

## **Archaeological Investigation of Early Trade and Cross-Cultural Interactions at Abonse, Okere District, Ghana.**

### **ABSTRACT**

This thesis investigates the archaeological material culture and landscape of Abonse, located in the Akuapem North District of Ghana, focusing on early trade networks and cross-cultural interactions before European contact. Through extensive field surveys, excavations, and analyses of material remains such as pottery, ivory, beads, metal objects, fauna remains, ceramic discs, terracotta clay heads, grinding stones, and smoking pipes amongst others, the study reconstructs the economic and social dynamics of Abonse as a significant trade and interaction hub.

The research employs a multidisciplinary approach, integrating archaeological, historical, and ethnographic data, as well as GIS mapping and radiocarbon dating, to establish a chronological framework of human occupation and commercial activities at Abonse. Findings indicate that the site was active between the 13th and 17th centuries AD and played a crucial role in intra- and inter-regional trade networks. The study explores the relationships between Abonse and neighbouring communities, including other Akuapem, Krobo, and Shai, shedding light on material exchange, technological influences, and economic interdependence.

By applying theoretical perspectives of agency, materiality, and production, the research highlights how artifacts and trade items were economic commodities and markers of social and cultural interactions. The study challenges the conventional focus on the Atlantic trade era and underscores the importance of pre-European trade dynamics in understanding the region's historical development. Ultimately, this research contributes to the broader discourse on early trade, settlement patterns, and the complex socio-economic structures before external influences reshaped the landscape.