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**JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN MATTHEAN THEOLOGY  
AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE BANYAMULENGE  
COMMUNITY: A POSTCOLONIAL READING**

by

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**DEDICATION**

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- To all widows, orphans and refugees whose cry for justice and righteousness is yet to be heard;
- To my ancestors who taught the community about *Imana* (God); to elders and pioneers of Christian faith in the Banyamulenge community from whom I learned faith and hope;
- To colleagues and companions in the work of God;

I dedicate this work.

**DECLARATION**

I, the undersigned, declare that this dissertation is my original work. It has not been previously submitted for any examination or any degree in any other university.

---

Lazare Sebitereko Rukundwa

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## Summary

# **JUSTICE AND RIGHTEOUSNESS IN MATTHEAN THEOLOGY AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE BANYAMULENGE COMMUNITY: A POSTCOLONIAL READING**

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This study makes a contribution towards a postcolonial reading in Matthean scholarship by looking at the concept of justice and righteousness and its application within the Gospel of Matthew and beyond. Argumentation is based on a construct of the socio-political setting of the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5-7). These findings are applied to the reading of the story of the Canaanite woman (Mt 15:21-28), while a contemporary parallel reading is made in respect of the Banyamulenge community, whose socio-political identity has been the subject of political contention since the colonial period in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC).

The struggle for justice and righteousness is an ongoing one that plays itself out within the social, political and religious contexts of power influence and competition. Postcolonial theory, which emerges from the discourse of marginality within geopolitical spheres, on the other hand, challenges any measures of oppression and exploitation in any given setting. It claims fair judgment to all and seeks to empower the weak for their own representation.

From a postcolonial theory point of view, marginality is expressed through various cultural forms of identification, such as hybridity, subalternity, Negritude, Diaspora,

*abacu* or brotherhood. These concepts are tools which serve as a derivative discourse that challenges the powerful, the racist and the tribalist to recognize otherness in the *Other*.

In a postwar context, social and political identity becomes the most important value to surviving communities, such as the Matthean community. The Sermon on the Mount, for that matter, is not a speech of resignation, but rather a revolutionary speech against the oppression and exploitation carried out by Roman imperialism and its local agents in Palestine and its environs. The justice and righteousness which people are denied of because of their social, political and religious status, is to be administered, not by Roman imperialists, nor by their Judean collaborators, but by agents of the kingdom of God, who are called to do the will of God.

The Matthean context is a context of power and oppression, hunger and death, war and insecurity, poverty, land reform and economic hardship, exploitation and dispossession. Given such a context, Matthew's understanding of the Sermon on the Mount is that it gives new directions with regard to the structure of the community in which all members are equals under the fatherhood of God in heaven and in the brotherhood of humanity on earth. God's kingdom virtues equal redistribution of basic resources to the poor, the landless regaining their shares and mourners being comforted.

Drawing a parallel example to the Banyamulenge community, the issue of their citizenship being contested by successive governments of the DRC, constitutes a threat to justice and righteousness. The dispute surrounding the Banyamulenge identity has its roots in the colonial regime. The Banyamulenge community have been victims of the colonial regime, tribalism practiced by the Congolese government and regional politics and the stigmatisation of ethnicity in the Great Lakes Region.

The Sermon on the Mount, therefore, challenges the existing power structures on behalf of the marginalized whose justice and righteousness is denied. For the Congo to survive as a united nation under the concept of brotherhood (or nationhood), the political system of good governance must be installed and all marginalized groups need to be treated equally.

**KEY WORDS**

Banyamulenge community

Brotherhood

Formative Judaism

Justice and righteousness

Marginality

Matthean community

Postcolonial theory

Sermon on the Mount

## ABBREVIATIONS

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 1QM           | <i>Milhamah – The War Rule from Qumran. Bibliography I, The Scroll of the War</i>        |
| 1QS           | <i>Manual of Discipline from Qumran Cave 1</i>   |
| ABAKO         | <i>Association de Bakongo</i>  |
| AFDL          | <i>Alliance des Forces Démocratiques pour la Libération du Congo-Zaire</i>               |
| AJIA          | <i>African Journal of International Affairs</i>  |
| ANC           | <i>Armée Nationale Congolaise</i>  |
| <i>Antiq</i>  | <i>Josephus' Jewish Antiquities</i>  |
| ARN           | <i>Abot Rabbi Nathan/ Fathers According to Rabbi Nathan</i>                              |
| AU            | African Union  |
| BALUBAKAT     | <i>Baluba du Katanga</i>   |
| BTB           | <i>Biblical Theological Bulletin</i>   |
| CADAF         | <i>Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu en Afrique</i>                                      |
| CADEZA        | <i>Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu à l'Est du Zaire</i>                                |
| CADC/Z        | <i>Communauté des Assemblées de Dieu du Congo/Zaire</i>                                  |
| CBQ           | <i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>   |
| CD            | <i>Cairo Gezinah text of the Damascus Document</i>                                       |
| CELPA/MLN     | <i>Communauté des Eglises Libre de Pentecôte en Afrique/ Mission Libre Norvégienne</i>   |
| CEP           | <i>Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte</i>   |
| CEPAC/CEM     | <i>Communauté des Eglises de Pentecôte en Afrique Centrale/Congo Evangelical Mission</i> |
| CFS/EIC       | <i>Congo Free State/ Etat Indépendant du Congo</i>                                       |
| CEMLC/MLM     | <i>Communauté des Eglises Libres Méthodiste au Congo/ Mission Libre Méthodiste</i>       |
| CONAKAT       | <i>Confédération Nationale des Tribus du Katanga</i>                                     |
| CNS           | <i>Conférence Nationale Souveraine</i>   |
| <i>Con Ap</i> | <i>Josephus' Contra Apion</i>  |
| CRA           | Congo Reform Association   |
| CTJ           | <i>Calvin Theological Journal</i>  |

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|         |   |
|---------|---|
| DRC     | Democratic Republic of Congo  |
| ECC/ECZ | <i>Eglise du Christ au Congo/Zaire</i>  |
| EMI     | Eben-Ezer Ministry International  |
| EU      | European Union  |
| ETL     | <i>Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses</i>  |
| FAZ     | <i>Forces Armées Zaïroises</i>  |
| FDD     | <i>Forces de Défense de la Démocratie</i>   |
| FNL     | <i>Front National de Libération</i>   |
| FRELIMO | Mozambican Liberation Front   |
| FRF     | <i>Forces Républicaines et Fédéralistes</i>   |
| GM/PAHU | <i>Groupe Milima/Projet Agro-pastoral des Hauts-Plateaux d’Uvira</i>                  |
| HCR-PT  | <i>Haut Conseil de la République- Parlement de Transition</i>                         |
| HTR     | <i>Harvard Theological Review</i>   |
| HTS     | <i>Hervormde Theologiese Studies</i>  |
| HUCA    | <i>Hebrew Union College Annual</i>  |
| HRW     | Human Wright Watch  |
| ICG     | International Crisis Group  |
| IRIN    | Integrated Regional Information Network   |
| ISS     | Institute of Security Studies   |
| JAAR    | <i>Journal of the American Academy of Religion</i>                                    |
| JRH     | <i>Journal of Religious History</i>   |
| JSNT    | <i>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</i>                                     |
| JW      | <i>Josephus’ Jewish War</i>   |
| LRA     | Lord Resistance Army  |
| MNC     | <i>Mouvement National Congolais</i>   |
| MONUC   | <i>Mission de l’Organisation de Nations Unies en République Démocratique du Congo</i> |
| MPLA    | Popular Movement of the Liberation of Angola  |
| MPR     | <i>Mouvement Populaire de la Révolution</i>   |
| Neot    | <i>Neotestamentica</i>  |
| NEPAD   | New Partnership for Africa’s Development  |
| NGO     | Non-governmental Organization   |
| OTSSA   | Old Testament Society of South Africa   |
| PAIGC   | African Independent Party of Guinea and Cap Verde                                     |

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|            |  |
|------------|--|
| PMU/UPMGBI | Pentecostal Missionary Union/ Union Pentecostal Missionary of<br>Great Britain and Ireland |
| PNP        | <i>Parti National du Progrès</i>   |
| PPRD       | <i>Parti du Peuple pour la Reconstruction et la Démocratie</i>                             |
| RCD        | <i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie</i>  |
| RCD/ML     | <i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie/ Mouvement de<br/>Libération</i>             |
| SBL        | Society of Biblical Literature   |
| JSOT       | <i>Journal for Study of the Old Testament</i>  |
| UGEAFI     | <i>Union de Groupe d'Etude et d'Action de Fizi-Itombwe</i>                                 |
| UN/ONU     | United Nations/Organisation des Nations Unies  |
| UNHCR      | United Nations High Commission for Refugees  |
| UNIMO      | <i>Union nationale des Mongo</i>   |
| UNITA      | National Union for the Total Independence of Angola  |