes) *Patatas spp*, (millet) *Pennisetum typoidum, (*guinea corn) *Sorghum bicolor* and *Oryza sativa* (rice) which are well cultivated in the environment because of the fertile land within the area. Large quantities of foodstuffs are moved on a daily basis to neighbouring towns and market during harvest (Barnicot, 1961).

A lot of people both men and women are also involved in the rearing of animals to supplement their little financial gain accrued from sale of farm produce. The most common animals reared include; local chickens, pigs and goats. The environment was conducive for the cultivation of crops and rearing of animals and it was a means of livelihood of the Abisi people.

2.3 Historical Background

The Abisi people just like any other ethnic group have similar historical trends in their history. According to an oral informant (Iliya per. com., April 15, 2014), the Abisi people popularly known as Piti by their Hausa neighbours speak Riban language. He asserted that the Abisi people were immigrants from the northern part of Bauchi who left Bauchi as a result of conflict within the ethnic groups as lands for agriculture were scarce and also changes in climatic condition. They were forced to move towards Amo-Bisa in Jos Plateau region and their food supply were *Colocasia esculenta* (cocoa-yam), *Lopmoea batatas* (sweet potatoes), *Sorghum bicolor* (guinea corn), *Zea mays* (maize) among others. Their settlement at Amo-Bisa was also disturbed as a result of constant attacks by the Rukuba people who were their neighbouring settlers. The Abisi people decided to move east-ward of Amo-Bisa and settled on the study site (Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement) where they thought might be safe and there they met a small settlement of the Chawai on another hill close to Umhah-Abisi hill and they forcefully drove them away from this other hill so as to eradicate future threats and occupied Umhah-Abisi hill.

According to oral information (Emmanuel per. com., April 15, 2014) the settlement is characterized by fertile soil for agriculture, forest which harbor games and other economic resources. The hill-top settlement also served as protection against external invasion, source of water, building materials like wood, grasses and rocks were also available. According to an oral source (Albertin per. com., April 15, 2014), they can't remember the exact year they settled on the hill (Umhah-Abisi). While on the hill, they settled in small clusters and lived in circular huts made of stones and mud. The major activities of the Abisi people were hunting and mat weaving but utensils like pottery vessels and iron implements were bought from neighbouring villages like Kurama, Chawai and Rukuba. He further asserted that, due to population increase and the

quest for more land to cultivate as the hill-top settlement was not enough for the community, they decided to settle on the plain at the foot of the hill which is their present settlement known as Rigertin. This happened around the early 1970s.

2.3.1 Political organization in Abisi land

Historically, the Abisi people had a strong belief that every Abisi man is linked with his ancestors. The political organization rested on kinship, they all believed they belong to the same ancestors. According to Gayya (1985), the Abisi people have seven political clans and they are; Igiribom, Ukantin, Rigertin, Igalik, Igureshen, Aban and Ugwagan.

The Rigertin clan is said to hold the title of king (*Magaji*) in the community. The king is saddled with the responsibility of taking charge of the community both spiritually and politically.

The Igiribom clan which is the second, is said to hold the title of village head (*Sarkin Gari*). The village head works with the king in governing the community.

The Ukantin clan was responsible for taking care of the hill (Umhah-Abisi) and they are in charge of the hill (*Sarkin Dutse)*. Any activity that has to do with the hill, the chief custodian has to be consulted for smooth running of the activity.

The Igallik clan was in charge of the shrine (*Mikama*). The title is an important role because of its responsibilities in the land. They are responsible for the arrest of any offender in all the seven clans according to an oral source (Danjuma per. com., April 15, 2014).

The Igureshen clan held the title of "*Sarkin Kuka*" (native doctors). According to an oral source (Talatu per. com., April 15, 2014), the native doctor take care of the health of the people

in the community. He is said to work together with the Rigerten clan (chief priest) to carry out his duties.

The Aban clan, is said to hold the title of *Sarkin Dawa* (Chief Hunter) in charge of hunting exercise in the community. He carries out these duties with the consent of the leaders for the smooth running of the hunting exercise.

The last clan is the Ugwagan clan, according to an oral source (Gayya per. com., April 15, 2014), they were saddled with the responsibility of reporting unhealthy situations discovered in the society to the *Sangari*. The *Sangari* in turn will send for the *SarkinKuka* to take note and find a lasting solution to the problem.

However, an oral informant (Atung, per. com., May 27, 2015), gave the names of the chiefs that have served in the community:

Kuragya Bori Sangari	1920 – 1950
Madoh Dodo	1950 – 1969
Chiyawa Madoh	1970 – 1982
Awain Mado	1983 – 2002
Kanga Madoh	2003 – Date

2.3.2 Religious beliefs of the Abisi people

The Abisi people believe in the existence of a supernatural being whom they call *Bareh* and regard as the heavenly God who is above every deity (gods) that control man's destiny. "*Bareh* is believed to live in heaven and is represented on earth by spirits and deities who live in stones, rivers and trees" (Mather per. com., May 29, 2014). The Abisi people also believed in

another god called the "*Michir"* (god of grains) who was incharge of the rainy season activity like farming. It was believed that nobody in the land has the right to start farming without the annual sacrifice normally done during the rainy season. A priest was assigned for the sacrifice to the god of grains. He takes either guinea corn, maize or millet to a cave already prepared for the sacrifice which was mostly performed in the first week of April of each year, seeking for blessing from the god of grains. It was further said (Maiwada per. com., May 29, 2014), that the priest in charge will go back to the cave after three days to check if the sacrifice was accepted. If the sacrifice was accepted the priest will find another grain replacing the one he brought earlier on, if it was not accepted the one he left earlier on will still be at the ritual site.

At the acceptance of the sacrifice, the priest will take the grains sacrifice to the farm land which was prepared for that purpose and plant the grains after which he would go to the announcement ground and announce to the general public to be out for the rainy season activities. Having heard the announcement, the whole community was at liberty to commence farming activities. The same procedure was also taken during the harvest of grains.

An oral informant (Mama per. com., May 29, 2014) asserted that, the Abisi people had other gods that were worshiped in the land called the gods of ancestors (*Rigpang-Tashi)* which were always consulted whenever someone was faced with mysterious illness or misfortunes in the land.

2.3.3 Socio-cultural traditions in Abisi land

The forms of marriage as practiced by the Abisi people are similar with other ethnicity of the north central Nigeria but with some slight variations. Having seen the division of clans, the seven clans communicate with each other in many social activities such as marriages and

ceremonial activities like festivals.

Marriages System

In Abisi land, marriage is considered as the most crucial union. According to an oral informant (Talatu per. com., Sept. 2, 2014) there were three types of marriage systems and they are: exogamous marriage, marriage by elopement and leviratical marriage.

Exogamous marriage that is marriage by exchange. It was practiced among the Abisi people. According to an oral informant (Anchia per. com. Sept. 2, 2014) in this form of marriage, a male takes his sister and exchanges her with another man's sister, some clans maintained this type of marriage union. He asserted that, most of the clans before now forbid clan's men from taking wives from the same clan fold. Each female born in the clan is either seen as a daughter or a sister. In this form of marriage arrangement, items like a female goat and 400 cowries were used as bride price (Gayya per. com., Sept. 2, 2014).

Another type of marriage practiced by the Abisi people was "marriage by elopement". An oral informant (Nuhu per. com. Sept. 3, 2014), said that, this was mostly practiced among matured people. For instance, after courtship and the girl is discovered to have more than one suitor, they will be requested to meet the same day at a particular place and time. The most intelligent suitor who out maneuvers others and is able to take the girl away to his home will finally become her husband. He further asserted that, between three days and one week after the snatch, the bride will be allowed to return back to her parents for the payment of the bride price. This ranges between 20, 000 and 30,000 cowries depending on the strength of the groom but it must not be less than 20,000 cowries. Other things include guinea corn, goat and a pot of fresh honey.

The third type of marriage is leviratical marriage. An oral source (Atini per. com., Sept. 3, 2014), said that, the Abisi people also practiced leviratical system of marriage in which either the younger or elder brother of a deceased married his wife or wives. The practice is historically believed to preserve the bloodline of the late brother, hence the effort is to keep the woman within the same family.

Festivals in Abisi land

There are two major festivals in Abisi land and they were celebrated annually. These festivals are: *Uganing* festival and the *Manbo* hunting festival.

Uganing festival**:** This festival was observed by the people of Abisi during the end of the rainy season activities. It was a thanksgiving festival to the gods for guiding them throughout the rainy season up to the dry season. In regard to this, all the seven clan's leaders were informed by the chief and the *Magajin Dodo* (chief masquerade) to start preparing the items used for the festival. According to an oral informants (Maiwada and Ishaku per. com., Sept. 3, 2014) on the day of the ceremony, all the youths in the seven clans will come out in mass to meet at the playground singing all sort of protective songs of praises to the heavenly god known as "*Bareh*" after that, the youths will march eastwards to the boundary of Abisi land and then throw away all the old farming equipment's that were used during the celebration indicating that they have thrown away the evils that might have occurred in that rainy season. This festival is presently performed without the throwing away of the old farming equipments, these are rather kept aside in their houses.

The *Manbo Kimong* festival**:** This is the second major festival celebrated in Abisi land, it

is called the hunting ceremony and it was observed yearly by the community during the dry season (January to April). According to an oral informant (Maiwada per. com., Sept. 3, 2014) the Abisi people are known for hunting practices. They were great hunters and from time to time organized big games and all outstanding hunters from each clan or family would exhibit their craftsmanship and medicinal strength. The hunting ceremony normally used to be the first hunting exercise before any hunting activity can take place in the land. During hunting, bows and poisoned arrows, spears, traps and horses were all used to hunt and animals were hunted by individuals and on communal basis. The chief masquerade will have to perform a ritual with the blood of a male horse, because it was believed that, the blood will strengthen the weapons used during the hunting and also increase the games in the bush. The chief will pronounce the day for the festival after consultation with the chief masquerade and a day will be fixed and the whole community will be on alert. The festival was celebrated with a lot of meat eating and beer drinking in each compound and family.

CHAPTER THREE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF UMHAH-ABISI HILL-TOP SETTLEMENT SITE

3.1 Introduction

Archaeological survey is a useful, nondestructive tool for understanding the past. An archaeological survey is a type of field research by which archaeologists search for archaeological sites and collect information about the location, distribution and organization of past human cultures across a large area. Archaeologists conduct surveys to search for particular archaeological sites or kinds of sites, to detect patterns in the distribution of material culture over regions, to make generalizations or test hypotheses about past cultures. An area may be considered worthy of surveying based on the following: Artifact types, literary sources, Oral sources, local knowledge and previous surveys among others.

The objectives of the survey are;

1. To determine the size of the settlement site using artifact distribution as a guide.
2. To document the available archaeological finds and features on the site

3.2 Site Description

Archaeological site consist essentially of activity areas; that is, where people have done things in the past and left some residues or relics of their activities. Umhah-Abisi is an archaeological site located on a hill-top that is oval in shape and is about 200 m north of Rigertin village. One can easily access the hill-top from the Rigertin village through narrow paths at the north and eastern part of the site, from the present settlement. The site is characterized by heavy rock boulders and its surface is a gently undulating land and it covers an area of approximately 1 x 1 square killometres. The vegetation of the site is unevenly distributed with tall trees that include those of economic importance such as *Parkia biglobisa (*locust bean*), Butyrospenrum paradoxum (*Shea butter*), Mangnifera indica (*mango*), Tamaridus indica (*Tamarind*), Adansonia digitata (*Baobab tree*)* and the vegetation at the base of the hill is characterized by short grasses (fig. 4).

3.3 Finds and Features on Umhah-Abisi hill-top Settlement Site.

An attempt was made with the aid of archaeological methods to document the finds and features in order to reconstruct the history of the Abisi people who inhabited the study site.

3.3.1 Finds

3.3.1.1 *Potsherds*

Potsherds are artifacts that are found in almost all archaeological sites especially habitation sites (Aliyu, 2005). Potsherds constitute the most common class of finds on the site and were found scattered around the Umhah-Abisi hill-top site. Only representative samples were collected from the site. A total number of 123 potsherds were collected and bagged for

classification and analysis and an attempt will be made to reconstruct some of the potsherds based on their rims types and morphology in chapter four.

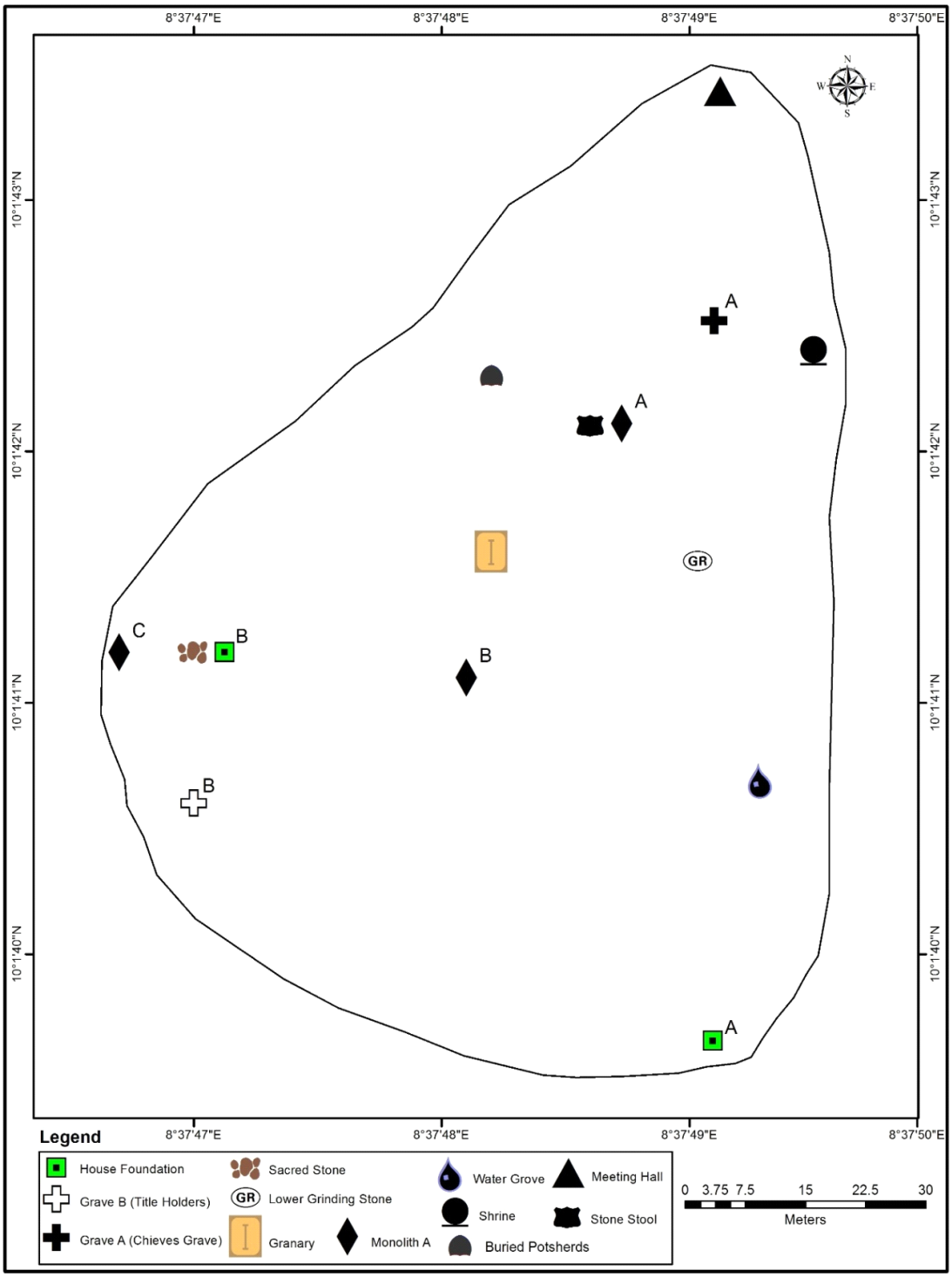


Figure 5: Site Map showing the distribution of finds and features on the study site.

Source: Map Gallery, Department of Geography, ABU, Zaria

3.2.1.2 *Lower grinding stone* (*Ripangiwogih*)

A single lower grinding stone was found at the eastern part of the site. It has an irregular shape with rough edges. It also has a deep hollow in its centre. The lower grinding stone measured 50cm in length and 15cm in height (Plate I). The raw materials used are hard igneous rocks that abound the study site. It was found close to a rock boulder.



Plate (I): Lower Grinding Stone (*Ripangiwogih*)

3.2.2 Features

3.2.2.1 *Buried pots* (*Ujorum inyosi*)

Three buried pots were found embedded in the ground and only their bases were revealed at the surface. Two of the pots are partly broken and they are located north of the lower grinding stone. The distance between the buried pots and the lower grinding stone is about 10m away. (Plate II).



Plate (II): Buried Pots (*Ujorum inyosi*)

3.2.2.2 *Circular house foundation* (Udeh*)*

Traces of circular house foundations were identified and these are in form of stone arrangements in circular form. Most of the stone arrangements have been disturbed due to human activities on the site. These are of different sizes and found in different locations of the site. These have been labelled A - C.

Circular house foundation A, is at the northeastern part of the site consisting of about 70 stones and is about 15m away from the lower grinding stone (plate I) with a diameter of 6.8m (plate III). Circular house foundation B is located 18m southeast of circular house foundation A, with a diameter of 4m (plate IV). Circular house foundation C is located on the western part of the site at a distance of 5m away from circular stone arrangement A, it has about 29 stones, closely arranged.



Plate (IV): Circular house foundation

3.2.2.3 *Sacred stones (*Gu-uworo-chaikireh*)*

This is a triangular shaped stones arrangement located at the western part of the site. It was at a distance of about 4m away from circular stone arrangement B. Two of the stones are rocks that appear to be of igneous origin, while the third stone appears to be metamorphic rocks which are abounds on the site. (Plate V).



Plate (V): Sacred Stones (Gu-uworo-chaikireh)

3.2.2.4 *Granary foundation* (Richen)

This was found on the northern part of the site. It was 13m away from the sacred stones (plate V) with a diameter of 1.8m (Plate VI).



Plate (VI): Granary foundation (Richen)

3.2.2.5 *Water pool* (Emyerih)

A water pool was found during the survey under a granite boulder. The water pool has little water inside which doesn't go dry. It is located at the eastern part of the site, it is at a distance of 15m away from house foundation A. (Plate VII).



Plate (VII): Water Pool (*Emyerih*)

3.2.2.6 *Graves* (Mideng)

There are two distinct graves that were found on the site. Grave A which is located at the northeastern part of the site is at a distance of 3.1m away from the granary foundation (plate VII). The grave consists of a heap of granite stones arranged in an oval shape (Plate VIII). Grave B is located at the southwestern part of the site, it was 8m away from the circular stone arrangement B. (Plate IX).



Plate (VIII): Grave A (Mideng Amagaji)



Plate (IX): Grave B (Mideng)

3.2.2.7 *Monoliths (*Ripang*)*

Three small standing monoliths were found in different locations on the site. These have been labelled A – C.

Monolith A is located at the northern part of the site away from Grave A (plate VIII). The monolith has a height of 50cm and a width of 48cm (plate X). Monolith B is located at the southern part of the site. The base of the monolith is wider than the upper part and it is 6.2m away from Monolith A. It has a height of 1m with a width of 26cm (plate XI). Monolith C which is the third monolith is located at the western part of the site. It is 3.7m away from the sacred stones, it has smaller stones attached to it at the base. The height of the monolith is 80cm and it has a width of 35cm (Plate XII).



Plate (X): Monolith A (Ripangnoag-kishik)



Plate (XI): Monolith B (Ripang-ukum, Kings Stone)



Plate (XII): Monolith C (Ripang, Protective Stone)

3.2.2.8 *Chief Priest Stone stool* (*Ripankisoh-Ures*)

These were found close to each other at the northern part of the site. The bigger stone has a measurement of 80cm width and the height is 20cm, while the second stone which is smaller in size is 15cm wide and 10cm height. It is 3.1m away from Monolith A. (Plate XIII).



Plate (XIII): Chief Priest Stone Stool (*Ripankisoh-Ures*)

3.2.2.9 *Shrine* (Ures)

A shrine was found on the site during the archaeological survey and it is located at the northeastern part of the site. It is 5.1m away from Grave B and has a height of 4.2m, the entrance measured 85cm in height and 0.9m in width. The shrine was built with red mud blocks with a thatched roof and it is situated on a mound. The shrine has some wild animal skulls fixed on the outer wall.



Plate (XIV): Shrine (Ures**)**

Table1: Summary of finds and features from Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site

S/N	FINDS AND FEATURES	QUANTITY

1	Stone objects	Lower grinding stone House foundations Stone tool Granary foundation Monoliths Sacred stones Water grove	1 3 1 1 3 3 1
2	Potsherds		123
3	Others		
		Shrine Graves Buried pots	1 2 3

CHAPTER FOUR

CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDS AND FEATURES

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to the analysis of artefactual evidence recovered from the site and it is an important part of the survey. Pottery constitutes the most common class of artefacts recovered. Consequently, the chapter begins with a presentation of the analysis of the pottery assemblage. Particular attention is given here to describing the general varieties of different vessel forms and their possible typological, cultural and functional significance. The second section presents the results of the lithic materials analysis. These are discussed in terms of general characteristics, the different types, and their possible cultural and historical significance. Additionally, it is hoped that this exercise would shed some light on the trade relations and interactions between the study site and their neighbours.

4.2 Pottery Classification

The archaeologist typically finds pottery in two different forms; as sherds (fragments) and as complete vessels. The differences between these two kinds of ceramic remains are more than just a matter of completeness. They involve also the kinds of information that can be derived from the two sources. As a result, it is only pots that consistently allow us to make functional inferences about the contexts in which they are found; whole pots and sherds are useful to the archaeologist for different purposes (William and Ernest, 1991).

The basic problem is that archaeologists generally work with sherds, while people in the past used pots. Ideally archaeologists would want to know how many pots of a particular type are present, not how many sherds. However, more often than not, archaeologists have to compare quantities of sherds of different types between areas on a site, between sites, or between periods (Drewett, 1999).

Potsherds were the predominant cultural materials found on the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site which were said to be trade goods from neighbouring town (Fadan Chawai). These pottery wares were used for different purposes by the Abisi people perhaps as a result of its durability and importance to the people. A total of 123 potsherds were collected from different parts of the site. In pottery analysis, there is no one way of analysis, it depends on the set down characteristics and interest of the archaeologist concerned. Despite this, there are five main features that were used in classifying pottery recovered from the site. These are;

1) **Paste Characteristics:-** This looks at the paste constituents which include clay, inclusion, hardness and colour among others
2) **Surface Finish:-** This also looks at how the pot was finished during manufacture of the pot.
3) **Vessel Parts:**- This addresses the sorting of potsherds according to which part of a pot

they belong to.

4) **Vessel Forms:-** This looks at the pottery forms in order to determine their morphology and by extension whether they belong to pot, bowl or any other vessel.
5) **Decorative Motifs:-** This looks at the different decoration on the potsherds and how they could have been achieved.

4.2.1 Paste characteristics

The paste or fabric is the physical composition of the pottery and is described in terms of the clay, the color, and the temper. The clay may be fine, medium, or coarse, indicative of the source of the clay as well as vessel function (coarser jars generally put to heavier use). Color is measured using a Munsell color chart for the exterior, interior, and core surfaces. Temper is the filler material added to clay to prevent the pot from breaking during the firing process and to give it special characteristics. Potters used a great variety of temper for this purpose: grit (crushed crystalline rock), grog (crushed pottery), shell, and even some types of reeds and grasses. The temper type is noted, and the size (average and range) for each sherd is estimated. Generally, the analysis and determination of the clay, color, and temper indicate the function of the vessel and the sources of physical materials (William and Ernest, 1991)

However, this section of the analysis was based on visual observation on the representative sample of the total potsherds collected from the site. Out of 123 potsherds collected, fifty-six are reddish brown, forty-two are light brown while twenty-five are black in colour and this is as a result of bush burning or function the pots were put into. This suggests that, the clay used in producing these pots varies and were not sourced or produced from the same source.

4.2.2 Surface finish

Surface finish or treatment simply refers to the final application on the pottery before firing. The finishing could be burnishing, glazing, slipping and plain among others. The potsherds collected on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site had two types of surface finish and they are identified through careful visual observation of the samples.

However, from visual observation 72 potsherds were burnished decorated and they account for 59% of the total number of the potsherds, while 51 were burnished undecorated and account for 41% of the total number of potsherds collected from the site. This result was achieved by feeling the surface of the potsherds with the use of the palm.

Table 2: Summary of surface finish distributed

S/NO	Surface finished	Quantity	Percentage %
1	Burnished decorated	72	59
2	Burnished undecorated	51	41
Total		**123**	**100**

4.2.3 Vessel parts

The form of a pottery consists of four main elements; its base, body, neck and rim. If a whole pottery is found, all four elements can be used to describe its form, but most pottery from archaeological sites are found as sherds (Drewett, 1999). The analysis focused on the total number and percentage of the potsherds collected from the site of study and also the total number of every part and percentage represented.

However, the sorting of potsherds from Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site was carried

out mainly to identify the specific fragments either as a rim which is the mouth of a pottery ware, the neck which is usually below the rim and above the body, body which is the major structure of the pottery ware, the base which is the part of the pottery ware that rests on the ground and finally the handle (if present) is the part attached to the vessel between the rim/neck and the body which makes it easier for the vessel to be carried. The table below shows the summary of potsherds classified into vessel parts (Table 2).

Table 3: Summary of Vessel Parts

S/N	Vessel Part	Quantity	Percentage %
1	Rim	20	16
2	Neck	13	11
3	Body	85	69
4	Handle	5	4
	Total	**123**	**100**

4.2.4 Vessel form

Rims are the most visible elements of a pottery ware in everyday use, so it is hardly surprising that potters varied their forms in every conceivable way. Rims can be made and therefore classified into a wide variety of forms, from plain to thickened, vertical, flaring,

incurving, T-shaped, pendant or horizontal (Joukowsky, 1980). The classification and analysis of pottery cannot be complete without the study of the vessel forms. The study of pottery forms involves the identification of rims which are the outer edge of pottery vessels located within the orifice to which the neck or body is attached depending on whether the vessel is a pot, jar or bowl. This helps the archaeologist to understand the descriptive and predictive framework for establishing what particular class of prehistoric vessels looks like and how they might have been used (Rice, 1987 cf. Maram, 2014). Out of seventeen rims analysed through physical examination, determining their sizes and thickness with the aid of a rim profile chat. Thirteen rims belong to pot category, while four belong to bowl category (Table 3).

Vessel forms

Form 1: Everted with Round Lip

Form one indicates a pot with everted rim and round lip. A total number of five rims fall under this category. The diameters of these rims range between 20 - 24 centimeters with an average thickness of 0.5 - 0.9 centimeters (fig. 5).

Form 2: Everted with Tapered Lip

Form two indicates a pot with everted rim and tapered lip. With an average thickness of 0.6 to 0.9cm and a diameter that ranges from 24-28cm. Seven rims belong to this group (fig. 6).

Form 3: Straight with Flat Lip

Form three indicates a bowl with a straight rim and flat lip. With a thickness of 0.6cm and a diameter of 14cm. Four rims fall under this category (fig. 7).

Form 4: Everted with Ridged Lip

Form four indicates a pot with everted rim and a ridged lip. A single rim was found under this category, with a thickness of 2.3cm and a diameter of 2.3 cm (fig. 8).

Table 4: Summary of Vessel forms

Form	Vessel Forms	Quantity	Diameter	Thickness	Percentage (%)
Form 1	Everted with round lip	5	20 – 24 cm	0.5 – 0.9 cm	29
Form 2	Everted with tapered lip	7	24 – 28 cm	0.6 – 0.9cm	41
Form 3	Straight with flat lip	4	14 cm	0.6 cm	24
Form 4	Everted with ridged lip	1	26 cm	2.3 cm	6
	Total	**17**			**100**

4.2.5 Decorative motifs

The fifth key element in pottery analysis is a consideration and classification of its decoration. The damp or leather-hard surface of newly-made pottery is an ideal medium for decoration by grooving, combing, incising and impressing among others. Alternatively, moulded pieces of clay can be added to the surface prior to firing. All these techniques of decoration can be applied in a variety of shapes, some as mere decorations, others providing particular meaning to the people using the pottery. Decorative motif implies the adornment, pattern or decoration applied to a pottery ware to enhance its aesthetic value, these motifs often become permanent. Different marks of decoration are usually applied on pottery either as single or multiple motifs. The study of decoration on pottery is one of the most widely reported aspects of pottery analysis. Unlike stones and other artifacts or materials found on archaeological sites, pottery is formed and allows for a wide range of creative expressions. (Lizee, Prindle and Plunkett, 1995 *cf*. Amos, 2014).

To the archaeologist, motifs can be used to gain insight on the life ways or events in the history of the people or society who made them. Out of 123 potsherds collected from the site 70 had decorations on them, 57 potsherds were identified with single decorations and 14 potsherds were identified with multiple decorations. This classification was based on visual observation with the naked eyes.

4.2.5.1 *Single decorative motifs*

Grooves

This is a line drawn across a vessel that is achieved using a blunt or hollow instrument.

The line makes a U-shape when seen through the profile of the pot. Grooves can be vertical, horizontal, zig-zag, channels or wavy. The major types of grooves on the potsherds were vertical, horizontal and wavy grooves. Seven potsherds were identified with grooves.

Roulette

Roulette is a technique whereby an object is used to roll on the back of wet clay to achieve a pattern of decoration.

Incision

Incisions are lines or strokes cut by any sharp object, it could be straight, wavy, spiral, diagonal or any other form.

Motif 1.

A. Horizontal grooves: This group consists of 10 potsherds with the same decorative motif and account for 18% of the total decorated potsherds (plate xvi).



Plate (XV): Horizontal Grooves

Motif 2.

A. Incision: This group consists of 6 potsherds with the same decorative motif and account for 11% of the total decorated potsherds (plate xvii).



Plate (XVI) Horizontal incision

Motif 3.

A. Roulette: This group consists of 40 potsherds with same decorative motif and account for 71% of the total decorated potsherds (plate xviii).



Plate (XVII) Twisted string roulette

Table 5: Summary of Single Decorative Motifs

S/N	Decorative Motif	Quantity	Percentage
1	Horizontal grooves	10	18
2	Incision	6	11
3	Roulette	40	71
4	**Total**	**56**	**100**

4.2.5.2 *Multiple decorative motifs*

Multiple decoration is a situation whereby two or more different types of decorations are made or super-imposed on one another on pottery.

Motif 4

A. Horizontal groove with notching: A single potsherd was classified and it account 7% of the total multiple decorated sherds (xxi).



Plate (XVIII). Horizontal groove with notching

Motif 5

A. Horizontal and wavy grooves with twisted string roulette: thirteen potsherds were classified under this category and it account for 93% of the total decorated sherds collected (xxii).



Plate (XIX) Horizontal and wavy grooves with twisted string roulette

Table 6: Summary of Multiple Decorative Motifs

S/N	Decorative Motif	Quantity	Percentage
1	Horizontal and wavy groove with notching	1	**7**
2	Horizontal and wavy grooves with twisted string roulette	13	93
3	**Total**	**14**	**100**

4.3 Classification and Analysis of Stone Objects

Prior to the introduction of metal, stone was a key tool-making raw material. Its domination in some archaeological assemblages is, however, partly as a result of its largely indestructible nature. Tools made of organic materials only survive in special circumstances.

Stone was also used in the past for a variety of purposes other than making tools. In archaeology, lithic analysis is the study of stone tool objects, and can entail things like determining where the stone was quarried, when the stone was worked, and what kind of technology was used to make the stone tool and examining other visible features.

However, the use of lithic materials by the Abisi people in the past can be attested to by the construction of houses, grinding stones and as monoliths mostly used for both religious and ritual purposes.

A single lower grinding stone was found at Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site. The grinding stone has an irregular shape and size with rough edges. The grinding stone is characterized by a smooth and depressed surface and oral information explains that is was used for grains grinding and herbs by the Abisi people.

The monoliths which were found on the site are characterized with rough and flat surfaces with irregular shapes. Based on oral source they were used for religious and ritual purposes in the community.

The use of stones for the construction of houses and granaries were practiced by the Abisi people and evidence of these was visible on the site. We can deduce from the choice of these stones (rocks) by the Abisi that, they knew the geological composition of rocks in the environment of Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement which they chose for their constructions of houses, monoliths and grinding stones. This also indicates a settled settlement by the Abisi people.

CHAPTER FIVE

INTERPRETATION OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DATA ON UMHAH-ABISI HILL-TOP SETTLEMENT SITE

5.1 Introduction

Interpretation is a stage in archaeological research or investigation at which the results of analyses are synthesized and attempts made to explain their meanings, allowing a reconstruction of the past. The layout of a settlement might have been determined by many factors, economic, environmental topography, social and religious or symbolic. The local landscape, hills, valleys, rivers may predetermine the shape of a settlement, while its location may be partly determined by access to resources or security consciousness among others.

As already pointed out, the initial focus of historical archaeology studies was on the investigation of physical evidence through contemporary information and notable written documents on the study site. Historical archaeology was used as a model because it allows the archaeologist to reconstruct the history of a particular people with the aid of archaeological finds and features on a study site. Research questions which are essential components of historical archaeology were utilized during the research.

5.2 Potsherds (*Ujorum Tiyin*)

Pottery making has been one of man's earliest crafts or indigenous knowledge systems and has played an immense role in the daily affairs of human society. They served as containers for storage, cooking, processing and other uses which vary in different societies. Pottery vessels

constitute a useful data base for archaeologists which are helpful to date sites, trace trade patterns, understand social and economic relationships of societies (Rice, 2007). The classification and analysis in chapter four, reveals that pottery vessels were used by the Abisi people.

From oral information obtained (Atung per. com., Sept. 10, 2014), the Abisi people were not skillful potters but their neighbours like Fadan Chawai are skilled potters. The informant asserted that, the soil around the site are not good enough for pottery production, but the source of pottery vessels in the community came from Fadan Chawai (Fadan Chawai is about 7km away from Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement). The purchase of pottery vessels from Fadan Chawai was because of the quality, the types and also the proximity.

An ethnographic study conducted on the present settlement of Fadan Chawai reveals that, pottery production is a long known craft since the days of their ancestors and the tradition is still in practice among the present-day people. This tradition of pottery making was inherited from their ancestors who once lived on the hill before migrating to the plain. Pottery production is peculiar to the women and they are mostly found in different compounds engaging in this tradition. No taboo is attached to pottery making in the community. The production of pottery is mostly carried out during the dry season when most of the farm produce have been harvested. (Harira, pers. com., Feb., 12, 2016).

The pottery vessels are named after the function or use they put. However, from the classification and analysis of potsherds collected from Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement, there are two major vessels types which are pots and bowls and they are also peculiar to the Fadan Chawai pottery vessels. Pottery vessels commonly produced in Fadan Chawai include vessels like; *Yen*

shiri fura (a pot used for cooking food), *Yen shiri azin* (a medium size pot used for soup making), *Yen holak mankan* (a pot used for herbs), *Yen karr* (a pot mostly used in the shrine) and *Yen sin-aning* (a large pot used for water or local wine storage). The bowl vessels like; *Yen shu-ning* (a bowl used for drinking of wine or water), *Yen ri-fura* (a bowl used to serve food), *Yen kutuk* (a lid used as cover for pots). The nature of decorations on pottery vessels are unique to each potter and most of the decorations include grooves, notches, roulette and incised lines. The pottery vessels at Fadan Chawai are still seen in the present settlement of the Abisi people which are also used for similar function as obtained from ethnographic source. (Ezra per. Com. Feb., 17, 2016). However, this suggests that the Abisi people and Fadan Chawai must have engaged in trading of pottery wares in the past and present settlements.

5.3 Buried Pots (*Ujorum inyosi*)

Pottery vessels were found embedded in the ground under a rock boulder at the northern part of the site. According to an oral informant (Koni pers. com., Sept. 10, 2014), the pots mostly medium slim necks were used for the burial of umbilical cords of newly born babies in the community. It was a practice that is well respected because of its religious implications on the newly born babies. Oral tradition claims that if a child is born and the umbilical cord is not buried, it will cause the death of the newly born baby or the child would be faced with a mysterious illness in the future which will also lead to death. The burial of the umbilical cords are done by the father or the first son of the family after the chief priest most have prayed over it. The burial of the umbilical cords of newly born children is still practiced by some Abisi people who still hold on to the old tradition.

5.4 Lower Grinding Stone (*Ripangiwogih*)

In ancient times, stones were fashioned out and used for grinding purposes. According to an oral informant (Ishaku pers. com., Sept. 10, 2014), grinding stones were commonly used in the community. The Abisi people are agriculturalists, crops like *Zea mays* (maize), *sorghum vulgare* (guinea corn) and millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*) are the major crops that were cultivated and the grinding stones were used for grinding grains which was mostly done by the women in the community. The grinding stones were also used for grinding local herbs.

The presence of these grinding stones in archeological context indicates an indirect evidence of agricultural practice among the inhabitant of Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site. Also, this type of lower grinding stone is still in use by a few inhabitants in the present settlement Rigertin of the Abisi people. This clearly indicates cultural continuity in the use of grinding stone even though it is declining because of modern electrical grinding machine.

5.5 Monoliths (*Ripang*)

Three separate monoliths were found at different locations on the study site and were used by the Abisi people. An oral source (Atung pers. com., Sept. 10, 2014), claims that Monolith A (*Ripangnoang-kishik*) Animal altar which was found at the northern part on the site was used to perform rituals of hunted animals and species most widely hunted included rabbit (*kireh*), loin (*Ichen*), hyena (*Umurum*), antelope (*Unanroh*), leopard (*Ukwoh*), warthog (*Udwang*) and gorilla (*Ugir*). Hunting was an important activity in the past and my informants asserted that the Abisi people used to hunt using a combination of weapons including bow and arrows, spears, machetes and clubs. The rituals are performed by *Sarkin-kuka* (Chief Announcer) it was believed that if the ritual of hunted animal is not performed, disaster will befall the community. Specific days were usually set aside for the ritual and the animal blood will be

poured around the monolith and during the ritual, the chief will address the community while the head of such an animal will be fixed on the outer wall of the shrine. Large herbivores are still occasionally seen close to people's homes (Bakiya per. com., Sept. 10, 2014). Monolith B (*Ripang-ukum-ishet*, King Stone) according to an oral informant (Darje per. com., Sept. 10, 2014), signifies authority and the chief stands before the monolith whenever he wanted to address the elders (title holders). He was the only one allowed to stand close to the monolith. While Monolith C (*Ripang*, Protective Stone) was a meeting point of the chief and his elders during their hunting activities. They prepared themselves spiritually around the monolith before assembling the whole community. The reason was for the protection of the hunters and also for better game in the course of the hunting exercise (Darje per. com., Sept. 10, 2014).

Monoliths mainly represent religious and cultural belief in Africa. The Abisi people are caught up in this belief, evidence of monoliths with religious belief were seen on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site which were said to be erected and used by the Abisi people.

5.6 Shrine (*Upok-unok*)

The shrine was a sacred place dedicated to their ancestors and was used for rituals associated with title and oaths taking. The shrine was very important to the Abisi people because of its significance in their community. Activities in and around the shrine were conducted by all title holders in the community but the shrine was kept under the custody of the chief. Also, inside the shrine at the time of this research, there were ritual objects like a medium sized-pot with herbs, a leopard skin and a ritual drum usually used to celebrate any success when performing rituals. The shrine has some skulls of animals killed by the community on its outer wall, which signifies victory. Oral informant has it that (Kwasu pers. com., Sept. 10, 2014), the shrine is still visited by the people to perform some specific rituals especially the preparation and selection of

new chiefs in the present settlement of the Abisi people.

Shrine in an archaeological context reveals a lot about religious beliefs and practices of a particular society. Items found in shrines vary from one society to another. The shrine (Upok-unok) found on the study site reveals their belief in deity and gods, the animal skulls on the outer wall also indicate hunting activities by the Abisi people.

5.7 Granary (*Richen*)

A granary foundation was identified on the study site and according to an oral informant (Talatu per. com., Sept. 10, 2014), building of granary was very important to every household in the community. Grains like beans, maize, acha, guinea corn and finger millet are mostly cultivated by the people and these were stored in the granary. The preservation and storage were done in order to protect it from insect attacks and also for the next planting season (Albertin per. com., Sept. 10, 2014). It was also asserted that, the construction of the closed type of granary in the community was mainly done by skilled men. Anthill soil was usually considered to be good when constructing a granary and it will be mixed with grasses and water which will protect it from any insect attacks and cracks. Sticks and grasses were used to roof the granary and heavy stones were used as foundation when constructing a granary.

According to an oral informant (Koni per. com., Sept. 10, 2014), the women had small granaries which were built with small entrances for easy access for the women. This was where grains were kept for their daily cooking. While the men also had theirs which was built with an entrance at the top of the granary which contained the major produce. The building of granaries is still in practice in the present community.

Evidence of granary on the site indicates agricultural aspect of the Abisi people which is

very important to our understanding of the food types of the people and their storage strategies. This feature provides the archaeologist with information about the food system of the society which can tell



Plate (XX): Granary structures in the present settlement of the Abisi people

5.8 Circular House Foundations (*Udeh*)

The household, in its many and varied forms, is a fundamental unit in human societies worldwide, so it is an essential element in the interpretation of archaeological data from most domestic sites. Evidence for the household consists of the house itself and evidence for activities in and around the house. The activities may be represented by sets of artefacts and or features.

Circular house foundations were found on the study site and it shows evidence of the remains of former place of habitation of the Abisi people. According to an oral informant (Ayuba per. com., Sept. 10, 2014), the materials used to construct the houses are stones with red mud mixed with water and grasses and these materials were gotten within the settlement and specific grasses were used for roofing the houses (Yakubu per. com., Sept. 10, 2014). It was explained

that, House foundation A (Plate iii) belonged to a house meant for the chief and the elders in the community. He further asserted that, the stones which were mostly used as foundations for structures and other materials used for the construction of their houses were sourced from the environment.

There are availability of stones, trees and grasses that were used for constructions in Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site. The evidence of this feature can inform the archaeologist about the settlement pattern of the society which reveals if the society had a permanent or temporary settlement on the study site.



Plate (XXI): Circular House Structure in the present settlement of the Abisi people

5.9 Stone Stool (*Ripankisoh-Ures*)

Oral information has it that (Gayya per. com., Sept. 11, 2014), the stone stool is a special seat for the chief priest, he normally sat on it whenever he was performing any duty around the

shrine and nobody was allowed to seat on it. The stone stool was placed at a strategic position which allowed the chief priest to perform his duty of overseeing any activity that has to do with the shrine. Oral source further claimed that, if anyone mistakenly sat on the stool, a certain illness like skin disease will befall the person and for such illness to be cured, water from the water groove would be used along with a particular herb gotten from locust beans tree. Nobody was also allowed to come close to the stone stool with a covering or a cap on his head because it was an abomination to do that in the community.

This feature signifies social status in the community. This can be seen from the oral information about the stone stool and what it represent.

5.10 Sacred Stones (*Gu-uworo-chaikireh)* and Rain Making

The stones were sacred because of their function in the community. The *Michir-kireh* (chief priest) was the custodian of the sacred stones, before the chief priest made use of them, the chief will have to bless him. The chief priest performed the ritual and offered prayers whenever they experienced a drought during the rainy season. The elderly people in the community will be called to assemble before the sacred stone and drums will be beaten during the gathering. An oral source claimed that, most often whenever the chief priest performed the prayers, they normally would experience rain.

5.11 Water Pool *(Emyerih)*

The water pool was a source of special water to the community. According to an oral informant (Sani per. com., Sept. 11, 2014), the source of the water is from a rock beneath the ground and the water has never gone dry. The water was used to bath infants immediately they were born because it was believed that, the baby will be cleansed from any ailment known to

attack growing children. Water used in the shrine and other religious activities was also gotten from the water groove (Zamani per. com., Sept. 11, 2014). Zamani also asserted that, metallic objects or containers were not allowed into the water groove because they believed that metal objects will contaminate and render the water ineffective, so mostly calabashes were used to fetch water from the water groove.

5.12 Graves (*Mideng*)

There is a suggestion that generally death is thought to be caused by witchcraft among the Abisi people or by old age. According to an oral informant (Sumaila per. com., Sept. 11, 2014), there are two types of death in Abisi land. The first one is the death of an aged person either a man or woman while the second one is that of a youth. However, another source (Atini per. com., Sept. 11, 2014), said that the two graves found on the site under study were used to bury very important persons in the community.

The first grave was used for kings (*Mideng Umagaji*), an oral informant (Bakiya per. com., Sept. 11, 2014), said that, the chiefs were buried in a cave but due to the status of chiefs in the community, the grave was transferred close to the shrine. The corpse of chiefs would be carried in and out of the shrine twice, then at the third time, it would be moved to the grave. The same grave was also used just like the title holders' grave, the remains will be removed in order to create space to bury a new dead chief. The announcement of the chief's death was not normally done until after three days, this was observed in order to select the next person to be on the throne. The announcement was mostly done by the village head (*San-gari),* and was accompanied by beating of a particular drum called *Iburah.* The dead bodies were usually wrapped with a leopard skin, which signifies authority of the king.

The second grave was used for title holders in the community, he further asserted that, whenever a title holder dies, the grave will be opened and the remains of the old corpse will be removed in order to perform the new burial rites. The burial of a title holder was mostly done with leopard skin and specific sticks usually gotten from locust bean tree.

In many cultures, human corpses were usually buried in soil and this act of burial provides archaeologists with a wide variety of information about past funeral practices and their social contexts. Cultures vary in their modes of respect to the dead and this also varies on their grave goods. The provision of a final resting place for someone's mortal remains is generally a carefully thought through procedure which vary in different cultures. The shape of a grave of a person may relate to the social status or gender in the society. The archaeologist retrieves a lot of information about religious beliefs and social status about a society from their burial practices. A grave is an important feature in any archaeological site because of its role of knowing some aspects of the past culture under study. The two distinct graves found on the site reveal their religious and cultural beliefs about the dead. Grave goods were said to be inclusive in the graves and they vary to reflect class stratification in the society and their belief of afterlife.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to present the summary of the research work been conducted on Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site in Lere Local Government Area, Kaduna State. The summary is very important because it will help the reader to comprehend the entire idea and information about the research.

Chapter one of this research was the introductory part; an attempt was made to introduce the entire work and the site under investigation as well as presenting the statement of the research problem. The aim and objectives of the research were outlined which paved way in bringing out the significance, the scope and the theoretical frame work that was useful in the course of the research. The various methods employed in the research were highlighted which were very necessary because of their importance in any archaeological survey.

Chapter two describes the geography of the study area as a whole where the site is located. First, detailed geographic characteristics such as physical resources like site location, the climate, geology and soil, drainage, vegetation and economic activities were examined. This was made in order to give the reader a background to understand the scope of the research. The second part of the chapter looked at the various aspect about the history of the Abisi people,

bringing out the political organization, religious beliefs and socio-cultural tradition of the people under study. This helped the researcher in gaining more insight into the history of the Abisi people.

Chapter three involved the actual archaeological survey of the site under investigation. The site description, presentation of various finds and features found on the site such as potsherds, lower grinding stone, granary, and house foundations among others were made. The site map was presented which shows the spatial distribution of the finds and features on the site.

Chapter four of this research was concerned mainly with the classification and analysis of the finds and features observed and collected from the site. The finds was pottery, while the features includes, monoliths, house foundations, grinding stone, shrines among others. The classification and analysis of the pottery was carried out according to paste characteristics, surface finish, vessel parts, vessel forms as well as decorative motifs. This was important because it helped the researcher to create order from the artifacts into groups. Thus, this helps the reader with a clear nature of the cultural materials on the site.

In chapter five, an attempt was made to give meaning to the entire research work by interpreting the cultural materials which are finds or features. This was achieved using oral traditions and historical documents. All the finds and features were interpreted and links made with their function on the site.

The final chapter of this research (chapter six), reviews the data and results presented in chapter 3, 4 and 5 and also offer the main conclusions reached by this study. This will help the reader for easy understanding, and also have an idea of what the research has contributed to our understanding about the history of the Abisi people under study.

6.2 Conclusion

This research has been able to show the importance of archaeology in unraveling the cultural and technological process of past society. This can be observed from the evidence of human activities found on the site in the form of house foundation, shrine, scattered potsherds, buried pots, sacred stones, monoliths, graves, lower grinding stone, water groove and granary. The research was able to unravel the archaeological materials of the site particularly as it relate to their settlement history and past life ways.

The archaeological finds and features found on the site suggest that, the people actually lived in an organized society with settled life as they practiced agriculture which they supplemented with hunting during the dry season. This probably led to the development of trade networks between them and their immediate neighbours from all direction. From the oral tradition collected and the remains of finds (potsherds) retrieved from the site, there seems to be a cordial relationship between Umhah-Abisi people and their neighbours in terms of trade. Oral tradition has it that they never engaged in pottery tradition but the past inhabitants who made use of pottery as seen on the site purchased most of their wares from Fadan-Chawia and other neighbouring villages (O. Atung pers. com., Sept 10, 2015).

On the basis of oral information collected from knowledgeable indigenous elders, the site may not have been fully abandoned because certain rituals and practices like the crowning of a

new king and chiefs are still performed on the hill-top settlement. This affirms that the Abisi people have a link with the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement site. However, caution is needed when doing surface archaeology here so that ancient artifacts are not mixed up with ethnographic resources. This is a challenge archaeologists must not gloss over.

However, in the aspect of decision making and political organization, age and sex played key roles. The elders in the community were much involved in decisions making that concerned the well-being of the community members. The elders are believed to have gained enough knowledge and more experience than the younger members of the community, which placed them at the position of decision making in the social and political organizations of the community. Mostly, women were involved in domestic activities and not actively involved in decision making processes.

Finally, the various methods employed for this study have made it possible for me to achieve the goal of reconstructing the past life ways of the people through the investigation and documentation of the material evidence found on the site. However, through this research, the rich cultural heritage of the Abisi people has been brought to lime light, some of which are quite unknown to the outside world. It has also been established through this research according to oral tradition that the people of Abisi who today live few meters away from the hill once lived at the hill-top in ancient times. Cultural materials and relics of house foundations, monolith and shrine among others seen on the hill-top support this assertion of oral tradition. From the research work conducted, it was realized that the area is viable for archaeological research. Hence, further archaeological research will thus help throw more light on the culture and people of Abisi as a whole.

6.3 Recommendation

The site has provided material evidence which has contributed to our understanding of early settlement history of Abisi people and to the archaeology of the Kaduna state in general. However, based on the fact that, this research is a pioneer research on the site, scientific methods of archaeological investigation such as excavation and dating were not adopted in the course of the research. The information gathered, analysed and studied remains tentative, it is hoped that future archaeological research on the site will entail excavations and "absolute" dating so that, the information obtained will enable us to place the site within a specific time frame and possibly establish its relationship with other sites within the locality. There is the need for the Abisi people to cultivate the habit of safeguarding their cultural heritage on the Umhah-Abisi hill-top settlement in terms of more public awareness on the importance of the settlement to their history because the site is been threatened on a daily basis.

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Appendix 1: Question Guide

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What is your occupation?
4. Are you an indigene of this village?
5. What is the meaning of Abisi?
6. What brought about the name Abisi?
7. Where did the Abisi people come from?
8. Who founded the hill top settlement?
9. What made the founder leave the former place and settle on the hill top?
10. What was the nature of occupation of the Abisi people?
11. Were the people involved in any kind of craft?
12. Do the Abisi people still practice the craft now?
13. What is the significance of this craft to the Abisi people?

14. What type of agricultural practice did the Abisi people practiced in the past?

15. What are the cultural festivals practiced in the past?

16. How was the relationship between the past society and their neighbors?

17. How do you choose your chief?

18. What is the believe system of the Abisi people in the past?

19. What type of political structure did you operate in the past?

20. How many rulers have you had since you settled on the hill-top

Appendix 2: List of oral informants

S/N	Name	Occupation	Type of information	Age	Year of interview	Place of interview
1	Gayya. J. D.	Retiree	Oral History	65	2014	*Rigertin*
2	Ayuba A.	Student	Oral history	28	2014	*Rigertin*
3	Albertin S.	Student	Oral history	21	2014	*Rigertin*
4	Bakiya B.	Farmer	Oral history	69	2014	*Rigertin*
5	Darje W.	House wife	Oral History	29	2014	*Damakasuwa*
6	Kwasu R.	House wife	Oral history	70	2014	*Damakasuwa*
7	Talatu K.	House wife	Oral history	69	2014	*Rigertin*

8	Danjuma Z.	Farmer	Oral history	74	2014	*Rigertin*
9	Iliya A	Farmer	Oral history	61	2014	*Rigertin*
10	Ishaku L.	House wife	Oral history	78	2014	*Rigertin*
11	Maiwada W	Farmer	Oral history	49	2014	*Rigertin*
12	Koni K.	Farmer	Oral history	49	2014	*Rigertin*
13	Atini A.	House wife	Oral history	31	2014	*Rigertin*
14	Mathar H.	Farmer/House wife	Oral history	59	2014	*Rigertin*
15	Mama V.	Farmer	Oral history	50	2014	*Rigertin*
16	Nuhu P.	Farmer	Oral history	25	2014	*Damakasuwa*
17	Atung O.	Farmer/hunter	Oral history	78	2014	*Rigertin*
18	Sumaila I.	Farmer	Oral history	98	2014	*Rigertin*
19	Zamani U.	Farmer	Oral history	20	2014	*Rigertin*
20	Anchia R.	Civil Servant	Oral history	49	2014	*Rigertin*
21	Emmanuel J.	Trader /farmer	Oral history	36	2014	*Rigertin*

22	Yakubu U.	Civil servant	Oral history	45	2014	*Rigertin*
23	Amos E.	Civil servant	Oral history	32	2014	*Rigertin*
24	Sani I.	Farmer	Oral history	51	2015	*Rigertin*
25	Harira H.	Potter	Oral history	50	2016	*Fadan Chawai*

Appendix 3: Geographical Coordinates of Finds and Features on Umhah-Abisi Hill-top Settlement

S/NO	Finds and Features		Coordinates
1	Lower Grinding Stone		Lat: 10^0 01' 41.6"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.2"E
2	Buried Pots		Lat: 10^0 01' 41.4"N and Long: 08^0 37' 44.2"E
3	House foundations	A	Lat: 10^0 01' 85.9"N and Long: 08^0 37' 49.9"E
		B	Lat: 10^0 01' 36.5"N and Long: 08^0 37' 49.4"E
		C	Lat: 10^0 01' 41.1"N and Long: 08^0 37' 47.1"E
4	Sacred Stones		Lat: 10^0 01' 41.2"N and Long: 08^0 37' 47.0"E
5	Granary Foundation		Lat: 10^0 01' 41.6"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.2"E
6	Water Groove		Lat: 10^0 01' 40.6"N and Long: 08^0 37' 49.4"E
7	Grave	A	Lat: 10^0 01' 40.6"N and Long: 08^0 37' 47.0"E
		B	Lat: 10^0 01' 42.3"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.4"E
8	Monolith	A	Lat: 10^0 01' 42.1"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.6"E
		B	Lat: 10^0 01' 41.4"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.1"E
		C	Lat: 10^0 01' 41.2"N and Long: 08^0 37' 46.7"E
9	Stone Stool		Lat: 10^0 01' 42.1"N and Long: 08^0 37' 48.6"E
10	Shrine		Lat: 10^0 01' 42.4"N and Long: 08^0 37' 49.5"E