

OGUAA FETU AFAHYE:
A MUSIC AND RITUAL OF THE PEOPLE OF CAPE COAST
IN GHANA

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Abstract

Indigenous societies in Africa consider music and ritual as important cultural elements that serve to function as a social activity that satisfies specific purposes in life. They are therefore never performed out of context. Music and ritual performances by ethnic groups in Ghana are prevalent in their social, political, economic, and religious activities. Their indigenous religious inclinations have shaped them to strongly value festivals that are publicly celebrated to mark certain important landmarks in peoples' lives. One such prominent type that fosters a close bond between the people and the spirits that they worship is *Fetu Afahye*, which is celebrated by the chiefs and people of *Oguaa* (Cape Coast), an ancient coastal town in the Central Region of Ghana. This paper therefore examines the historical background of *Oguaa* traditional area, the festival of the people, and finally explains why music and ritual performances in *Fetu Afahye* are strongly regarded as imperative to ensure unity, solidarity, and total well-being of the people.

Keywords: indigenous music, ritual, festival, culture change