**ABSTRACT**

Most toponomastics research has ignored the importance of indigenous places as sites for identity and other cultural and social significance. Using Cape Coast as a historical site of the transatlantic slave trade, this study explores the origin, meanings and relevance of indigenous place names in the suburbs of Cape Coast, Ghana. Through an interdisciplinary approach that synergizes an interview with a chief, who is a prosopographer, historical documents, and literary sources, this study traces the city’s evolution from its ancestral hunting origins. The findings revealed that Cape Coast’s identity is encapsulated in the indigenous names, which point out the complex dynamics of culture, geography, identity and power. The names reference landmarks, events, environment and communities, transforming the city itself into a living archive with historical relevance. The literary interpretations uncovered metaphorical meanings encoded in some toponyms. Tracing connections across people, events, geography and time, these names reveal an interconnection often obscured by colonial ruptures. Based on these findings, there is a need to preserve the indigenous place names to foster intergenerational connections to the city’s storied landscape. The study contributes to Critical Toponymy theory and empirical insights into using indigenous toponyms to decolonize urban heritage.