

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY OF OKO HILL-TOP SETTLEMENTSITE, IN  
KUTA AREA SHIRORO LOCAL GOVERNMENT, NIGER STATE NIGERIA**

**BY**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES,  
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**DEPARTMENT OF ARCHAEOLOGY**

**AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,**

**ZARIA, NIGERIA**

**OCTOBER, 2017**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the work in this Dissertationentitled ‘An Archaeological Survey of Oko hill-top settlement in Kuta area, Shiroro Local Government, Niger State, Nigeria’ has been carried out by me in the department of Archaeology. The information derived from the literature has been duly acknowledged in the text and a list of reference provided. No part of this dissertation was previously presented for another degree or diploma at this or any other institution.

Abdulkareem ABUBAKAR

Name of Student

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled “An Archaeological Survey of Oko Hill Top Settlement site inKuta area, Shiroro Local Government , Niger State, Nigeria.” by Abdulkareem ABUBAKAR 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 work to my late Father Alhaji Abu-Bakr Danladi Muhammad Abuja (GarkuwaBabba Suleja),my mother Hajiya Aisha Kuta Abubakar Abuja and my Maternal Grandmother Princess Fatima Umar Kuta (Dako). Similarly this research is dedicated to my beautiful wife Samirah Ibrahim and my son Abu-bakr Sadeeq Abdulkareem Jawad Garkuwa III.

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## **Abstract**

This research is entitled “An Archaeological Survey of Oko Hilltop Settlement site, in Kuta area, Shiroro Local Government, Niger state”. The research is informed by the lack of an Archaeology based study of one of the major cities occupied today by the Gbagyi ethnic group mostly living in the Middle of Niger-Benue confluence area. The understudy area is situated in Kuta town 62 kilometers east of Minna the capital of Niger state and located on one of the Kuta hills rooted on the eastern part of the town.

Therefore, an archaeological investigation of the site via reconnaissance was carried out via a collection of oral traditions, consultations of literatures, ethnographic studies as well as classification and analysis of data which were interpreted using historical Archaeology as a model in order to understand the culture history of the former inhabitants thus contributing to our knowledge of some aspects of the settlement history of Gbagyi.

Consequently, reconnaissance of the site revealed cultural remains in form of, defensive wall ruins, potsherd pavements, settlement mounds, granaries, house foundations, grinding stones, artificial ponds, shrines, and burial sites among others. Ethnographic data highlighted the extent or degree of cultural continuity especially in pottery traditions, granaries and house foundations between the past and present inhabitants of the studied area. Oral traditions provided valuable information about the traditions of origin, settlement layout as well as insight into some of the material culture found at the site. The consultation of relevant literatures nonetheless informed the researcher of the need to holistically study the site using historical Archaeology as a method in interpreting cultural materials found on the site.

This research has succeeded in producing a site map, showing spatial distribution of cultural materials left behind by man who lived and harnessed different environmental provisions in the area. It has also unified various traditions of origin about the early peopling of the area by concession of different reports available and collected. However more needs to be done in the areas of excavation and dating in order to be able to establish chronology of the area understudy.

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## **CHAPTER ONE**

### **BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY**

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Okohilltop settlement is one of the early settlements in Kuta area of Shiroro local government area of Niger state. There are different traditions of origin related to the history of Oko hilltop settlement.

One version of the tradition links the settlement with Gbagyi ethnic nationalities that migrated from north east Nigeria between 1500 –1900. This version has gotten currency (acceptance) in most of the areas visited by the researcher. The second version associated the history of the people that founded the site to Zaria as the probable origin. Their movement from Zaria to Oko hilltop settlement was said to be necessitated as a result of the need of more farmlands. This event was said to have happened 500 years ago(Pers.Comm. Yusuf, December 7<sup>th</sup> 2015).

Other written documents pointed NigerBenue confluence area as the probable origin of the people that once occupy Oko hilltop settlement (Mohammed, 2001).

Despite the archaeological materials in the form of potsherds pavements,granary and house foundations as well as defensive walls,there seems to be no archaeological documentation ever conducted on the site.

Therefore, this research is aimed at reconstructing aspects of settlement history of Oko hilltop settlement site.

## **1.1 STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM**

Oko hilltop settlement site was said to be one of the early Gbagyi settlements in Kuta area of Niger state. There exist several version of oral traditions and written documents with contradictory information about the settlement history of Oko hilltop settlement site, there is yet to be one single accepted tradition of origin about the antiquity of the site.

This archaeological research may perhaps supply more relevant and correct information about the settlement history of the site. Archaeological materials such as potsherds pavements, grinding stones, stone arrangements, granaries, dye pits, defensive walls among others if carefully studied can provide vital information about the settlement history of the site hence, hence the foundation on which this research is built.

## **1.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH**

The aim of this research is to reconstruct aspect of settlement history of oko hilltop settlement site. This aim is achieved through the following objectives:

1. To collect and document oral traditions about Oko hilltop settlement for a better understanding of the history of the people;
2. To identify and record material evidence on Oko hilltop settlement via archaeological survey in order to understand the way of life of the people;
3. To produce a site map capable of showing spatial distributions of finds and features and their association on the landscape of the site.

### **1.3 SCOPE OF RESEARCH**

This research is limited to surface survey of Oko hilltop settlement site located at the eastern part of Kuta town, no excavation was conducted. Relevant literatures were consulted, oral information about the tradition of origin were collected and documented.

### **1.4 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH**

The research is very important because it brought archaeological perspective in understanding aspects of settlement history of Oko hilltop settlement, as was mentioned previously, that there exist contradiction between oral traditions and written documents about the history of Oko hilltop settlement.

Thus, this research has provided vital information through materials remains that filled in the gaps of oral and written records on the settlement history of oko hilltop settlement site.

### **1.5 METHODS OF RESEARCH**

The methods employed for the purpose of this research are, oraltradition, consultation of written records, archaeologicalreconnaissance, ethnography and classification/analysis of finds and features.

#### **1.5.1 Oral Tradition**

Oral tradition is seen as an informed report about the past that has survived over time through the retentive memories of certain indigenous people of a particular society ensuring that such information remains fresh and appreciated by generations of such societies (Bakinde, 2006)

According to Devantine (2009), oral tradition transmit the emotions, thoughts and cultural reflections of a particular society, therefore it enumerate the socio-cultural experience of such

society. Bagchi (2010) posit that oral tradition is the catalyst that bound people together by cementing their unity as a group by means of keeping their history, beliefs, values and cultural practices alive and spread across all level of such society. That is to say oral tradition can help a researcher to determine the level of acceptability of various traditions of a particular society (Bahn and Renfrew, 2000).

Oral tradition was conducted by verbal interview with the aid of structured question guide. In total, 30 respondents were asked different questions connected to history of origin, crafts and industries, architecture and settlement pattern, economic and subsistence pattern as well as political and religious history. Twenty five (25) of the respondents were indigenes of Kuta and five (5) said they were not. All respondents were interviewed separately in order to have independent responses and those with western education were allowed to read the question guide and responded accordingly so as to avoid author's interference. Only ten (10) females and twenty (20) males responded to questions bordering on subsistence pattern and origin of history.

### **1.5.2 Written Records**

Written records are researches already conducted and documented for future reference. Written records can either be published or unpublished and formed a major part upon which this research was built. A number of written records regarding the general and specific history have been consulted to gain insight into what we know so far about the settlement history of Gbagyi with particular interest to Oko hilltop settlement. These materials are text books, journals, archival materials, early manuscript, academic papers and maps providing relevant information of current perception on the culture history of Gbagyi in Nigeria.

These materials were consulted at the following locations; Niger state Archives and Niger state museum, Minna; Archaeology and History departmental libraries and Kashim Ibrahim library, Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. Others manuscripts were consulted at the private libraries of Dagacin Zumba, Hakimin Kuta and Dan galadiman Kuta.

### **1.5.3 Archaeological Survey**

Archaeological survey entails the purposeful searching, identification and recording of imprints of past human societies in settlement sites. Some scholars define it as the process of viewing to detect certain phenomena as well as the ability to identify the amount of human cultural presence in an archaeological site which is directly proportional to the approach with which archaeologists conduct such reconnaissance (Bruce et al, 2004). Reconnaissance have over the years provided a useful tool to archaeologists in detecting un-natural impression on the surface of the earth, that is those evidence that directly or indirectly highlights the relationship between Man and his environment (Holcom, 2001). It contributes in areas of discovering common features such as house foundations, granary, potsherd, kiln, walls, ritual sites among others that always account for the relationship between man and environment (Bahn and Renfrew 2000). Apart from providing primary data like the soil type, source of raw materials, and settlement behaviours among others, for further archaeological investigation, it has epitomized the long lasting relationship between man and environment (Bruce, 2004).

### **1.5.4 Ethnographic Survey**

Ethnography has many definitions depending on the context in which it is adopted as a method of research. Generally, it simply means the study of a living culture through direct

participation and or observation of the totality of peoples' socio-cultural activities. In the context of Archaeology, is regarded as a study of the present and focuses on the on-going cultural behaviour of a particular society learning from within such society for the purpose of understanding the extent to which their past is connected to the present (Aliyu, 2006).

The researcher participated and observed certain aspects of pottery production in *Dhullukpan*, a pottery district in Kuta, examining the way raw clay is being sourced and processed into a workable paste that is use for the production of pottery wares. Other stages observed are drying, decorating and firing methods employed by Kuta potters.

### **1.5.5 Classification and Analysis of Finds and Features**

Classification and analysis of artefacts remain a big problem to archaeologists in attempting to give meaning to the various cultural materials collected from the site (Jonathan and Stickel, 1973). Therefore classification of pottery would be worthwhile if based on primary criteria of vessel morphology. These will include forms, sizes and structures of vessel.

However classifications continue to be tedious due to the irregularities of archaeological data considering that most categorizations are based on cross cultural correlates. Therefore, there is no universality in describing certain pottery materials and decoration since every society has its own way of achieving similar technology in its different way. As postulated by Whittaker et al (1998), it is necessary for archaeologist involve in either Survey or Excavation to have adequate confidence in interpreting artefacts based on professional skill. This is because classification largely depends on the perceptions and aspirations of the archaeologist coupled with the prevailing arbitrary and intuitive understanding therein.

As a result, pottery materials collected from Oko settlement site were classified and analysed based on intuitive and ethnographic observation since oral traditions opined that the present potters are descendants of the past potters. Another reason was the ardent resemblance between the present pottery decorations and those on the potsherd collected from the site. The various stone arrangements are also understood from the ethnographic point of view. For instance, a close look at the present granary foundations and compound formations revealed that the same number of stones was used for granaries on both the extant and extinct settlement.

Classification of pottery was carried out based on primary criteria because it is cheaper and simple to execute. Primary criteria are features like, forms, sizes, designs, surface finish, paste characteristics and body parts. The adoption of these criteria facilitated the easiest distribution of potsherd in order of shared attributes and category. Therefore using intuitive and ethnographic data potsherds collected from the site were classified and analysed in order to establish the connection in the areas of vessel form, decorative motif, vessel function, and paste characteristics.

Classification and analysis were carried out to identify potsherd of similar attributes for the purpose of appreciating the quality and quantity of each data unit on the site. We were able to establish the nature and types of pottery ware probably produced and used by the past human occupants of the settlement.

#### **1.5.6 Ethnoarchaeology**

This is the ethnographic studies of contemporary cultures for the purpose of archaeological interpretations by especially focusing on material aspects of the culture. It is the study of the

present in order to understand the past; hence archaeological evidences are interpreted through the lens of ethnography or by ethnographic analogy. According to Kalentzidon (2000), ethno archaeology provides the very key for documenting and understanding the distribution of material culture such as pottery. It can also expose the social context occurring on pottery production and consumption. Ethno archaeology provides a research method to interpret the past through the study of contemporary material cultures (Kalentzidon, 2000). Despite the problems hindering the adoption of ethno archaeology in interpreting the past, a systematic study of modern cultural material can yield useful information on various aspects of the past human relationship.

In view of the nature and characteristics of the cultural materials found, Ethnoarchaeology was adopted as one of the research methods advancing a holistic understanding of the relationship between the archaeological and ethnographic records. The choice of Ethnoarchaeology to study cultural remains discovered on Oko settlement is relevant since most of the material remains left on the site are found in the present, thus show high degree of consistency. The substantial body of evidence retrieved from the site in form potsherds and decorative motifs, potsherd pavements, cowries, circular stone arrangements, granary, and foundations of house and settlement behaviour were holistically studied.

Apart from the interpretation of artefacts like pottery on the site, other aspect of the archaeological records (granaries, stones arrangement and potsherd pavements) identified would also be described accordingly. Archaeologist considers the ethno archaeological study of ceramic as important due to the alarming rate at which traditional pottery industries are fast declining ( Kalentzidou 2000). Therefore, pottery industry in Kuta was considered and proven to be one of the surviving industries that provided important insight on the way

pottery designs found in the archaeological context might have been created. It has also exposed people the compositions of clays, technique of production, functions and use of vessels as well the standard skill required for the manufacturing of various pottery wares.

## **1.6 LITERATURE REVIEW**

A lot have been said in historical records about Oko hilltop settlement, its origin, environment, people and their economic activities, settlement behaviours, political and social organizations which form part of the cultural aspects under study in the research. However, there has not been any form of archaeological research on Oko settlement before now and the only related research known to the present writer, was an undergraduate project on the ethnographic studies of pottery in Kuta by Ahmadu (2012). There are other undergraduate researches carried out in other Gbagyi settlements that shall be discussed later.

Ahadu (2012) is an unpublished undergraduate research that documents pottery making traditions in Kuta based on ethnographic studies and only focuses on the present pottery traditions with no emphasis the potter's origin. He further outlined five stages for pottery production in Kuta which include; sourcing of clay, forming of the body, drying, decorating and firing stage. The author also notes that pottery wares in Kuta were used for cooking, storing, eating, and fetching of water depending on the shape and size the ware. He also observed that decorations were mostly roulettes and grooves usually done in multiple decoration style.

Another undergraduate Reconnaissance and Survey was conducted in Gussoro by Yusuf (2012). He notes that abundant fertile land, available water and other mineral resources led to

the human settlement in the area around the 19<sup>th</sup> century. According to the author, Gussoro got its name from one of the streams in the area.

The reconnaissance and survey of Minna–Shako hilltop site (Deborah, 2006.) yields many imprints of past human occupation on the site. These include potsherds of roulettes, grooves decorations, circular stone arrangements and grinding stones which the author claims to be common among the Gbagyi ethnic group. The author is of the opinion that the people migrated from the hilltop to the ground settlement when rail lines and station were built in 1912.

Tayi-Paida hilltop site was studied via ground reconnaissance by Musa (2009) as an undergraduate project. The author reports about the significance of the hilltop top settlement to the need of the people for a secured environment against external aggression. He also opines that available natural resources, abundant animal sources and fertile land for agriculture for the sustenance of human population were responsible for the development and growth of the settlement. Danladi, (2011) is an undergraduate research in archaeological investigation on the plain site of old Garam which also suggests the origin of Gbagyi to Borno area. The author reports that the site was occupied as a result of mass movement of people into the hills during slave rustling. It also notes that the difficult terrain associated with Old Garam protected the people against external aggression.

Archaeological reconnaissance of Guni abandoned site' (Abgonika, 2011) studied the origin of human settlement on the site using oral traditions and archaeological survey to reconstruct the history of the people. The research notes that the first settler came from within the Gbagyi concentrated area around Kuta and Zumba environs.

The work of Adamu (2006) was another undergraduate research, carried out through archaeological reconnaissance of Bosso abandoned site. The author among other discoveries reports the settlement behaviour on the site to be based social classification. He also notes the hilly nature of the environment, available water source and fertile land as major attractions of human settlement in the area. Other finds includes many potsherd decorated with multiple roulettes and grooves.

The archaeological reconnaissance of Machiku-Galuko site (Mohammed, 2011) highlights the origin of some Gbagyi settlement to migration and war. The site yields evidence of agriculture, pottery manufacture and food production in a large scale despite it being developed as a result of war camp.

Archaeological Reconnaissance and Survey of Gawu abandoned hilltop settlement (Magaji, 2011), describes the rocky and undulating nature of the hilly environment of the site as a major contributor to the survival of the occupants in the past. Features like shrines, grinding stones and potsherd finds were retrieved and discovered to be decorated with multiple designs of grooves and roulettes.

Old Zumba abandoned settlement (Bala, 2011) was studied through archaeological reconnaissance highlighting the rich aquatic resources of river Zumba which also served as one of the major canoe route connecting the two halves of the inner Gbagyi concentration area in Niger state. The site was said to serve as ports for transportation of goods, fish and people to and from northern and southern parts of Nigeria.

The 'Archaeological Reconnaissance and Survey of Abba abandoned settlement' by Mu'azu, (2006) relied on oral traditions and ethnography to examine the material culture collected

from the site. The main thrust of the research is to document retrieved cultural materials from the site thus ascertaining human occupation of the site from the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

These aforementioned preliminary archaeological investigations covered Gbagyi settlements falling under the Gbagyi concentration. The research only focus on surveying, retrieving and documenting various imprints of past human activities with no or little interest on the origin and culture history of Gbagyi ethnic group. However valuable information about the characteristic of various Gbagyi settlements, environment, economy and industry became available after reviewing these literatures.

Similarly, all the historical materials reviewed and examined in the course of this research were found to be based on oral traditions, linguistic studies and historical records. For instance, the article titled ‘Some Notes on Pre-Colonial Gbagyi Environment and Economic Activities’ (Mohammed, 2000) attempts to establish a map of present major Gbagyi settlements in central Nigeria covering pre-colonial settlement of the people up to the present. The author highlights environmental features like fertile land, mineral resources, rivers, rainfall, climate, soil, fauna and flora of the central region of Nigeria, attracted the Gbagyi to these areas, thus relying on hunting, farming, fishing, crafts among others, for the sustenance of the population in the pre-colonial period until the twentieth century when colonial system became operational in Nigeria.

‘Pre-Colonial Gbagyi Hill-Top Settlements: An Examination’ (Mohammed, 2007) is a related article to the one mentioned above but is focuses on the reasons that led to the preference of hilltops by Gbagyi for their settlements. The author reports that hunting, farming and religious practices provided better explanation for the choice of hilltops as dwelling for early Gbagyi societies. This is contrary to colonialists’ reports associating Gbagyi hilltops

settlements to slave raids and other external aggression. It is further posits, though base on oral traditions and linguistic evidence that the Gbagyi settlements on hilltops were formed at the consequence of northward migration rather than the southward migration commonly reported in some historical records.

Furthermore an article titled ‘Gbagyi and their South-East Neighbours to 1898’ (Mohammed, 2002) examines the geographical, linguistic, trade and political relationship between the Gbagyi and Nupe as one of their neighbours in terms of geographical location. The research covers the period before the 18<sup>th</sup> century AD relying on oral traditions and historical data, though fragmented and incomplete to forward the extent and type of relationship that existed between these two long time neighbours. According to the author, the relationship between Gbagyi and Nupe is of great antiquity cutting across all human endeavours like, linguistic affinities, trade relation, and politics among others.

Again in his article ‘Gbagyi Traditions of Origin: Some Preliminary Analysis’ (Mohammed, 2001) attempts a preliminary analysis of the varying Ggabyi traditions of origin creating heated debate among writers. Apart from examining and been critical of the two major narratives ascribed to Gbagyi origin, that is, the Borno or Zaria extraction, the author used linguistic evidence as a yardstick to affiliate the emergence of Gbagyi in their present settlements to the initial northward expansion due to the pressure upon them by the Ebira whom occupied the Niger-Benue confluence area with the Gbagyi in the past. More suggestion by the author was based on the fact the Gbagyi belonged to the Kwa sub-family of the main Niger – Congo group of languages. Other ethnic group found in central Nigeria belonging to the Kwa sub- family are Nupe and Gade.

‘The Impact of British Colonial Rule on the Gbagyi, 1900-1960: A Study of Political Change’ (Mohammed, 1980) is an unpublished postgraduate research that appraise the relationship between the Gbagyi and the British Colonialist between 1900 when Oko, the major Gbagyi territory became under British rule up to the time Nigeria gained political independence in 1960. Like any other northern Nigerian society, it was found out that the Gbagyi had centralized political systems which have flourished for a long time before the coming of Europeans. The people were said to settle more on hilltops for superior control over animal resources associated with the hills as well giving them upper hand in term of internal and external security. Therefore the Gbagyi harnessed what the environment provided for the social, religious, economic and political sustenance.

‘Kuta Today’, (n.d.) is an anonymous, undated and unpublished paper that discusses the history of Oko settlement based on oral traditionsto suggest Oko ancestry for the present Kuta town. The author though not an archaeologist considersmaterial remains on the site and explained them through oral history which still ascribes Bornoan origin for the first occupants of Oko hilltop settlement.

Similarly, ‘The History of Kuta’ (Abdullahi,(n.d.), another undated and unpublished paper narrates various traditions of history about Oko hilltop site in order to establish the earliest settlers of the hill as well as examining the evolution of the Gbagyi kingdom in Oko and its royal houses. The paper reveals that the names Gwari and Kuta emerged due to the inability of non Gbagyi people to pronounce Gbagyi and Okota as respective names for the people and their settlement.

‘The Beginning of Kuta Kingdom and its Growth up to the Present Day’ (Baba kuta, n.d.) also used oral tradition to suggest Borno origin for the earliest settlers of Oko settlement site.

The author aligned with the narratives that Oko got its name from a species of animal found in abundance around the hill. And that the name Kuta was first used by the non Gbagyi people that frequented Oko for various commercial benefits.

‘The Transformation of Kuta: Kuta Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow (Nuhu, 2007), is an unpublished paper that highlights the achievement of Kuta as the cradle of Gbagyi ethnic group. The author based his submissions oral history, early manuscripts and colonial archives, placing Kuta as the pioneer of Gbagyi civilization highlighting the level of development experienced before colonial rule as reasons why the Europeans headquartered their administration in Kuta.

‘The Origin of Dance and Historical Background of Kuta’ (Jagaba, n.d.) is also an undated and unpublished paper that document dance history of Kuta and how it explained the historical background of the people. The author brought out the nature of dance steps anchored by the popular *Kabulu* dancers which were said to be similarly to that of the Kanuri ethnic group of Borno. He claimsthat the*Kabulu* musical instrument used by the dance group today was brought by the founders of Oko settlement who were said to come from Borno

‘Minna as Gbagyi Land: The Truth Must Prevail’ (Shekwogaza,n.d.)is an article that the author argues that substantial historical, ethnographic and oral historic evidence posit Minna to have been first occupied by Gbagyi dating back to the 16<sup>th</sup> century AD.

Therefore, after examining the various reports and documents so far written on Oko and Gbagyi settlements in general, this research is hereby imperative for the holistic understanding of aspects of Gbagyi origin of history since the aforementioned literatures were unavoidable fragmented due to the absence of archaeological methods and procedures

in carrying out such immense task of reconstructing the history of a people and culture that is so huge both in size and population. However these works provided adequate information in all ramifications vis-a-vis broaden our perception and increase our knowledge regarding the archaeology and historical development Oko hilltop settlement.

## **1.7 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

Historical Archaeology has been adopted to serve as the theoretical frame work for this research. Historical Archaeology evolved from American Archaeologists thrust in the 1920s while attempting to study colonial European material culture as different from the study of the Native American material culture (Connah, 2006). The concept was eventually introduced to the studies of African archaeology because it nowadays focuses on the study of more recent archaeological records which are apparently synonymous to African cultures. Historical Archaeology as a concept study literate societies for the purpose of understanding their past by making use of material evidence in order to forward explanations on the behaviours of people in the past and their relationship with the dynamic environment (O'Brien and Lyman, 2000).

To some scholars, historical archaeology is the combination of complimentary data sources for an expanded archaeological interpretation of material culture. This data include oral traditions and written records especially in African societies (Aliyu 2006). While others due to its origin see it as a Eurocentric concept which tends to place western bias theories and analogies above other views in interpreting the complex archaeological records (Connah 2006)

Therefore, the use of historical archaeology remain pivotal to African archaeologists since many sites investigated using historical archaeology yielded positive results especially in sub-Saharan Africa where funding remains elusive for excavation driven research. The suitability of historical archaeology in African studies could be drawn from the fact that most African societies studied today falls under periods term as historical usually rich in oral traditions, written documents, songs, crafts, dance and costumes.

In some cases, however archaeologist complimented other archaeological research concepts as excavation, ethnography and oral traditions with written sources for a fuller knowledge base about the earliest peopling of particular African societies. For instance in southern Nigeria, Patrick Darling published works on the earthworks of Benin Kingdom and Yinka Ogedengbo studied the British colonial settlement of Zungeru in the heart of Niger state, north central Nigeria using historical archaeology as a concept (Connah 2006).

Another site investigated using Historical archaeology was the site of Dikwa, north east Nigeria by Gronenborn and Magnavita (2000). Using Historical Archaeological approach they established the level of continuity, similarities and change in the ceramic tradition of the people. The result of that research depicted the relationship of ceramic traditions with imperial expansion of powers of the Kanem- Borno Empire into the area south of Lake Chad after the sixteen century AD. (Gronenborn and Magnavita, 2000)

Historical Archaeology is being adopted as theoretical framework for this research because Okosettlement is an historic-period site with various historical documents about the early peopling of area (Mohammed, 1980, 2000, 2001, 2007). The site also yielded many imprints of past human activities which could also be perceived by engaging the inhabitant the area of study by way of oral interviews, ethnography and study of their early historical manuscripts.

Therefore, historical archaeology seems to have as many definitions that are directly proportional to the dynamic goals of archaeology. But the points of convergence of these classes of archaeology remain the quest for seamless system under which comprehensive knowledge about the past could be understood by combining available data sources for a holistic study of material culture of a people.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **2.0 GEOGRAPHICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

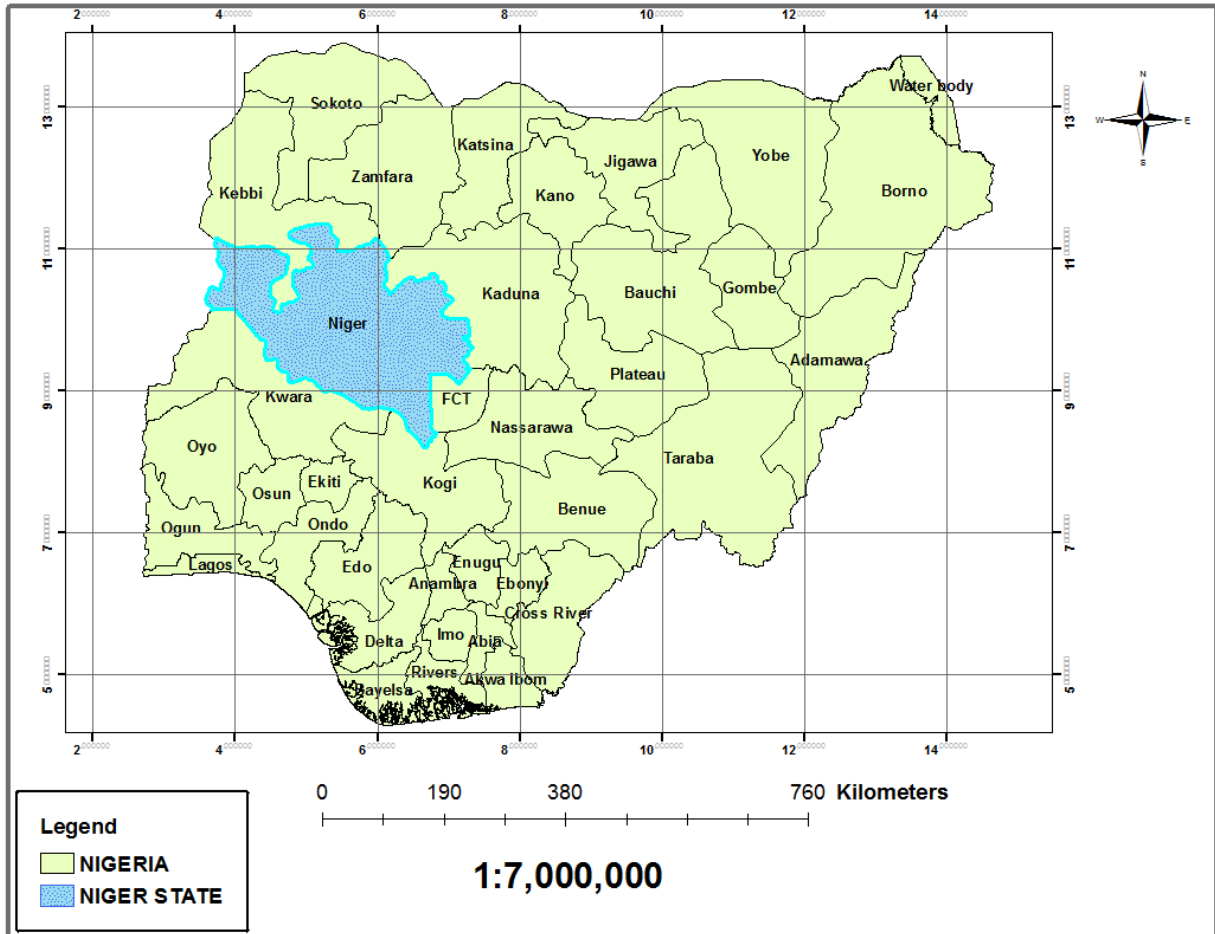
The environment is a complex combination of chemical, physical and biotic factors that interact continuously and closely thus impacting on all living things and their surroundings. It remains the life supporting system for human existence and survival as well as providing physical plate and raw materials required for cultural and socio economic progress. In fact, environment is the platform, through which an organism lives, dies and decomposes (Garba and Mohammed 2011). This means that without the enabling space provided by environment living things would not have probably survived or even existed.

Therefore archaeologists must pay attention to the environment of a givensite so as to appreciate the dynamics of the relationship between man and environment. An archaeological site is part of the environment where cultural materials are usually found on the surface or beneath the earth from generation to another. These materials are understood better if we understand the nature of the environment and how it has changed over time.

### **2.1 LOCATION**

Oko settlement is on a hilltop that falls on Latitude 9°52'54.62"N, Longitude 6°42'54.77"E with an altitude of about 517 meters above sea level. The site is bounded to the west by the present Kuta town, a sister site called Wemidna settlement and the remains of the defensive walls on the east, Kuchi settlement to the South and Kuji settlement to the North According to oral traditions Oko got the name Kuta as recent as the early 1900 as a result of the peoples long lasting inter regional trade relationship with their Hausa, Kambari and Nupe neighbours

who also short changed the name Gbagyi to Gwari as commonly seen today in many literatures that are not authored by Gbagyi.



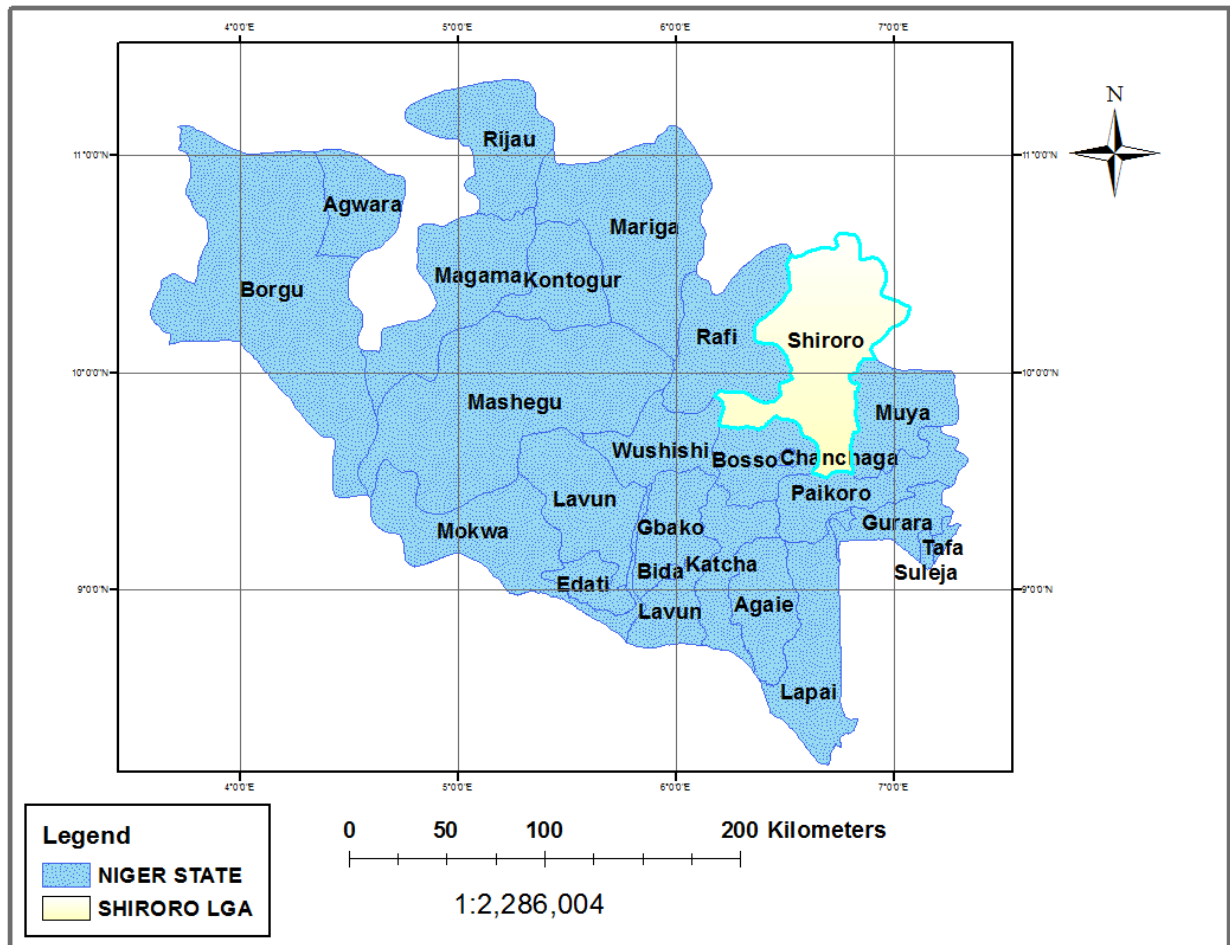
**Figure 1: Map of Nigeria Showing Niger State**  
**Source: Department Of Geography (Remote Sensing Unit) FUT Minna**

## 2.2CLIMATE

The study area falls under the tropical wet and dry climate type where rainfall is seasonal and falls between April and October, sometimes extending to November. The dry season lasts from about October to April.

The highest mean monthly rainfall occurs in August/September with almost 300mm. In the dry season, when the sky is cloudless, the temperatures are very high with a mean of 29°C and

daily maxima at the height of this season frequently exceed 30°C. The seasons are associated with North and South migration of inter-tropical discontinuity (ITD)(Garba & Muhammed, 2011).



**Figure 2: Map of Niger State Showing Shiroro Local Government Area**  
**Source: Department Of Geography (Remote Sensing Unit) FUT Minna**

### 2.3 VEGETATION

According to Garba and Muhammed (2011), the vegetation of the study area falls under the Guinea Savannah region with fairly scattered trees and luxuriant grassland. In the absence of farming activities in the area some common economic trees noticed in the area are, Mango *Mangifera indica*, Locust bean *Ceratonia siliqua*, Shea butter *Vitellera*

*Paradoxa*, Guava *Psidium guajava*, Sweet Orange *Citrus Sinensis*, Cashew *Anacardium Occidentale* and Oil palm trees *Elaeis guineensis*. Others are Neem *Azadirachta indica*, Mahogany *Khaya*, Silk tree *Garrya elliptica*, Sour Orange *Citrus aurantium* Tangerine *Citrus reticulata* and Baobab *Adansonia digitata*.

## **2.4 GEOLOGY AND SOIL**

The surface of the study area is dominated by hills of over 100 metres above sea level. The topography is undulating which has characteristics of gradual ascent from the East to the North with a number of isolated plains (Garba & Muhammed, 2011). By gradual ascent, it means the hill slopes in an upward vertical movement. The undulating hills are predominantly granitic rocks while the rocks in the lower terrain are dominated by schist and gneiss rock particles which might have been used as flaked tools, lower and upper grinding stones and for other cultural purposes as seen in the way the rocks were technically worked to serve as chairs and cast of different shapes.

The parent materials of the soils are Pre-Cambrian rocks usually on the highlands and the loose sandstones/alluvia soils on the lower slopes and river valleys which makes the entire area susceptible to gully erosion. Therefore, soils in Kuta are derived from pre-existing rock i.e. Precambrian basement complex consisting of granite and amphiboles schist. The extensive land use of the study area, incorporate a wide range of soil which contain high content of aluminium and iron and are suitable for intensive cultivation. Though the soils are good under physical natural conditions, they tend to deteriorate under intensive cultivation for farming purposes (Garba and Muhammed 2011).

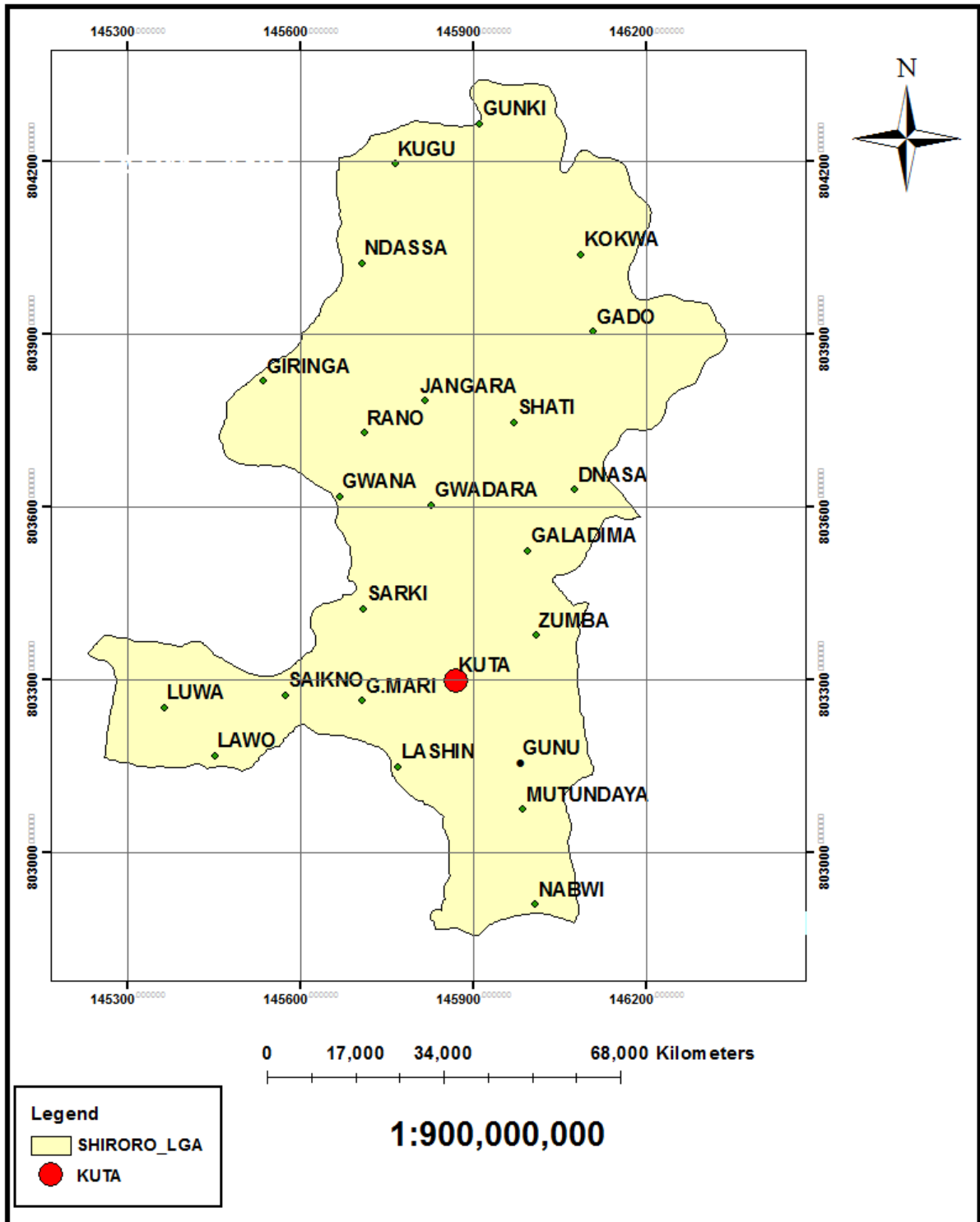


Figure 3: Map of Shiroro Showing Kuta Town  
 Source: Department Of Geography (Remote Sensing Unit) FUT Minna

## 2.5 DRAINAGE

Kuta is characterized by a rectangular drainage pattern where grids on the high grounds formed the channels for flowing water that empty into the several drainage basins especially on the western borders of the town as well as the river Erena on the north. However Oko Hilltop site has a centripetal drainage pattern because the water from the hill flows towards the drainage basin on the south and to the *Bawyi* stream on the north. *Bawyi* stream has a constant flow that drains the Oko hill during the rainy seasons and throughout the dry season in the three drainage basins called *Kakayi*, *Vudam* and *Akuta*.) (Garba & Muhammed, 2011).



**Plate I: Part of Oko Hilltop Site Vegetation**

## **2.6 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

The Gbagyi ethnic group occupy most part central Nigeria, stretching from the Niger-Benue Confluence area to the Zaria region (Mohammed, 2000). They are intersected sometimes by other groups like Hausa, Kadara, Koro, Nupe, Gwandara, Ganagana, Dibo, Kamuku, Pangu among others. Similarly, the origin of the people remain a contentious issue as both professional and amateur historians are yet to point to the actual place, time and nature of the emergence of Gbagyi, their culture and heritage.

Apart from the two major narratives regularly used to point at Gbagyi origin of history, a third perspective have been added with the works of Mohammed (1988, 2001, 2002, 2007 and 2010). The first narrative gives the earliest date for the formation of Gbagyi Kingdom between 1500 to 1900. The proponents of this idea believed the Gbagyi migrated from the North east due to persecutions or hunting expeditions as the case may be (Baba Kuta, n.d., Abdullahi, n.d., Kuta Today, n.d.). These narratives also seem to be consistent with oral traditions collected in the course of this research.

The second narrative is mostly found in oral traditions and has ascribed Zaria to be the probable origin of Gbagyi who only moved southwards to their present settlements in search of more farm lands, fishing venues and as reported in some case to escape from strict Islamic administration practiced across most part of Northern Nigeria at that time. This group seem to suggest a date for the said migration to about 500 years ago. In the third and more recent narrative, Mohammed (2001) opined that the Gbagyi have shown great similarities in culture, language and location with some Kwa sub-family language group found in the Niger-Benue confluence area, hence closer to these groups than those in Borno and Zaria regions

thereby propagating that the Gbagyi might have originated from Niger-Benue Confluence area between 16th and 18<sup>th</sup> century AD.

Similarly Oko hilltop settlement was quoted in oral traditions and some manuscripts to be founded by one Adamu Bodo who came from Borno for hunting of a particular mammal called *Okota*. Bodo now settled on the hilltop as a result of its richness in edible plants, stream and stone materials. He was said to live on the hill alone until when other hunters found him and offered one of their daughter as wife to him.

In other traditions Oko got its name from one of the Monoliths situated on the hill top while others said that the settlement was named after some species of reindeer that occupied the hills and were known to the people as *Okota*. While some traditions said *Okota* was derived from the name of a dead animal, some opined that the name *Okota* which means the oldest dwelling place was used to refer to the hill because it represented the earliest human habitation in the area.

In a more divergent narrative, Oko is said to be the cradle of Gbagyi ethnic group existence for at least a millennium before Adamu Bodo unanimously united isolated settlements living around hill-top site and ruled over them in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD (Baba Kuta, n.d., "Kuta Today", n.d.). He was reported to have migrated from Borno state and entered Oko from the east in the course of his hunting expedition.

In another narration by Yusuf (nd) Oko was described as the cradle of Gbagyi ethnic group which was re-occupied by the people living in the surrounding hamlets as a result of their common aspiration to unify and appointed one of their heroes in the person of Adamu Bodo as head and charged him with the responsibilities of ensuring that every clan was protected

and treated with equity. According to other oral traditions the founder of Oko was a member of a particular Gbagyi clan from among those living around the hill that travelled to Borno for exploration only to return home as a great warrior and built the first house on Oko hill from where he hunted wild animals in the region. He was fearless and feared by many and subsequently chosen unanimously by the people to rule over them. He married from another Gbagyi clan that later relocated to the hilltop and directed the rest of the clans to move to the hill as a result of his kindness, hospitality and justice.

In attempting to link the culture of Gbagyi to that of the Kanuri ethnic group in Borno, north east Nigeria, some opined that similarities of tribal mark that runs the cheeks of both Gbagyi and Kanuri as seen today indicates the cultural link between them Baba Kuta (n.d.). This argument is strengthened with the identification of the *Kabulu* instrument used by the Gbagyi traditional and cultural dance group also known as *Kabulu*, as the same instrument Adamu Bodo brought from Dikwa, Borno state at the time of his arrival.

In yet another narration by Abdullahi, (n.d.) Kuta originally included isolated hamlets such as Kuji, Minko, Genko, Wemidna, Baminpye, Gulokopa and Chekunsanpy. These settlements were said to be unaware of each other until the arrival of Adamu Bodo in the 15<sup>th</sup> century AD. The author reported that Oko hill was sacred to the communities in that period of its richness in animal and plants resources. Contrary to the rest of the narrations, Kuta was further said to be founded by Sabo who came from Borno through Kuji and finally settled on Oko hill. Sabo then married out his younger sister called Fatima to Adamu Bodo who also came from Borno. Adamu Bodo then moved out of Kuji to Daguna and Fuka before returning to settling on Oko hill top opposite of his brother in-law, Sabo.

However, in some narrations, Adamu Bodo became aware of other hamlets during one of his several visits to Kuji. Some of these hamlets were Kubwatu, Wemidna and Geriko and the heads of the hamlets selected Adamu Bodo as chief except that of Geriko who opposed the appointment and challenged the assertion by other clans that Bodo founded Oko. But the objection was turned down by the majority of clans. Bodo was henceforth made the King of all the people belonging to the Gbagyi ethnic nationality.

Since then Oko flourished and enjoyed uncommon peace and growth under different leaders of Adamu Bodo's extract until early 1900s when the Europeans arrived and coaxed the people to migrate from the hilltop to the present settlement. But in some narrations the period of 1925 to 1936 under the leadership of Osu Musa and Osu Ibrahim witnessed the movement of the Kingdom from the hill top to the foot of the hill as a result of population explosion and the relative peaceful environment enjoyed in the entire region ("Kuta today" n.d.). This period also saw the transfer of the headquarters of Gbagyi native authority from Kuta to Minna because of the establishment of railway station by the colonial government of Nigeria in the heart of Minna (Shekwogaza, n.d., Baba Kuta, n.d.).

Baba Kuta, (n.d.) listed all Gbagyi villages and settlements as part of the larger Gbagyi ethnic nationality. They include, Bosso, Allawa, Dagunu, Fuka, Galadiman Kogo, Guni, Kurmin Gurmana, Kushaka, Maikunkele and Paiko as settlements under Kuta that also paid their tributes to the Habe Kingdom in ancient Zaria through the authorities in Kuta. And the earliest Kuta kingdom comprised Kuji, Wemidna, Gudoko, Pyidna and Kubwatu.

The article also discussed the settlement pattern on the hill by intimating us on the three hamlets that occupied Kuta hill in from the 16<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Hamlets were occupied by the Kuji clan on the occupying the north eastern part of the hill, The *Dnami* clan

on the eastern part and the *Kubwatu* clan on the southern part of the hill. Kuji clan dominated the rest but failed to take total control due to the Gbagyi tradition militating against forceful leadership and as a result of the peaceful coexistence among the clans.

The article further stated the use of Kuta as sanctuary for many people running away from slavery and Jihad of the 15<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century AD. The geographical landscape and the political stability of Kuta was said to have played a major role in the choice of Kuta as hideout. The city was said to have defensive walls with eleven gates that were under strict surveillance round the clock.

‘The Origin of Dance Historical Background’ is another article which explains the role of *Kabulu* dance group in ensuring the repository preservation of Gbagyi cultural history and development since its foundation. Apart from performing locally in annual festivals, the group have highlighted the origin of Kuta through its costumes, rhythm and dance movements as well as its musical instrument. They have also succeeded in showcasing the rich culture of Gbagyi ethnic group by representing Niger state and Nigeria in National and international competitions respectively. The hallmark of their achievement came when they emerged overall best in the 1979 All African cultural festival in Algiers, Algeria.

In view of the need an academic historicalvarious literatures has no doubt informed the researcher the deer need for harnessing these related articles in order to have a single document that will comprise various aspects of the history and archaeology of Kuta. It is important to note that oral traditions collected so far have been largely inconsistent as much as the written records and this is common in archaeological perspective (Bagchi, 2010). However they interestingly agreed on the arrival of AdamuBodo to mark the emergence of a

single legitimate authority responsible for the administration and organization of the territory known as Kuta.

The available written traditions and oral literatures focus on the historical importance of Kuta to the understanding of general history of Gbagyi ethnic entity. For instance, ‘The beginning of Kuta Kingdom and its Growth up to present day’ highlighted series of event that occurred during the reigns of chiefs that ruled Kuta from the time of AdamuBodo and the major events that were associated with each chief’s period. It also discusses the origin of administration in Kuta before and after the Jihad as well as the colonial and post-colonial periods (“Kuta today”, n.d.).

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **3.0 SURVEY OF OKO HILL SETTLEMENT SITE**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

The successful covering of the site was made possible by arbitrarily gridding all segments of the site where each grid was outlined by its bearing and materials evidence measured at their various coordinates. This made substantial recording of cultural materials systemic which eventually culminated in the production of the site map.

#### **3.2 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE SURVEY**

The aim was to collect and record available data on the hill-top site for a better presentation on archaeological map. The map should be able to depict the distribution and spatial organisation of imprints of past human activities on the site.

The objectives are;

1. Surveying the whole site to determine the extent of activity area for mapping.
2. Recording of cultural materials *in situ* and collecting potsherds and other material evidence by way of walking, observing, noting, collecting and taking photographs of any archaeological data on the site.
3. Digital plotting of the recorded data to produce the site map

### **3.3 SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

The site measured 300 meters on the eastern wall, 300 meters on the southern wall, 500 meters on the western wall and 200 meters on the northern wall. It is characterized by hills and ruins of walls on the eastern axis and plain lands on the west with patches of lateritic and clay soils on the south and north axis respectively. It is dominated by short grasses, trees and shrubs growing amid sedimentary and metamorphic rocks mixed with reddish loamy soil that allows the growth of plants in a small scale during the rainy season.

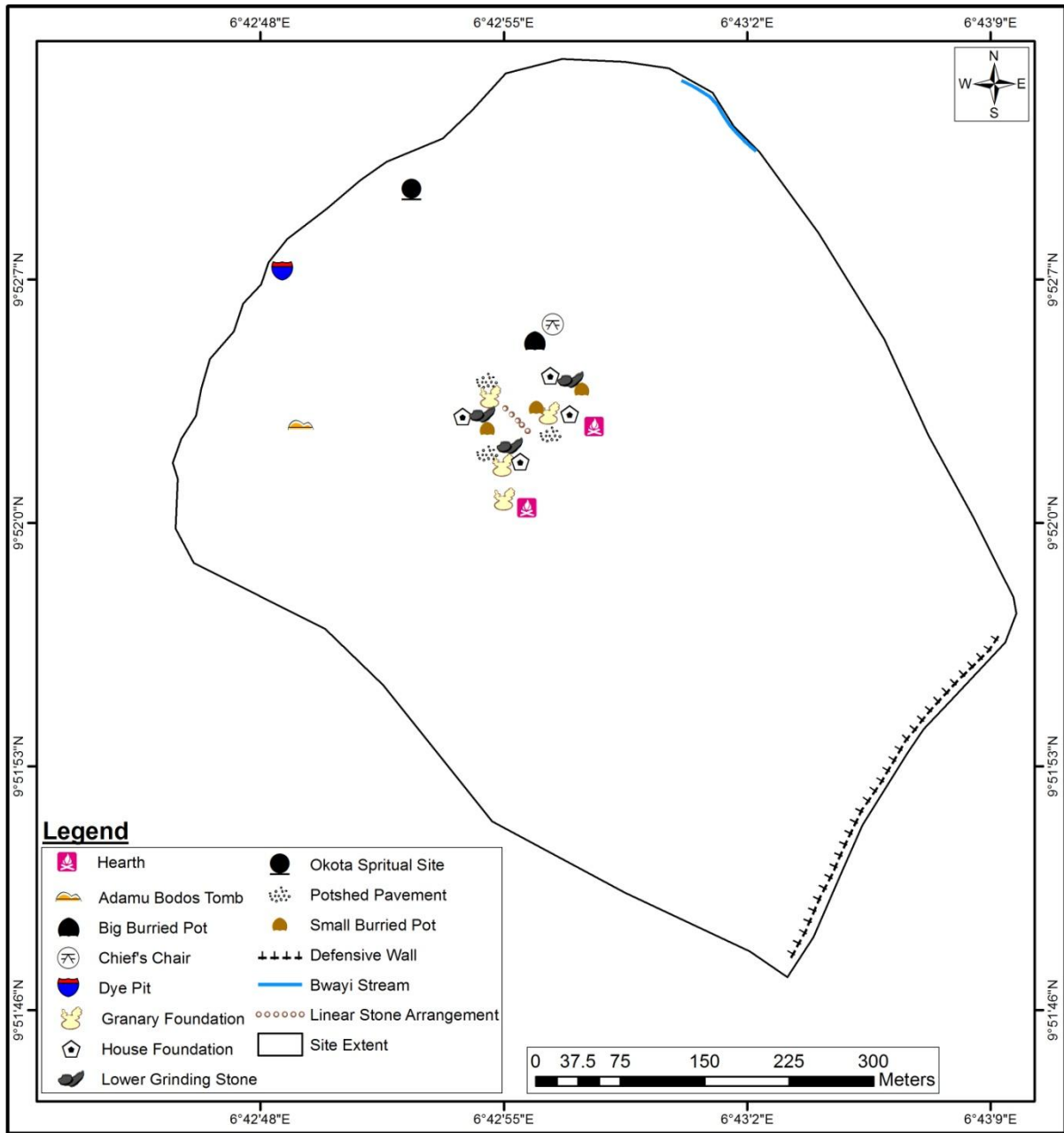
### **3.4 METHOD OF SURVEY**

Archaeological survey could be carried out from the sky in small aircrafts, under- water using diving kits or on the ground in a jeep, horseback and foot walk. Oko hilltop site is undulating in nature, thus good for the conventional ground reconnaissance which was done on foot with another Archaeologist, two field assistants and five site guides. The vegetation of the site falls under the savannah region of central Nigeria that provided plain and cleared lands in the dry season and a light forest vegetation characterized by short grasses, shrubs and scanty trees in the wet seasons. Hence the site was surveyed at three different periods so as to have a fuller coverage during the rainy season, dry season and harmattan seasons. In all the three periods, the site was covered with grids of three arbitrary areas as it appeared physically.

Each grid was covered by walking carefully using the global positioning system(GPS) to obtain coordinates of cultural materials in situ from the four corners of the grids. A prismatic compass was used to capture the bearings of all identified cultural material aided by an arrow of 50cm, a measuring tape of(5m to 20m) for measuring the distance between the various archaeological records. Photo-documentation of cultural materials on the site was carried out using a digital camera before a few were collected for further analysis. A field note was used

to provide preliminary data for the final documentation of the activities undertaken throughout the research.

A jute bag was used to collect potsherd and cowries from the site for further studies. Other implements used during the field work are cutlasses, hoes, knives, pegs and trowels for clearing purposes.



**Figure 5: Archaeological Map of Oko Hilltop Site**

### 3.4. FINDS AND FEATURES

The following are the identified finds and features on Oko hilltop settlement site:

#### 3.4.1 Dye Pits

The two dye pits found on the site were located along the western axis on what seems like a refuse dump on a lateritic scatter and were tagged; Dye Pit A and Dye Pit B are made from lateritic clay but painted grey in the inside. (Plate II). Using the measuring tape the measurement of each Dye Pit was taken as follows: Dye Pit A; Diameter – 1m, Height – 0.30m and Width – 0.10m and Dye Pit B; Diameter – 0.95m, Height – 0.20m and Width – 0.10m.



Plate II: Dye Pit B

#### 3.4.2 Spiritual Site

There are two features found under the spiritual site. The first feature is the only baobab tree *Adansonia digitata* on the site and it is located along the southern belt within a cluster of

circular stone arrangement. The second feature is heap-like stones arrangement lying at the foot of the hill along the western wall of the site and is known to the people as *okota*. (Plate III). This feature measured; Length - 2.5m, Height – 1.5m and Width – 1m.



**Plate III: Heap of Stones (*Okota*)**

### **3.4.3 Artificial Stone Arrangements**

Three major types of stone arrangements were found on top of the hill associated with other features. The stones arrangements were classified; Stone Arrangement A, Stone Arrangement B and Stone Arrangement C respectively.

**Stone Arrangement A:** Over hundred (100) large circular stones arrangements were found in the site in a cluster of three or four with each comprising twenty four to thirty stones mostly of granitic and sedimentary rocks origin (Plate IV). They mostly associated with other archaeological features like buried pots, granary foundations and ruins of potsherds pavement. Samples of three similar arrangements were numbered A, A2 and A3 to represent

the whole and measure as follows: Length 2m, diameter 2.5m and width 1.5m; length 1.8m, diameter 2.5 and width 2m and length 2m diameter 2.2m and width 1.5m respectively.



**Plate IV: Sample of Stone Arrangement A**

**Stones Arrangements B:** These are twenty eight (28) small-circular stone arrangements identified on the site. Of which ten (10) are made up of arrangement of 5 stones and eighteen (18) are formed by 6 stones laid in a spherical form (Plate V). Three identical sets were sampled B1, B2 and B3 with the following measurements: Length – 0.80m, diameter – 1m and width – 0.60m; length- 0.60m diameter – 0.80m and width 0.45m and length – 0.70m diameter – 0.70m and width 0.50m respectively



**Plate V: Sample of Stone Arrangement B**

**Stone Arrangement C:** The features were found between the middle and upper section of the site along the southern axis (Plate VI). The stones arrangement runs from east to west in a straight form stretching about 5m in length.



**Plate VI: Stone Arrangement C**

#### **3.4.4 Potsherd Pavement**

These are ruin of pavements made with pottery material of different designs and surface finish. They are sometimes found inside the large-circular stone arrangements or in a cluster without any form of stone arrangement. The potsherd pavements consisted of pottery with roulette, incision and notch decorations. Some of them appeared to be painted in black or grey colour while others were not decorated. (Plate VII)



Plate VII: Potsherd Pavement

### **3.4.5 Water Pond**

A water pond was identified at the basin located at the lower section of the northern part of the hill. The pond collects water from a stream known to the people as *Bawyi* which further splits into *Kakayi*, *Vudam* and *Akuta* streams. The pond covers an area of about 30 square meters and characterized by small and large stone boulders, shrubs and aquatic grasses. (fig VIII).

The pond might be an indication of how the people sourced and manage their water supply for sustenance and improved livelihood.



**Plate VIII: Part of the Water Pond**

### **3.4.6 Lower Grinding Stones**

A total of three lower grinding stones found on Oko hilltop site were made of granitic sedimentary materials of grayish colour and classified as Lower Grinding Stone A, B and C respectively. Lower Grinding Stones A and B are broken into two halves, probably by natural or artificial agents and found at the eastern part of the site while C was half buried in the middle part of the site with deep and worn out platform. (Plate IX). Lower grinding stone A measured 0.27m in length, diameter 0.50m and Width 0.30m. While lower grinding stone B has 0.43m in length with a diameter of 0.20m and Width 0.15m. Lower Grinding Stone C measured 0.35m in length, 0.40m in diameter and Width of 0.20m.



**Plate IX: Lower Grinding Stone A**

### **3.4.7 Grave Site**

On the west of the lower section, lies a tomb which according to oral tradition belongs to the grave of the great founder of the Kingdom, AdamuBodo. The tomb is in a mud-made round hut with a thatched roof reported in oral tradition to have been built immediately AdamuBodo was buried in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century AD. (Plate X). Other burials found on this part of the site are not sheltered but belong to all former rulers while public burial continue to take place in the old general burial ground located along the northern axis of the site.

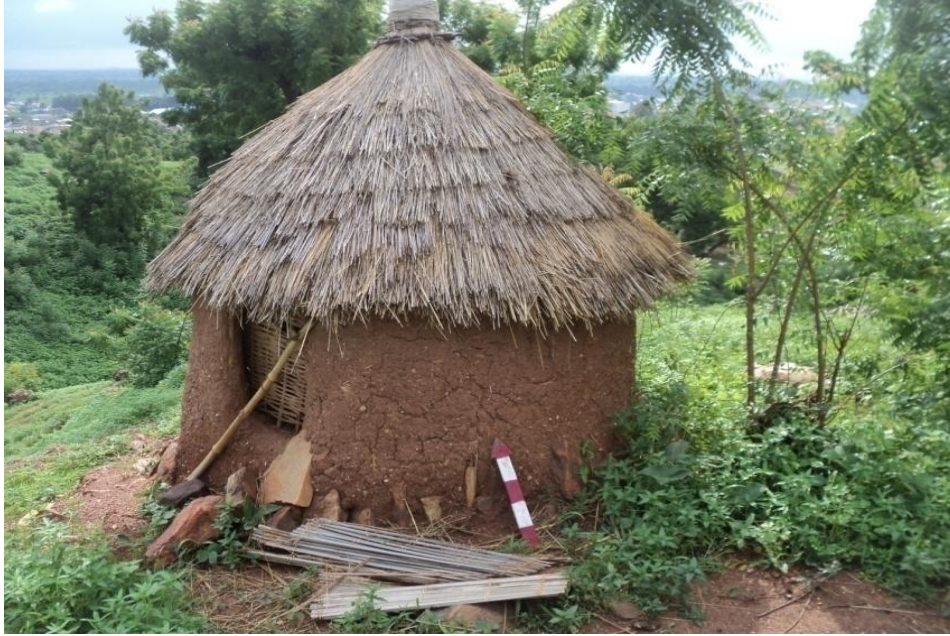


Plate X: AdamuBodo Tomb

### **3.4.8 Buried Pots**

Of all the ten (10) buried pots found on the site, two major types became prominent and were categorized as; Big buried Pot and Small Buried Pot. The only Big Buried Pot found on the site was located amidst potsherd pavement at the highest level of the site with a diameter of 0.70m and Width of 0.10m. This part of the site is also regarded in oral tradition as the dwelling of the rulers in the past. (Plate XI).

The other category comprised of small buried pot numbered from A to I respectively and are found closely buried in group of two. They are also situated in middle of most of the house foundations (Plate XII). According to oral traditions, the buried pots were meant to protect each household from internal, external and spiritual attack. The diameter ranges from 25cm to 35 cm and the width from 1 cm to 4 cm.



Plate XI: Big Buried Pot



Plate XII: Small Buried Twin Pots

### **3.4.9 Carved rocks**

These are three different rock features found in the upper unit of the site, forming part of what oral tradition posits as the area where the earliest administrative functions was carried

out. These rocks appeared to be systematically fashioned according to need as depicted on them. (Plate XIII, XIV and XV).

The rocks are categorized into three types (Domestic, Recreational and Industrial Rocks) based on the function they seemed to have served in the past.

The domestic rock is a huge sedimentary and metamorphic rocks concentration apparently fashioned into two seating platforms. The two seemingly seats/chairs are carved out in the middle of the rock facing east of the site and massively protected by the parent rock on the west, south and north. This feature lies on an area of about 5 square meters.

Recreational Rock found on the site is circular rock materials that appeared polished on the surface. The rock carries twelve (12) identical round depressions on a space of 0.35 meters, with height, diameter and width of 1m, 1.5m and 0.80m respectively.

Industrial rocks; this feature is trapezoid in shape with four different forms of depressions showing evidence of production of both household and hunting implements. This feature is measured as follows: Length 0.75m and Height -0.13m.



Plate XIII *Kujeran sarki* Chief's chair



Plate XIV: Recreational Rock Depression



Plate XV: Industrial Rock Depression

#### **3.4.10 Potsherds**

Okohill top site is very rich in pottery materials, found in almost every corner of the site especially the activity area. All the pottery materials found are broken (potsherds) but depict varying shapes, forms and sizes which were sampled across all units of the site for further visual classification, analysis and interpretation forthcoming in this research. A total of 100 potsherds were collected from each of the units and bagged in a jute bag that was marked according to the units (A, B and C) This approach ensured proper handling and identification of the sum total of 300 potsherds collected thus far.

#### **3.4.11 Ruins of Defensive Walls**

The defensive walls of Oko are constructed with a mixture of stones, mud, timber and human beings according to oral traditions. It has a deep ditch constructed on the outer part with various trees planted on it. The evidence of the walling system is only found on the eastern axis where the gate of *Wemedna* is evident as the wall stretched about 3km North – South

(Plate XVI) because recent human developments (road, house, farming and mining) have destroyed the walls on the other parts of the site. Archaeological survey conducted covered the site at 500 meters interval showing an average thickness and height of 4m and 3m.



**Plate XVI: Ruins of defensive walls**

## **CHAPTER FOUR: ETHNOGRAPHIC STUDIES**

### **4.0 INTRODUCTION**

Ethnographic survey was carried out in Kuta to get an insight on the extent at which certain aspects of the extant cultures may be similar to the extinct cultures. The study examined the contemporary settlement layout with focus on spatial distribution of various structures and features in a typical Gbagyi compound. It has also studied the production of pottery with the view of appraising the degree of similarities between the past and the present pottery industries.

To this end, features like granary, kitchen, sitting room, laundry, living rooms, stores, veranda among others, as well as pottery making industries were examined in the contemporary setting. In each of the compounds studied, two or three people were interviewed for data collection which corroborated visual observation. It has been noted that certain gender roles among the Gbagyi are not restricted to a particular sex except for kitchen and construction roles.

#### **4.1A TYPICAL GBAGYI COMPOUND**

According to oral informant, Fonda, (Pers.Comm., December, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014), there are structural similarities between the present and past Gbagyi compounds. The common features found include among others, granaries, round huts, kitchen and reception. It was also claimed that the people still maintained their traditional settlement layout.

For instance, it was observed that a compound comprises of two or more households belonging to one extended family. A typical compound consists of one big reception *Zaure*, which also serve as the only entrance and exit of the compound and that in some cases a

small door is provided at the back end of the compound as alternative exit, Fonda, (Pers. Comm. December, 11<sup>th</sup>, 2014). There are also two or three smaller receptions for each of the household in the compound. The receptions *Zaure* are meeting points to discuss family affairs and to receive visitors of the family.

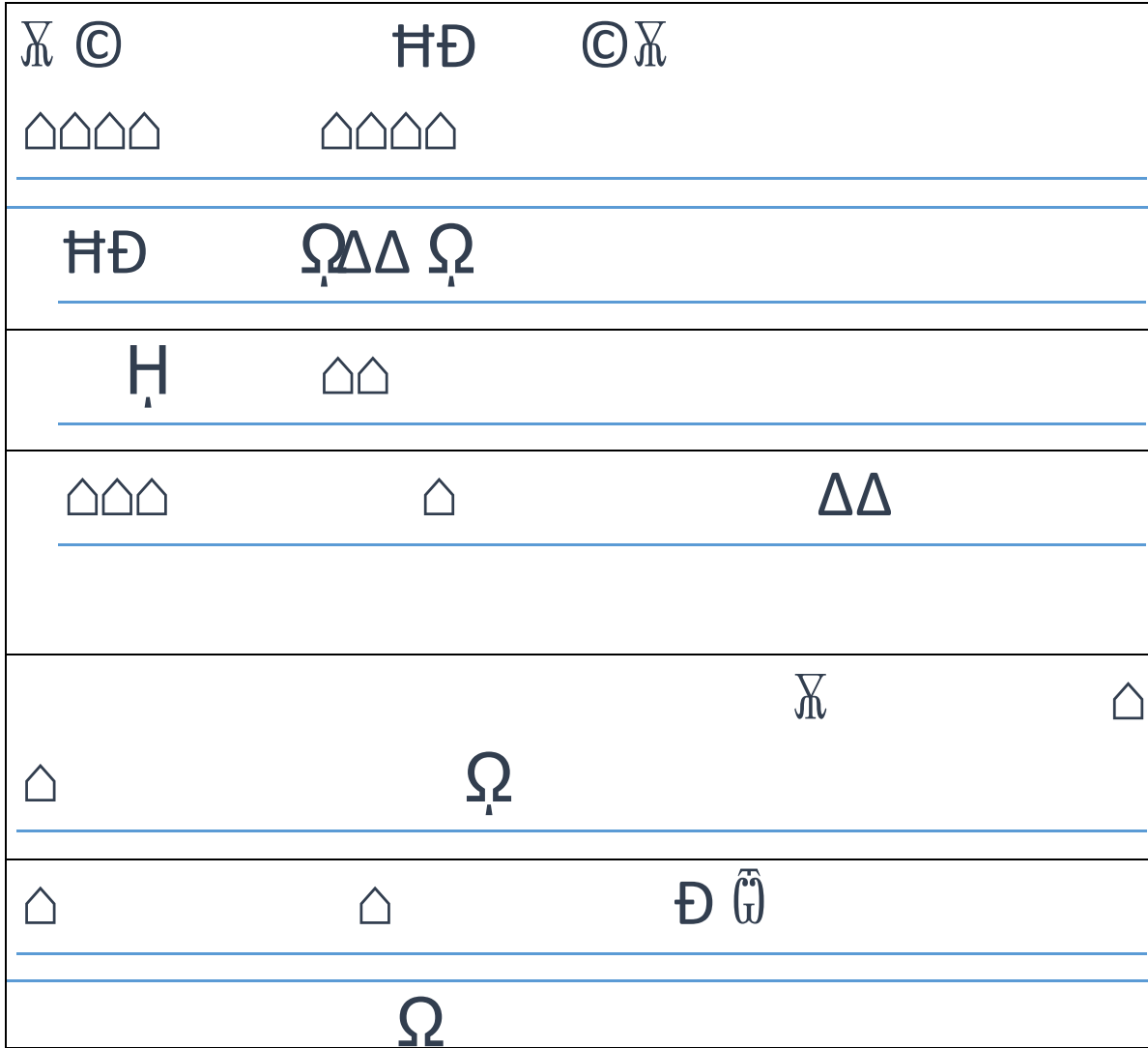
Each household usually has one granary, one kitchen, eight living huts, one laundry, one bath room and one pit toilet. A household has an average number of twenty five persons with the oldest male serving as the head and the oldest female controlling kitchen activities. The total number of extended family members depend the number of household in such compound but the eldest person in the compound is regarded as the family head.

In the course of this study, it was found out that, the people built their huts in circular shape using locally sourced mud and roofed with bamboo branches and grasses. The sizes differ depending on the function of the hut, where a medium size hut has a diameter between 3m and 4m. Most of the huts are semi detached except for granaries and kitchens that seem to stand alone. The distance between a granary and kitchen is measured at 1.5 and 2m and from reception to granary is about 1.5 meters from the living rooms. It was also observed that the distance from one block of huts to another measured from 1 meter to 2 meters with each block containing at least three rooms.

Another oral informant, Fatima (Pers. Comm. June 7<sup>th</sup> 2014), said, the granaries were located very close to the rooms for security purposes while the grinding stone in the living room serve all family members the purposes of grinding grains and herbs. The grinding stone located close to the kitchen is strictly used for grinding food ingredients like tomatoes, pepper, vegetable and many other local spices.

At least two pots are always put close to the kitchen and sitting rooms to provide water needed in both places. Another set of water pots are usually placed in association to the reception either outside or in the inside for public consumption ( Fonda, Pers.Comm, June 7<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

Apart from serving its primary purpose as washing and drying area, the laundry is said to be used as bath area for nursing mothers and their infants (Fatima, Pers. Comm, June 8<sup>th</sup>, 2104).



LEGEND

△ SLEEPING ROOM

X BATHROOM

© TOILET

Δ GRANARY

Ω POTS

Đ GRINDING STONE

H KITCHEN

HL LAUNDRY

○ RECEPTION

Sketch map of a typical gbagyi compound in kuta

## **4.2 SETTLEMENT BEHAVIOUR**

In the area of settlement behaviour, it was discovered that the people built and arranged their houses in a compound of at least three households each, with a single entrance known as *Zaure*. Each compound is occupied by extended family members of the same ancestors but with each household taking care of its immediate needs. The rooms are usually built in round shapes using the same techniques and materials used in granary constructions.

According to Bala (Pers.Comm. September 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015) other aspect of settlement behaviour observed in the present is direct reflection of how it appeared in the past. For example, It was observed that the chief palace lies at the centre of the present settlement and surrounded by closed relations, religious leaders and families working closely and a third section of settlement surrounding the latter comprised of families that either belong to the ancient army or that of later settlers that came to Kuta after the relocation to the present location.

## **4.3 POTTERY INDUSTRY**

Pottery was studied ethnographically because it was predominantly the imprint left behind by Man on the site. Therefore the three surviving potters' families found at *Dhullukpam* (Potters hamlet outskirts of Kuta) were engaged by way of observing the stages involved in the manufacture of pottery wares. Each family was represented by two potters and the exercise was done separately in each compound. A structured question guide was applied in all the sessions.



**Plate XVII: Clay Sources (*Dhullukpam*)**

It has been observed that clay is sourced on the southern belt of the old and new settlements, usually by both men and women for the use of all members of their families. The raw clay is piled up outside of each family yard, under a tree that serve as work station and children are allowed to prepare it by walking and sprinkling water on. The work is then taken over by the potters who would continue to pound with pestle until a workable paste is achieved. The potters claimed that their clay need no tamper and can last for years as long as water is being sprinkled on it at an hour intervals.

In producing pottery ware, a large pound of clay is fetched from the worked clay and placed on *Saku-sala* broken pot laid firm on *Oka/Ganmu* aluminum stand. The potter, then insert her fist into the clay pound until the size of the ware to be produced is achieved. This is followed by using the hand fist to systematically creating the volume and body of ware to be produced. A second pound of clay is then fetched and mould into a ring and then placed on the tip of the

body. The height of the body may be increased at this point before forming the neck, rim and lip as the case may be.

Kutapotters decorate their vessels when it is leather dry using carved sticks called *Sai*. Decorations are achieved by simple techniques through different implements depending on the desired decorative motif. There are basically four types of decoration in Kuta. Sometimes a pot might be decorated with one or more decorative motifs depending on market demand and function to which the material might be put to. The decorative motifs are *Ovi Grooves*, *Owa Roulettes*, *Zukananba Notch*, *Mankaci Stamp*.



**Plate XVIII: Some Decorated Pottery Materials**

The pottery vessel is then removed from the *Saku-Sala* and allowed to dry so as to complete the body formation by smoothing the bottom or base of the ware with an implement called *Tatagi*. After about thirty minutes in the open air, the inside of the vessel is also worked and smoothed using the same instrument. Kuta potters dry their products in the open air but under

a thick shade provided by mango trees *Mangifera indica*. The pottery wares are air-dried for as long as required avoiding direct impact of the sunlight.

Firing of pottery vessels is done in the open by each of the families at their own designated fire point. Firing commences immediately the potters are convinced that their products are adequately dried. The vessels are arranged in an upside-down position on top of shrubs, sticks and dried fire wood. The fuels are mostly cassava stems, baobab *Adansonia digitata* stems and mango *Mangifera indica* stems.

A firing place is known as *Lakpamis* prepared by covering a space of about 4m square with dry grass and shrubs mostly of rice *oriza sativa*, cassava *Manihot dulcis* and Mango *Mangifera indica* leaves to form a layer. A second layer is then formed by laying logs of wood made from Mango *Mangifera indica* and Baobab trees *Adansonia digitata* are imposed on it. While the third layer constituted up to twenty (20) pottery vessels ready to be fired, the fourth layer is mainly of *Saku-sala* broken pottery that must cover all the vessels to be fired. The last layer is made of grasses of rice *oriza sativa* and cassava *Manihot dulcis* after which the firing will commence. The firing of dried vessels usually last for about an hour or two depending on the amount of breeze available at that time. There is no ritual attached to firing of clay in Kuta and the use of kerosene is highly prohibited.



Plate XIX: Pottery wares in firing positions

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **CLASSIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDS AND FEATURES**

#### **5.0 INTRODUCTION**

Classification of finds and features means the allocation of archaeological data according to groups, usually determined by typology, category, form and function while analysis entails the separation and illustration of the constituents that are contained in archaeological materials in order to grasp the shared attributes each group or class of data present in the archaeological record. Classification and analysis are also used by archaeologists in examining the systems and components of the various cultural materials found in a particular site (Sutton and Yohe II, 2006).

Out of the two major types of cultural materials found in Oko hilltop settlement site (Stone and Pottery), only pottery materials were collected for further examination. It is worthy to note that oral traditions reported the activities of iron working in the site but no such evidence was discovered except for the deposits of lateritic soil located along the Northern belt of the site.

#### **5.1 STONE MATERIALS**

The site produced three types of stone materials and these are analyzed only according to the functions they might have performed in the past. These materials are classified based on domestic, industrial and recreational attributes embedded in them. (Refer to chapter 3 for details)

### **5.1.1 Lower Grinding Stones**

This falls under the domestic stone and by visual examination it was discovered that the stones were products of granitic rocks fashioned into workable platform achieved as a result of the smooth and easy nature of the stone. The shiny grey stones have three parts that is; body, platform and base. The body comprises the outer part which is darker and rougher compare to the inner part. The body also forms the size of the grinding stone giving it vessel posture. The platform represents an oval depression in the middle obviously resulting from long time grinding of hard and soft materials. The platform is the inner part of the grinding stone which is worn out hence the depiction of fine particles that constituted the stone. The base is the foot of the grinding stone that is rooted into the ground giving it the required rigidity for grinding pressure.

### **5.1.2 Heap of stones**

This feature falls under the domestic stone materials which are comprised of igneous, sedimentary and metamorphic rocks. The feature can be described as an arrangement of varying sizes of granitic stones to form a heap-like structure that could stand the test of time. A relatively large but flat smooth stone appeared on the top giving the heap a plateau like presence.

### **5.1.3 Carved rocks**

This is a large rock at the summit that is so far found only on Oko hill. The feature consist of two carved rock chairs, rock hollows of different functions around it depicting possible manufacture of piers, arrows, spoons, knives and hooks. There is also a rock with twelve small circular depressions that seem like a draft board probably used for traditional sport.

Therefore the carved rocks discovered in Oko could either be classified as industrial or recreational as depicted by their probable functions.

## **5.2 POTTERY AND POTSDHERDS**

Pottery materials are product of clay made by man for whom the four basic elements of earth, water, air and fire are combined to produce various vessels or containers for the purpose of human consumption. Classifications of pottery remain a tedious task for the Archaeologist as a result of its abundance in most archaeological site. For instance the way and manner we name decorative motif might be ambiguous when compared to traditional perceptions of the makers of such designs. Therefore, as postulated by Whittaker et al (1998), it is necessary for the Archaeologist involve in survey or excavation to be able to in classify potsherds based on certain attributes and functions. This is because classifications of potsherds depend largely on the perceptions of the researcher as a result of the inadequacy of the common scheme usually employed as criteria and terminologies for the classification of pottery (Ericson and Stickel, 1973).

However the discovery of potsherd pavements in Oko hilltop settlement mean that the usual functional classification and analysis of pottery found on archaeological side had to be expanded to accommodate these rare phenomena in Gbagyi settlements.

As opined by Ericson and Stickel (1973), the classification system for pottery materials found in Oko settlement site primarily comprised the functions, forms, size and structure in the determining the categories of potsherds collected from an archaeological site and these was achieved by determining the rim forms through intuitive and arbitrary decision.

A total of 300 potsherds were collected from Oko settlement site with each of the three units contributing 100 potsherds. These were simply classified based on vessel forms, parts, paste characteristics and decorative motif. These classification models were adopted because apart from being relevant to the study of our sample pottery, they allowed for ethnographic, intuitive and objective analogy of the pottery materials found on the site.

### **5.2.3 Paste Characteristics:**

When it comes to classification an analysis of pottery, the study of paste characteristic by Archaeologist present a special technique that exposes the component of a particular clay paste. It sometimes includes the examination of colour texture and content in clay. The paste characteristics of a pottery collected on the site was determined by physical examinations of the various potsherds in the laboratory. This involved the hand breaking and scratching of sample potsherds in order to notice the inclusions or otherwise of temper in the clay paste. It was discovered against ethnographic reports that temper was added to clay paste as some of the clay consists of quartz granule and mica with strands of organic material which might represent the temper used during paste preparation.

Further examinations shows that clay paste are either reddish brown or dark brown. The reddish brown are 197 pieces which represents 70%, heavy and soft to break while the dark brown numbering 103 appeared hard and light weight representing 30%.

Table 1: Summary of potsherd colour

<b>SN</b>	<b>COLOUR</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>PARCENTAGE</b>
<b>1</b>	REDDISH BROWN	197	70%
<b>2</b>	DARK BROWN	103	30%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 5.2.4 Vessel Parts

In addition to the study of paste characteristics, efforts were made to separate the various parts usually found in pottery vessels. These parts could all be found in one vessel while others might have just two or three parts as the case may be. The common parts include body, rim, lips, base, handle, shoulder and neck.

Out of the three hundred potsherds collected, one hundred and seventy seven body parts were classified, constituting 55%, fifty five rim parts collected make up 18.33%, forty necks identified constitute 13.33%, one handle found constitutes 0.33%, two base parts that make up 0.67% and twenty five shoulders constituting 8.33% were also collected.

Below is a table representation of vessel parts distribution.

Table 2: Summary of Vessel Parts

<b>S/N</b>	<b>VESSEL PART</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>PARCENTAGE</b>
1	BODY	177	59%
2	RIM	55	18.33%
3	BASE	2	0.67%
4	HANDLE	1	0.33%
5	SHOULDER	25	8.33%
6	NECK	40	13.33%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100%</b>

### **5.2.5 Classification of potsherds based on vessels forms**

The study of vessel forms entails the classification and analysis of pottery by identifying the rims morphology so as to describe and predict the class and functions of vessels in the archaeological context. Rims are the outer edge or tip of a pottery usually connected to the neck or shoulder regardless of the type of vessel produced. Therefore potsherds collected in Oko were sorted out to determine the rim parts which forms were established using the rim profile chart. The rim profile chart aided in establishing the rim diameter, rim thickness as well as the nature of curvature of the rim.

It should also be noted that pots are usually determined when their rim diameters are shorter than their projected height while bowls are presumed to have rims diameters that are longer than their projected heights. Out of the three hundred potsherds collected from the site, fifty five (55) constituting 18% of the whole were classified as rims parts. Then fourteen of the fifty five rim parts were classified as pots that is 25% while 41 which is 75% were classified as bowls. A rim is described as concave when it is inwardly curved and as convex when it is outwardly curved.

#### **5.2.5.1 Pot Forms**

##### **Form 1**

This form was classified as concave rim and round lip comprising ten potsherds constituting 71% of the concave pot forms. Their rim diameters range from between 12cm to 28cm and body thickness range of 5mm to 20mm (fig 9)

## Form 2

This form was classified as convex rim with a flat lip yielding four potsherds classified as convex pot form and constitutes 29%. Their rim diameters fall between 12cm to 28cm and body thickness measured from 5mm to 20mm (fig 12)

Table 3 Summary of pot forms

Type	Quantity	Thickness Range	Rim Diameter Range	Percentage
Form 1	10	5mm-20mm	12cm-28cm	71
Form 2	4	5mm-20mm	12cm-28cm	29
Total	14			100%

## Bowl Forms

### Form 1

This form was classified as concave rim with a flat lip. Seventeen potsherds were classified in this category contributing 41% of the bowl forms. The rim diameter here ranges from 14cm to 38cm with a body thickness of 7mm to 28mm (fig 6).

### Form 2

This form is a convex rim with a round lip that comprises of fifteen potsherds constituting 37% of bowl form with a rim diameter ranging from 10cm to 34cm and body thickness of 5mm to 18mm (fig 8)

### Form 3

This form has a straight rim with a round lip that has rim diameter ranging from 20cm to 36cm and body thickness of 8mm to 12mm. It comprises of nine potsherds constituting 22% of the bowls forms (fig 10)

Table 4 Summary of bowls forms

<b>Type</b>	<b>Quantity</b>	<b>Body Thickness Range</b>	<b>Rim Diameter Range</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Form 1	17	7mm-28mm	14cm-38cm	41
Form 2	15	5mm-18mm	10cm-34cm	37
Form 3	9	8mm-12mm	20cm-36cm	22
<b>Total</b>	<b>41</b>			<b>100%</b>

### 5.2.7 Surface Finish:

Surface finish entails the facial conditions of the pottery wares at the end of production. Pottery production is an art work, produced based on the craftsmanship, desires, function and requirement of the potters. Sometimes functions determine the type of body finish while in other cases the product are designed or decorated according to prevailing trend in the potters' society (Rice 1985).

Oko Hill-top settlement site yielded three hundred (300) potsherds of which sixty seven (67) have designed surface, fifty eight (58) were not designed but only burnished while ninety two (92) have decorated un-burnished surface. Another fifty eight (58) are un-burnished without designed and a further twenty five (25) potsherds have their surface finish eroded.

Table 5: Summary of Surface finish

S/N	SURFACE FINISH	QUANTITY	PARCENTAGE
1	BURNISH WITH DESIGN	67	22.33%
2	BURNISH WITHOUT DESIGN	58	19.33%
3	UNBURNISH WITH DESIGN	92	30.67%
4	UNBURNISH WITHOUT DESIGN	58	19.33%
5	ERODED SURFACE	25	8.33%
	<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>300</b>	<b>100</b>

### 5.2.8 Decorative Motif

Decorative motifs are peculiar patterns, trademarks and impressions made on pottery wares usually when at leather hard stage in order to express the traditions of the makers of such pottery product (Whittaker, 1998).

Out of the three hundred potsherds collected from Oko hilltop settlement site, one hundred and fifty nine (53%) were classified to have both single and multiple decorative motifs after physically analyzing them. From the one hundred and fifty nine decorated potsherds, Thirty seven (23%) have single decorations while one hundred and twenty two (77%) have multiple decorations.

**Table 6: Summary of categories of decorative motifs**

S/N	CATEGORY	QUANTITY	PERCENTAGE
1	SINGLE DECORATIONS	37	23.27%
2	MULTIPLE DECORATIONS	122	76.73%
Total		59	100

### **5.2.8.1 Single Decorative motif**

There were thirty seven potsherds that fall under this motif with single decoration. The decorations are grooves 13, Notch 7, roulettes 13, incisions 2 and Stamping 2.

#### **Motif A: Grooves**

These are horizontal, vertical and oblique thick lines drawn on leather hard pottery to achieve groove as a decorative motif. Thirteen potsherds representing 35.1% of the single decorated potsherds fall under this class and they are locally called *Owa*. This motif is also depicted by using carved wood *Saito* impress horizontal a U shape line on the body of the vessel. This design is mostly applied on the neck of a vessel. (Plate XXII)

#### **Motif B: Notch**

This motif is locally called *Zukunnanba* and is depicted by using *Sai* to pinch-off the body of a leather dry vessel in multiple sequences hence creating a hollow impression on the pottery ware. A total of seven potsherds were identified which constitute 19% of single decorated potsherds.

#### **Motif C: Roulettes**

Also known as *Ovi* in local dialect, this decoration is done using a carved wood with chevron pattern to create multiple horizontal lines depicting a pattern of squared shapes usually achieved by rolling the *Sai* clockwise on the leather hard pottery vessels. The pattern is thick with U-like depressions. Thirteen potsherds (35.1%) were identified. The decorations are mostly depicted on both pot and bowls being used for storage, cooking and or preparation of herbs. Ethnographic studies show that potters prefer roulettes *Ovi* decorations unless

otherwise determined by market demand. This could be responsible for the greater number of roulettes *Ovi* decorative motifs in the pottery finds. It has been found that *Ovi* motifs could be thinner and vertically depicted hence V shaped, depending of the desire of the potter vis a vis the size of the *Sai* being used. (Plate XXIII)

### **Motif D Incisions**

Only two potsherds were classified to have this decorative motif which was also achieved using the tip of *saito* create a thinner line on a leather hard vessel. These numbers make up 5.4% of the single decoration motifs. (Plate XXI)

### **Motif E: Stamping**

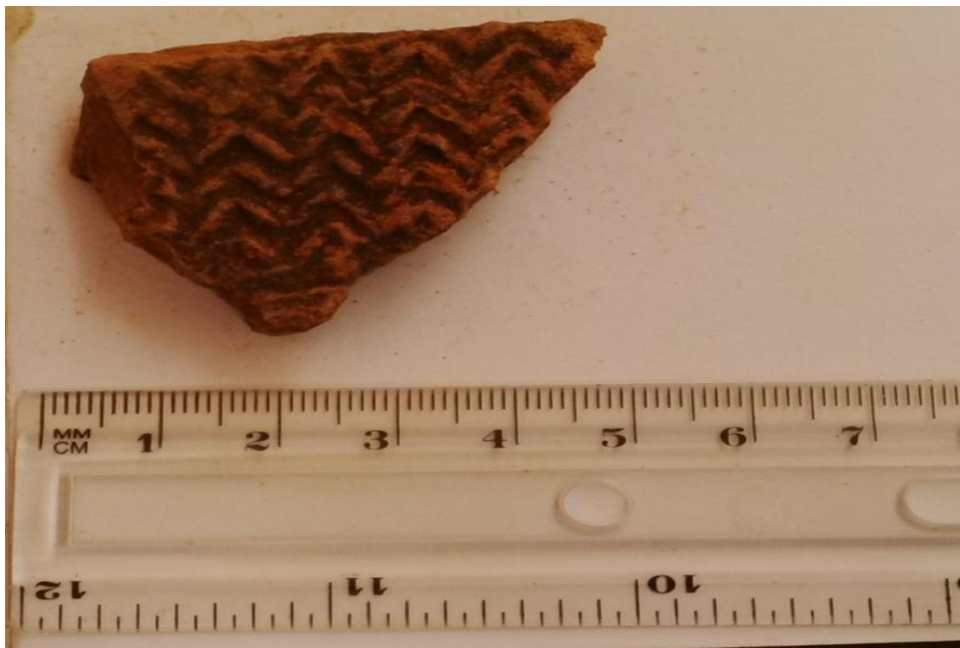
It is achieved by stamping the tip of the *Sai* in quick successions either vertical or horizontal to create a pattern known to the people as *Makanai*. There were also two potsherds identified with this motif constituting 5.4% of single decoration potsherds collected. Ethnographic studies also hinted that the potter's aim is to have a decoration that differs from the usual lines that is roulettes *Ovi* and grooves *Owa*. It is also discovered from the potsherd collected on the site that stamp decorations *Makanai* appears on dark burnished wares that could have been used for cooking.

**Table7: Summary of Single Decorative motifs**

<b>S/N</b>	<b>DECORATIVE MOTIF</b>	<b>QUANTITY</b>	<b>PERCENTAGE</b>
1	Grooves <i>Owa</i>	13	35.1
2	Notch <i>Zukunnanba</i>	7	19
3	Roulettes <i>Ovi</i>	13	35.1
4	Incision	2	5.4
5	Stamping <i>Makan-ci</i>	2	5.4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Plate XX: Incisions**



**Plate XXI: Herring-bone Groove**



**Plate XXII: Carved wood roulettes**

### ***5.2.8.2 Multiple decorations***

Most of the potsherds collected have multiple decorations comprising of varieties of the aforementioned single decorative motifs on them. One hundred and twenty two potsherds representing 76.73% of decorated potsherd were classified under this. A further classification revealed nine different multiple decorations pattern as follows:-

#### **Motif A**

This decorative motif includes nine potsherds having notching, grooves and horizontal incisions on them which constitute 7.4% of the total. (Plate XXIV).



**Plate XXIII: Notching and Horizontal Grooves mixed with Incisions**

**Motif B**

The decorative motifs under this category are carved wood roulettes, incisions and herring-bone grooves.( Plate XXV) Fourteen potsherds were identified which constitute 11.56% of multiple decorated wares.



**Plate XXIV: Carved wood Roulettes and Grooves**

**Motif C**

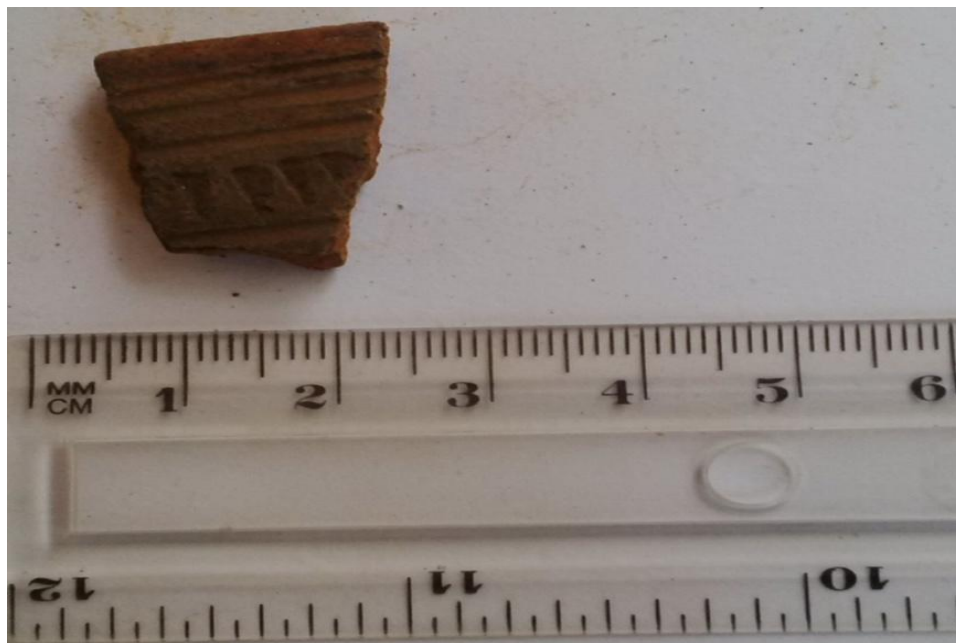
This is a combination of braided carved wood roulettes with simple grooves as seen in (Plate XXVI). Seven potsherds fall under this category contributing 5.73% to the total number of multiple decorated potsherds.



**Plate XXV Braided carved wood roulettes and simple Grooves**

**Motif D**

The decorative motifs here show a combination of stamping with grooves usually on very dark wares. (Plate XXVII). Only twelve potsherds were identified constituting 10% of multiple decorated wares.



**Plate XXVI Stamping with Grooves**

**Motif E**

This comprises of carved wood roulettes with banded grooves. Twenty six potsherds were identified to constitute 21.31% of wares with multiple decorations. (See plate XXVIII)



**Plate XXVII Carved wood Roulettes and banded Grooves**

**Motif F**

This decorative motif is a combination of vertical grooves, incisions and carved wood roulettes. (Plate XXIX). Twenty three wares were identified and they constitute 19% of multiple decoration motifs.



**Plate XVIII: Vertical Grooves, incisions, carved wood roulettes**

### **Motif G**

This decorative motif comprises of horizontal grooves and herring-bone grooves. Thirty one potsherds were identified under this category contributing 25% of multiple decorations. (Plate 30)



**Plate XXIX**Herring-bone andHorizontal grooves

**Table 8: Summary of multiple decoration motifs**

S/N	MULTIPLE ECORATIONS	QUANTITY	PERCENTAGE
1	Vertical groove, and carved wood roulettes	23	19
2	Herring-bone grooves and horizontal grooves	31	25
3	Stamping and Grooves	12	10
4	Carved wood Braided roulettes and banded Grooves	26	21.31
5	Incisions, carved wood Roulettes and herring-bone Grooves	14	11.56
6	Notching and Carved wood Grooves	9	7.4
7	Braided roulettes and simple grooves	7	5.73
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>122</b>	<b>100</b>

## CHAPTER SIX

### 6.0 INTERPRETATION OF FINDS AND FEATURES

#### 6.1: INTRODUCTION

Interpretation in archaeology is where cogent information about the studied site is presented with substantial verifiable material evidence found there in. Interpretation represent the point where archaeologists speaks for cultural materials left behind by man through classification and analysis of the finds and features discovered on a site(Price 2007).According to Sharer and Ash more(2003), archaeologists conducting a research are naturally engaged in interpretation from the starting point and only arrive at a cohesive picture of the past experiences of extinct human who occupied a particular space of land at a particular period of time at the end of a given research.

Artefactsare mute but embedded with alot of information about the past which rely on the ability of the archaeologist to speak for them hence speaking for the human beings that made them (Price, 2007). Using Ethnographic analogy, aspects of pottery tradition,settlement behaviour, architecture, building, religion, subsistence and origin of history of the past inhabitant of the site were somewhat interpreted. The above mentioned approach exposed a lot of cultural materials on the site inform of natural and artificial features which are not unconnected to the probable ways the early people that occupied the site interacted with the environment. The conduct of reconnaissance for studying Oko hill has also enhanced our knowledge of the soil type, vegetation distribution and provided an idea of how the people harnessed some aspect of the natural resources available to them. For instance, the discovery

of artificial rock hollows, the lower grinding stones and the carved stone chairs indicated the ability of the early people to work and fashion stone materials for their own needs.

The archaeological reconnaissance of Oko hill also led to the mapping of the site showing some aspects of cultural materials available on the site. The map shows the topography, size and the distribution of artefacts on the site which was consistent with reports in some traditions that the population distribution on the site was based on the functions they performed in terms of leadership, defensive duties and other economic activities at that time.

Oko hill is no doubt characterized by many surface finds such as potsherd pavements, settlements mounds, granaries and house foundation, monoliths, lower grinding stones and stone tools. These features have made it possible to investigate the past landscape strategies and experience of the past human society that lived once lived there.

Oral traditions also established a strong relationship between the extant and extinct potters in the areas of family ties, pottery production processes, pottery designs and source of clay, hence the need to critically study the variables.

## **6.2: THE ENVIRONMENT OF OKO**

The role of the environment cannot be over emphasized in the evolution and development of Oko hilltop settlement. It has been found that Oko likely got its name deduced from the hill that is being reported in oral history, to be the earliest habitation in the area. It has been reported that the settlement got its name from the hill because Oko natively means an older hill among so many. In another instance, it is also reported that the site was named after a species of reindeer usually found in Asia and Europe. The presence of this type of mammal would give insight on the nature of the past environment because the aforementioned

mammal is a native of Asian and European regions which climate is contrast to that of the area understudy. Therefore a critical study of the climatic history of the area understudy would enhance our knowledge on the nature of environmental conditions experienced in the past.

The hill apparently provided the peoples' shelter and security needs, hence the report in some traditions that the settlement enjoyed sovereignty and independence in pre-colonial era. The vast environmental opportunities were properly harnessed by the people for their sustenance and economic development. The fertile land supported surplus food production leading to trade exchange, inter marriages and culture sharing, The abundant clay minerals ensured that dye pits were built for dyeing with various pottery vessels for different purposes and the lateritic soil found might have been worked as reported some traditions and supported by the identification of artificial stone depression depicting iron implements.

### **6.3 POPULATION MIGRATION**

There are evidences from oral traditions and historical records showing that, the people migrated from the hills to the present settlement. The researcher was opportune to interviewed one of the natives of the hilltop ( Fatima, Pers.Comm., Jan 5<sup>th</sup> 2015) before the said migration to the present settlement. It has been reported that both human and natural factors led to this migration. Population growth is synonyms to increased food production, peaceful co-existence and technology. However, the limited space on Oko hill apparently led to population density and the eventual movement of the people from top of the hill to the low lands, just at the foot of the site (Figure 4).

#### **6.4 DRAINAGE PATTERN**

Okoko hill is a natural supplier of water into the basins along its foot, hence the continuous availability of water in *Bawyi* streams. The stream might have satisfied the water needs of the people in the past without since no well was identified during reconnaissance or reported in oral traditions. Digging a productive pond or well, though could have been near impossible given rocky nature of the site.

#### **6.5 POTTERY INDUSTRY**

The availability of clay deposits in the area provided the raw materials needed for pottery production. Various forms of pottery have been found and categorised into pots and bowls which were used for domestic purposes. The life cycle of pottery wares in Oko was established with the identification of potsherd pavements in almost all residential sites on the hill-top settlement. Pottery wares also served as containers for charms usually buried into the earth.

It has also been established during ethnographic studies (see chapter 4) that decorated potteries might have been used for water storage like the *Zukun* and *Ggagwagi Nagbanyi* while bowls like *Gbagwagi Naayi* were mainly used for cooking. Others are *Shawu-bu* use for soup and tea making and *Shapa* served as a frying/roasting pan. Similarly undecorated pottery wares might have been used for the various functions mentioned above.

#### **6.6 LOWER GRINDING STONES**

The presence of the lower grinding stones in the middle and lower parts of the site, mostly associated with house and granary foundations, indicated the nature of compound settings the Gbagyi might have practiced. The grinding stones were used to process food and prepare

herbs for the overall wellbeing of the people. It also impacted on their diet pattern and eating habits as different food could be processed. These assertions are backed by ethnographic studies conducted in present settlement. Food items like grains, vegetables and herbs are grinded using the lower grinding stones especially for the preparation of local delicacies.

### **6.7 RUINS OF KING'S PALACE**

Archaeological evidence has shown that the people have had tremendous knowledge of utilizing the natural resources when we considered how they were able to work-out the huge rock into what oral traditions considered the ruins of the king's palace. This edifice depicts a meticulously carved stone chair believed to be the seat of power in the past. Other evidences supporting the above claim are the artificially worked stones to make a draft board and implements casts for recreation and hunting respectively.

### **6.8 SUBSISTENCE PATTERN**

Farming, hunting, trading and pottery production are evidently the major occupations in the past and even now when we consider the vastness of archaeological and ethnographic evidences in that regard. The seemingly fertile lands have supported the growth of tubers like yam *discoria spp*, grains like maize *zee maize* and other economic trees earlier mentioned. These might have been responsible for the cosmopolitan population of Kuta today as a result of food security, trade and economic prosperity. Another aspect of the people's subsistence has been hunting dating to the time when the site or settlement itself was discovered and domesticated. The huge game reserve that attracted the earliest occupant of the settlement has now gradually migrated into the inner forest lands, thus the traditional hunting expedition carried out periodically in the present times.

In terms of manufacturing aspect of the economy, pottery industry still thrive as the only ancient industry that seem to survived through time. Though, dye site was discovered in the, the industry is in a complete moribund as in the case of iron working, raffia works and leather working. These are imprints of the nature and level of industrialization of the society dating to considerable antiquity. The people might have been able to produce their clothes in different colours and texture which could be sold through market exchange.

## **6.9 SETTLEMENT BEHAVIOUR**

The nature and topographical pattern of the site provided a limited land space that could have accommodated a large population of humans and their domestic animals. It has been discovered that settlement distribution of the people might have been in a densely populated compounds of about three households each. Each compound seems to have about two granaries, four rooms, two buried pots and one grinding stone. (See figure 3 and 4)

The site is naturally divided into three units as also reported in oral traditions collected. The units were demarcated by stone arrangement and constituted as much as ten to twenty (10-20) compounds in the First and second level with a very large compound on the upper unit of the site. It might be concluded that Oko hill was densely populated, hence the expansion or movement of the people to the present settlement.

There are several archaeological features found on Oko Hill. They comprises of Domestic, Industrial, Cultural, Social, Religious and Economic materials. The presence of a reliable source of water enhanced the survival of the settlement for over 500 years or so. The *Bawyi* is still serving the populace of the present settlement of Kuta.

It is evident that the people co-existed closely regardless of their definite boundaries as postulated by oral tradition. This is explained by the clustered nature of the compounds and the availability of the various socio-cultural materials in the three levels discovered. These materials include the Grinding Stones, Buried Pots, Potsherd Pavement and thousands of pottery materials. The stones used for different purposes in the site were of the same nature and texture.

Oko hill-top settlement site was densely populated in the past if the evidence of settlement discovered on the site is anything to go by. There are many stone foundations, potsherd pavements and granaries foundations indicating occupation in what might be described as concentrated settlement. According to oral traditions the site was occupied in three sections by three classes of people in the society. There also occurred supporting evidence that contrasted the three sections of the site. The upper parts of the hill represent the dwellings of the ruling class yielding evidence of the largest potsherd pavement in the site, the biggest buried pot and monolithic ruins which oral traditions described as the king's palace. Other cultural materials discovered at this unit are the stone casts of different forms associated with the monolithic ruins. While second unit which is the middle part is demarcated by a stone foundation inside which lower grinding stones, buried pots and potsherd pavement were also found. Oral tradition claimed that this unit was occupied by farmers and hunters in the past. The third unit was said to be occupied by mainly soldiers and spiritual leaders. This unit also yields buried pots, lower grinding stones and potsherd pavements.

The layout of Oko hill-top settlement site is typical of the contemporary Kuta settlement pattern. Most compounds today are having three to four rooms and at least one lower

grinding stone usually situated closed to the cooking area or the buried pots. The grinding stones were used to processed food and herbs while granaries sere as storage facilities.

The arrangement of the settlement also reflects political and economic attributes as seen today despite the claim in oral tradition that the society was egalitarian in nature. But a critical analysis of the site revealed that the upper part was occupied by probably the leaders of the community, the middle part by those working to feed and provide for the community and the lower part by those who protected the community from physical and spiritual attack.

#### **6.10 OKOTA (STONES ARRANGEMENT)**

*Okota* monoliths were reported in oral tradition to be last gateway to the settlement in the past. This feature is a charm made up of a stone heap that was used to screen visitors upon entry to the settlement. According to oral tradition, *Okota* monoliths could strike any enemy of the community right at entry point. These facts points to the symbolic nature of their belief in the past. It has also emphasized the place of traditional religion among the Gbagy in great antiquity.

#### **6.11 DYE PITS**

The ruins of the two dye pits found on the site showcased the nature and technique of building dye pits in the area. It has also informed us about the possibility of a major dye industry alongside other cotton processing industries. These means that the people might have produced garment of different colours. Though no iron work implement or materials was found in Oko site the discovery of dye pits and lateritic scatters might be an indication of a

possible iron industry. However, it was claimed in oral traditions that the ancient occupants worked iron into many different shapes and for various functions

### **6.12 Artificial Stone Cast**

Apart from being an embodiment of stone technology, the stone cast epitomise high sense of social advancement among the occupants of Oko dating to about one thousand (1000) years ago. It is obvious that the people fashioned out the casts into different forms in order to produce different household, weaponry, hunting and farming utensils. Other aspects of the influenced by the stone resources include the stone casts and *Okota* monoliths which served domestic industrials and spiritual purpose. The dye cast were possibly used for games in leisure time, thus supporting oral traditions that Oko was an organized and prosperous society since the last hundred years.

For instance, the stone chairs were said to be part of the ruins of the royal palace of the earliest occupants of the site. They are solid structures that seemed to be carved out of a heavy rock. The stone casts are three different flat stones bearing different casts of different shapes. One of the stones has cast of utensil (knife, spoon, fork) and weaponry (arrow, peg, needle) while two of the stones have round cast which oral tradition claimed to be a game stone board. (Plate XXVII and XXVIII). Other stone materials discovered on the site is the stone heap called *Okota* and the various stones boulders used as foundation stones for the construction of houses, walls and granaries.

### **6.13 GRANARY FOUNDATION**

The evidence of stone arrangement identified as granaries gives a strong suggestion that the people were food producers and became domesticated on the site about a thousand years ago.

Apart from exposing their ability to produce excess food which necessitated the means to store for future use, the granaries also indicated that every household fed itself as seen today by the appearance of granaries in every compound of the present settlement. The appearance of granaries on the site also indicated the consciousness of the people to save surplus as way of resource management which was possible because of their technical know how to control pest, diseases and rodents attacks.

#### **6.14 HOUSE FOUNDATION**

These are the various imprints that hinted the architectural designs prevalent on the site. The foundations were circular and have been found in clusters with potsherd pavements, buried pots, granaries and sometimes with lower grinding stones. The house foundations appeared circular with an average diameter of 1.5 meters which could have accommodated at least two (2) adults and three (3) children of average height. Ethnographic studies shows that even today round hut built in Kuta as rooms always have stones as foundations and were capable of accommodating at least five( 5) persons at a time.

#### **6.15 BURIED POTS**

The two categories of buried pots identified in Kuta are said to have served spiritual functions. For example the big buried pot identified in the ruins of the King's palace were strategically located in the middle of the dwelling while the smaller buried pots were usually buried close to each other just outside the stone foundations. According to oral traditions most of these pots were specially made for such purposes and using any used pots for such spiritual rite could amount to insubordination against their traditional belief.

## **6.16 GRAVE**

The manner and tradition of burial have also been highlighted with the identification of a distinctive grave site which oral tradition claimed to be the burial place of the founder of the settlement. The construction of shelter for the grave hinted the high level of importance and respected accorded to leaders even in their next life. It is reported in some traditions that burials of the elderly were mostly within their compound while the young people were mostly buried outside the compound or the public burial ground that is still in use today.

## **6.17 RUINS OF WALLS**

City walls are usually constructed to forward the capacity of a people to have total control over their territory. Walls show boundaries and are features of a sophisticated society where people ruled themselves under a centralized system of government that allocated different functions to different folks within the wall. Scholars' attributes city walls to greatness and achievement of a people as seen in Kanem-Borno and Hausa civilizations.

Oko defensive wall was built to secure the activity area which is an inselberg of about 2 square kilometre comprising of the three settlement site (*Oko, Kuji and Wemdina*). According to oral tradition, eight (8) gates *Kopa* existed in the past with each playing different roles and manned by heavily armed guards. The gates *kopa* are *Kopa Akna (Madaki Gate)*, *Kopa Ajata (Queens gate)*, *Kopa Jamu ( King's chief aide's gate)*, *Kopa Yako ( the main gate)*, *Kopa sata, Kubwa Kopa (the gate the colonialists came through)* *Kopa Shita* and *Kopa Abgolo* which is located in the east of the settlement where the ruins of defensive walls are found today.

According to oral traditions two gates were constructed per wall for entry and exit in order to easily identify strangers who might approach the exit instead of entry, thus proper monitoring was ensured in and out of the city.

All the gates were usually opened but guarded and closed at sunset except for *Kopa Shita* located on the Northern wall that was kept opened for hunters and traders whom must have informed the chief gates keeper about their possible late arrival. Others are *Kopa Akan* used for only King's entourage, *Kopa Ajata* used by the Queen, *Kopa Sata* used by other traditional title holders and *Kopa Kubwa* or *Dhullukpam* that was used by potters to and from the source of clay.

#### **6.18 DECORATIVE MOTIF**

There are basically four types of decorative impression examined during the ethnographic studies of pottery in Kuta. They appeared similar to designs identified on potsherds collected from Okosite. Decorations of pottery in Kuta are usually made using simple instrument called Sai (carved wood) which is used to achieve different motifs. The motifs found both in archaeological and ethnographic context are Grooves *Ovi* Roulettes *Owa* Notch *Zukananba* and Pinch/Indentations *Mankaci*.

#### **6.19 POTSHERDS PAVEMENTS**

This place of pottery in the livelihood of the past inhabitant of the site cannot be over emphasized. It has been discovered that broken pottery vessels might have been used as pavements as found in most of the house foundations identified. It has also been reported in oral traditions that potsherd used in pavement construction were either produced originally for that purpose or from the usual broken vessels commonly used in households.

Potsherds pavements in Oko consists a mix of decorated and undecorated broken pottery with their outer body parts on the outside. The pavements were laid to cover an entire room floor as seen on the site. The sheer size of potsherd pavement on the summit of hill further reaffirmed oral traditions on the nature of settlement behavior of the people hitherto

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **7.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **7.1 SUMMARY**

The archaeological survey of Oko Hill-top settlement site was conducted in Kuta area Shiroro Local Government, Niger State. The research was informed by the lack of archaeological information about the area which shrouded our knowledge about the early peopling of Gbagyi hill-top settlements in Nigeria. Hence the site was studied through ground reconnaissance in order to identify, collect and understand tangible facts about the early peopling of Kuta. Using Historical Archaeology as a theory frame, the researcher conducted ethnographic studies on some aspects of the people's culture after collecting oral traditions and consulting published and unpublished written materials related to Gbagyi cultural history and origin and in the end generated cogent facts about the experiences of the Gbagyi and their relation with environment.

Chapter one introduced the site and stressed the fact that it has not been studied before despite being generally regarded as the cradle of Gbagyi ethnic group in Niger state, hence the need for this research. It has also exposed the gaps in all the literatures written in relation to the area which could be filled by studying it through reconnaissance, ethnography, oral tradition as well as classification and analysis of finds and features.

Chapter two discussed the geographical location of the site by highlighting the tropical wet and dry climatic condition of the area which could have supported the growth of various vegetation associated with guinea savannah that the people were capable of harnessing for a better living condition and it has also brought to light the undulating topography and soil

types that created a rectangular drainage pattern in the site resulting to water flow into Bawyi stream/ basins at the foot of the hill-top site that provided for the water need of the people.

In chapter three, reconnaissance carried out on foot has yielded many evidence of past human activities ranging from social, cultural, economic, religious and political aspects of the peoples life. Apart from establishing the map of the site, this chapter confirmed oral and written information about some aspects of history of the Gbagyi ethnic group found in most hilltop settlements today.

Chapter four focused on ethnographic data looking bordering on pottery industry, settlement behaviour, and food processing involving grinding stones. Ethnographic evidence shows that the people still use the lower grinding stones especially for the preparations of herbs and local delicacies. It has also been discovered that pottery manufacture remains a strong tradition among the people involving both sexes.

Chapter five dwelled on classification of analysis of find s and features which shed light on the nature and types of material cultures found in the site. For instance, it has been established that pots and bowls as the two forms of pottery materials found in the site. Pottery were found to be decorated in different motifs and served various purposes. Other cultural materials classified here include stone materials which appeared to have functions like household, spiritual and industrial uses.

Chapter six attempted an interpretation of the various finds and features using Historical Archaeology as a strategy to explain the past through its material culture found on the site. Settlement pattern, subsistence pattern, economic,religious and industrial experiences of the extinct people have been brought forward in this chapter.

Lastly in chapter seven, the summary of the research was presented according to chapters which were duly followed by conclusion that outlined the contribution of the research to knowledge and our understanding of some aspect of the Gbagyi origin of history. Recommendations for the need to secure the site by stakeholders were highlighted as well as importance of further research on the site.

## **7.2 CONCLUSION**

The contribution of this research cannot be over emphasized considering the previous nature of information about the early Gbagyi settlements and history. Apart from mapping out the activities areas on the site, this research has among its major contributions, established the settlement map thus, confirming human occupation on the site in great antiquity by the exposure of fascinating imprints of past human life such as the city walls, potsherd pavement found inside house foundations which was reported to be contemporaneous with great civilizations of the 1st century AD. And this research has also documented various imprints of past human experience that indicate human occupation beyond all the times suggested for the supposed Gbagyi migration or immigration into Oko or Kuta as pronounced at present.

The research also highlighted some degree of continuity in certain aspects of the peoples culture especially, pottery decorations, granary construction, architectural designs and settlement behaviours among others. Other aspects of culture identified are stone and iron materials that predated the supposed migrations to the area either from Borno, Zaria or the Niger Benue Confluence suggested in the oral traditions and various literatures consulted. Until an expansive archaeological research is conducted this research has provided us with tangible result to declare Oko as the cradle of Gbagyi ethnic group in Nigeria

It has been established that the earliest occupant of the site interacted positively with the environment thereby fashioned rocks of different size into different utilities like the lower grinding stones, stone chairs, foundation stones and stone cast. Others include the monoliths which showed that religion existed and certain people served as custodians. These shows great capacity of the people to utilized the environment for their benefits.

The settlement behaviour indicated a harmonious relationship between all classes of people where everyone played his or her part for overall wellbeing of their community. These was made possible by the organized way the rulers administered over their subjects as seen in the way gates were provided for entry and exit into the city. Similarly, the appearance of lateritic deposits and dye pits are clear indications that people worked iron ore and produced coloured garments in the past since these industries disappeared around 1950.

Therefore, based on the archaeological investigation carried out on Oko hilltop settlement site, the researcher is of the strong opinion that the earliest Gbagyi settlers of Oko hilltop might have occupied the site in great antiquity largely as a result of the richness in animal, agricultural and mineral resources. Similarly the natural environment ensured that the people harnessed various opportunities from within to be able to sustain a settled, peaceful, decent and progressive livelihood where food, shelter, potable water, clothes, implements, weapons, storage facilities among others, made it possible for the people to be organized under a strong leadership that saw the erection of a sophisticated thick, high and strong walling system that placed the site in an enviable position as far as the history of Gbabyi is concerned.

Looking at certain aspects of settlement behavior and architectural traditions from both the old and the new settlement, there seem to be similarities in settlement layout, granary foundations and shapes between the extinct and extant people of the area. The ethnographic

studies of pottery have indeed exposed the life circle of pottery in Oko. Other material evidences recovered from the research are stone objects, dye site, grave site, cultural mounds, potsherd pavements and shrine which led to the conclusion the site was fully occupied on large scale with an organized settlement behavior that appeared consistent since the last five hundred (500) years. However the scope of this research makes it imperative for further research if more verifiable and cogent information about the earliest people and origin of Gbagyi ethnic group is needed. This can be achieved by dating both surface and excavated cultural materials from the site.

### **7.3 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Archaeological investigation carried out on Oko hill-top settlement site has no doubt yielded significant results bordering history of origin of Gbagyi in Kuta which is part of the areas acclaimed by different traditions and historical records as the cradle of Gbagyi in Niger state. However more need to be done if the earliest peopling of Oko hilltop settlement and the origin of Gbagyi ethnic nationality would be established with cogent and verifiable evidence in form of human, cultural and environmental resources.

It appeared in most historical records that the Gbagyi in the past might have romanced hilly dwellings either for, security, economic and or environmental benefits dating to about the mid sixteenth century. These assertions have been challenged in the course of this research with the discovery of Stone and Iron Age evidence on the surface of the site. Therefore to provide a more cogent and verifiable facts about Oko and environs, excavations are recommended immediately to unearth more fact about the early human occupation on the site which would establish the chronology of human activities in the under study . As a matter of heritage management, the state and federal government through the local

government should swing into action of ensuring further archaeological investigations are carried out using this research as base for a fuller reconstruction of past human experience in the site. Using the map produced in this research the educational potentials of the area cannot be far from being harnessed which could provide learning opportunities to hundreds of youths in the area thus impacting on the overall economic development of the people.

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## **APPENDIX 1**

### **QUESTIONS GUIDE FOR TRADITION OF ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT**

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you and how old is Kuta?
3. What do you do for a living?
4. What is the meaning of Kuta?
5. How was the name derived?
6. When was first the occupant(s) said to live on the hill?
7. Where was the first or earliest occupation on the hill?
8. Were people living by the hills before relocating to the hill?
9. If yes, what did they call the place?
10. What attracted people to Oko?
11. What was the occupation of the people?
12. What craft were they engaged in?
13. Do the craft still exist?
14. Was Kuta having neighbours?
15. Was there any kind of relationship between the settlements?
16. How many settlements were under the kingdom?
17. Were all the settlements of Gbagyi ethnic group?
18. Who were the rulers of Kuta?
19. What was their religious belief?
20. Are they still ruling?

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **QUESTIONS GUIDE ON POTTERY TRADITIONS**

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. What do you do pottery for?
4. How did you learn the making of pottery?
5. Have you been to Oko hill?
6. Are you aware of the abundant pottery materials in Oko hill?
7. Do you think there is any similarity in your production processes?
8. Are you aware if your neighbours produce pottery?
9. Do you think they copied from you or your ancestors?
10. Do you exchange pottery with your neighbours?
11. How do you discard broken pottery ware?
12. Do you have specific functions for different wares?
13. Is there any belief system attached to your pottery tradition?

### **APPENDIX 3**

#### **QUESTIONS ON SETTLEMENT BEHAVIOURS**

1. What is your name?
2. How old are you?
3. How long have you been living in Kuta?
4. Which area do you live in and why?
5. Is there any cultural significance to your choice of residential area?
6. Are you aware of Oko hill-top settlement?
7. How many rooms do you in your house?
8. Is it a family house?
9. Why do have granaries in your compound?

## **APPENDIX 4**

### **QUESTION GUIDE ON EARLY CRAFTS AND INDUSTRIES**

1. What are your name, age and occupation?
2. What is the oldest craft of Kuta people?
3. Are people still engage in such Crafts?
4. What other crafts practiced in the past?
5. Are you aware of Oko hilltop site?
6. Do you know if there exists evidence of crafts on the hilltop site?
7. How do you feel about the makers of the Crafts in the site?

## APPENDIX 5

### LIST OF ORAL INFORMANTS

S/N	NAME OF RESPONDENT	SEX	AGE	DISIGNATION	NATURE OF INFORMATION
1.	Late Fatima Umar	F	100	Princess	Oral History
2.	Yusuf Dada Abdullahi Kuta	M	69	Village head of Zumba	Oral History
3.	Abdullahi Adamu Kuta	M	65	Civil Servant	Oral History
4.	Abdullahi Sarkindaji Kuta	M	45	Farmer	Oral History
5.	Gambo Hashim Kuta	M	41	Business	Oral History
6.	Suleman Bala Kuta	M	50	Farmer	Oral History
7.	Mallam Datti Kuta	M	41	Civil Servant	Oral History
8.	Shekara Adamu	F	35	Teacher	Pottery tradition
9.	Habiba Abubakar	F	50	Civil servant	Oral History
10.	Garba Inuwa Kuta	M	55	Lecturer	Geographical/Historical Data
11.	Comanda Yahaya Bala Kuta	M	33	Tailor	Oral History/Site Guide
12.	Fonda Adamu	M	67	Farmer	Oral History
13.	Zuwaira Musa	F	59	Potter	Oral History/Pottery
14.	Salamatu Muazu	F	70	Potter	Oral History/Pottery
15.	Aisha Kuta	F	66	House Wife	Oral History/Pottery
16.	Manga Abubakar	M	59	Civil Servant	Oral History
17.	Zainab Bala Kuta	F	40	Farmer	Oral History/Pottery
18.	Halima Ibrahim	F	60	Potter	Oral History
19.	Adama Aminu	F	57	Civil Servant	Oral History and Pottery
20.	Zainab Yusuf	F	48	House Wife	Oral History/Pottery
21.	Hassan Musa	M	45	Hunter	Oral History

22.	Danlami Audu	M	60	Hunter	Oral History
23.	Danladi Karami	M	70	Community Leader	Oral History
24.	Adamu Tawali	M	65	Trader	Oral History
25.	Musa Baba Kuta	M	53	Potter	Pottery
26.	Kallamu Abdullahi	M	40	Potter	Pottery
27.	Umar Kawu Kuta	M	36	Farmer	Oral History
28.	Zubairu Mansir	M	43	Tailor	Oral History
29.	Abdulsalam Dada Kuta	M	40	Civil Servant	Oral History
30.	Yahaya Dami	M	47	Farmer	Oral History

## APPENDIX 6

### LIST AND FUNCTIONS OF IMPLEMENTS USED IN POTTERY PRODUCTION

S/NO	LIST OF IMPLEMENT	FUNCTIONS
1	Oka	Use as chair for the potter
2	Sako-sala	Use as board to work on the clay
3	OboiKwarya	Use to form body of vessels
4	Rag	To wet and form the lips and rim
5	Sai	A stick use for decoration like Grooves and Roulettes
6	Tatagi	Use to smoothen the body of vessels
7	Ebe	Use for pounding raw clay
8	Gbatako	Use in body formation
9	Kyai	Use in body formation
10	Bialko	Tick stick that is used in body formation

## APPENDIX 7

### ECONOMIC IMPORTANCE OF POTTERY WARES AND THEIR FUNCTIONS IN KUTA

1. Zukun: - This is a Pot that has a small mouth through which only a tea cup enters. It is used to store potable water for the whole family.
2. Gbagwagi (Nagbayi):- Is a reservoir that has the shape of Zukun but having a bigger mouth of about 40 cm Radius. It is used to store water that can be used for other sundry needs.
3. Gbagwagi (Nayi):- This is vessel with a wide mouth that is strictly used for cooking of food.
4. Shakwu-bu: - Is a small pot that is used for soup and tea.
5. Shapa: - Is a vessel that is used for frying and roasting of food.

## APPENDIX 8

Ruin of Defensive Wall

9°51'52.42"N

6°43'5.76"E

Bawyi Stream

9°52'11.72"N

6°43'1.29"E

Okota Spiritual Site

9°52'9.59"N

6°42'52.35"E

Dye Pits

9°52'7.25"N

6°42'48.64"E

Adamu Bodo's Tomb

9°52'2.80"N

6°42'49.17"E

Chief's Chair

9°52'5.72"N

6°42'56.41"E

Big Buried Pot

9°52'5.23"N

6°42'55.89"E

Granary Foundation

9°52'3.35"N

6°42'54.63"E

9°52'1.96"N

6°42'54.95"E

9°52'0.68"N

6°42'55.02"E

Lower Grinding Stone

9°52'3.25"N

6°42'54.41"E

9°52'2.07"N

6°42'55.18"E

9°52'4.06"N

6°42'56.79"E

9°52'2.07"N

6°42'55.18"E

9°52'4.06"N

6°42'56.79"E

House Foundation

9°52'1.90"N  
6°42'55.34"E  
9°52'4.10"N  
6°42'56.61"E  
9°52'3.05"N  
6°42'54.04"E  
9°52'1.90"N  
6°42'55.34"E  
9°52'4.10"N  
6°42'56.61"E

Linear Stone Arrangement

9°52'3.11"N  
6°42'55.23"E

Potsherd Pavement

9°52'2.02"N  
6°42'54.67"E  
9°52'2.02"N  
6°42'54.67"E  
9°52'3.90"N  
6°42'54.67"E

Small Buried Pot

9°52'3.96"N  
6°42'56.86"E  
9°52'3.96"N  
6°42'56.86"E  
9°52'3.01"N  
6°42'54.56"E

Hearth I

9°52'0.48"N  
6°42'55.31"E  
9°52'3.04"N  
6°42'56.70"E