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Sommario/riassunto

Using comparative cases from Guinea, Uganda, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, this study explains why some refugee-hosting communities launch large-scale attacks on civilian refugees whereas others refrain from such attacks even when encouraged to do so by state officials. Ato Kwamena Onoma argues that such outbreaks only happen when states instigate them because of links between a few refugees and opposition groups. Locals embrace these attacks when refugees are settled in areas that privilege residence over indigeneity in the distribution of rights, ensuring that they live autonomously of local elites. The resulting opacity of their lives leads locals to buy into their demonization by the state. Locals do not buy into state denunciation of refugees in areas that privilege indigeneity over residence in the distribution of rights because refugees in such areas are subjugated to locals who come to know them very well. Onoma reorients the study of refugees back to a focus on the disempowered civilian refugees that constitute the majority of refugees even in cases of severe refugee militarization.