

Indigenous Knowledge and Archaeological Heritage Resources in Lawra, Upper West Region, Ghana

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Abstract : This research mapped and documented archaeological heritage resources with associated indigenous knowledge in Lawra, an understudied Municipality in the Upper West Region of Ghana. Since the inception of Archaeology as a discipline in the 1930s at the University of Ghana, the Lawra Municipality has rarely been investigated archaeologically. Consequently, the unconsciousness and ignorance of indigenes on the relevance of these resources to national development has destroyed many significant archaeological sites, with agriculture and infrastructural developmental activities endangering countless of them. Drawing from a community archaeological approach, a collaborative archaeological investigation between local groups, communities and professionals (archaeologists) was conducted to recover these lost histories of settlements in the municipality, salvage and protect endangered archaeological heritage resources and sites from agricultural, exploitative and developmental activities. This was geared towards expanding on the limited research on northern Ghana and deepening our understanding on the existing symbiotic relationship between people and their heritage resources in past and present times. The study deploying ethnographic, archaeological and physical survey techniques as methods in six field seasons beginning from August 2013 to April 2023. This resulted in the reconstruction of the settlement history of Lawra with chronological dates, compilation of inventory on significant archaeological heritage resources with associated indigenous knowledge, mitigation of endangered archaeological sites and heritage resources through surface collections and the development of a photographic record, with associated metadata for purposes of preservation and future research.

Keywords : archaeological heritage resources, indigenous knowledge, lawra municipality, community archaeology

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