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Ominous calm : autochtony and sovereignty in Konkomba/Nanumba violence and peace, Ghana

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Citation

Wienia, M. (2009, December 15). *Ominous calm : autochtony and sovereignty in Konkomba/Nanumba violence and peace, Ghana*. *African studies collection*. African Studies Centre (ASC), Leiden. Retrieved from <https://hdl.handle.net/1887/79062>

Version: Not Applicable (or Unknown)

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Note: To cite this publication please use the final published version (if applicable).



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Ominous calm



African Studies Collection 21

Why did a conflict between a majority of settlers (Konkomba), claiming equal citizenship, and a minority of autochthons (Nanumba) produce both Ghana's largest incidents of ethnic cleansing and a subsequent ominous calm? Analysing the post-1996 peace accord Konkomba/Nanumba coexistence against their violent past and in Ghana's political context as one of Africa's promising nations, this ethnographic study shows that the conflict has two forms. One is sovereign violence and another is a persistent silence in relation to legalistic speeches. Breaking out of these forms may not so much require a reconciliation, as peace brokers proposed, but a political compromise.

Martijn Wienia studied Cultural Anthropology, Development Sociology and African Studies at Leiden University. Currently, he works as policy officer with the WOTRO Science for Global Development division of the Netherlands Organisation for Scientific Research (NWO) in The Hague.

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21



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