

authors to current social issues. Guth wants to challenge “preconceived ideas of ethics as a right-answer generator” (203–204), and hopes her work will guide persons in positions of authority, so that their decisions may contribute to true reform which “goes beyond retroactive repair or rehabilitation to foster ways of enhancing our future flourishing.”

MELICIA ANTONIO

University of Notre Dame

Who Are My People? Love, Violence, and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa. By Emmanuel Katongole. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press (2022). ix + 222 pages. \$35.00.

Emmanuel Katongole’s *Who are My People? Love, Violence, and Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa* is part personal intellectual retrospective of a philosopher-theologian, part ethnography of hope and peacebuilding in the midst of violence, and part scholarly argument about the experience of modernity in Africa.

Katongole’s book is a response to two kairos-like questions that arose early in his graduate studies at KU Leuven in the mid-1990s. As they watched news of the devastating Rwandan genocide on the television, a fellow student asked, “Why do you Africans always kill your own people?” (12). While Katongole recalls rebuking his classmate’s generalization—“Not all of Africa is having a genocide” (12), he is nevertheless both troubled by the question and horrified by the violence that engulfed Rwanda and does seem endemic in parts of sub-Saharan Africa. His classmate’s practical question joins another theological one to form the major inquiry of the book. The second question was asked by Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the former President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, of Rwandan Christian leaders: “Is the blood of tribalism deeper than the waters of baptism?” (1). Together these questions set the agenda for a book that struggles beautifully and at times heart-breakingly with questions of identity, community, violence, and reconciliation.

The book is divided into two major sections. The first, “Who Are My People? Philosophical and Theological Reflections,” reads like scholarly journaling. We are led into Katongole’s own efforts to wrestle, mentally and emotionally, with his identity (or even identities) throughout his journey as an African (born in Rwanda, raised in Uganda) Catholic who has lived much of his adult life in Western Europe and North America. He discusses the impact numerous scholars from Valentine Mudimbe and Ali Mazuri to Stanley Hauerwas and Kwame Bediako have had, not only on his scholarly

thought, but also his personal understanding of his multi-faceted and ever-fluctuating identity.

Here in part one, my main critique is that Katongole fails to engage thoroughly with African women scholars and theologians; they are simply not addressed with the rigor and consideration he gives to male scholars. Are African women also Katongole's people? I suspect he would answer with an emphatic affirmative, and yet there is no reference even to the work of the late Kenyan-born theological ethicist Teresia Hinga, whose own 2017 volume *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters* mirrors precisely Katongole's efforts to understand his identity in terms of multiplicity of belonging. I cannot help but think that Katongole's book would have been enriched by serious engagement with Hinga and other African women theologians.

In the second part of the book, "Love's Invention in the Midst of Africa's Violent Modernity," Katongole employs an ethnographic approach in which he discusses "extensive interviews and structured conversations" he carried out over a period of years in Uganda, Rwanda, Kenya, Central African Republic (CAR), and Benin (7). These poignant chapters tell powerful stories of ministries that burnish the human dignity of Africans who have lived and are living in terrible conditions of poverty, instability, and violence. Katongole describes the ministries in theological terms as the praxis of "God's self-sacrificing love in the midst of Africa's ethnic, religious, and ecological violence" (175). Indeed, Katongole introduces us to truly remarkable people engaged in tremendous efforts to heal, reconcile, and restore African peoples and lands. Through African leaders and their ministries Katongole explores critical questions of modernity, ethnicity, neocolonialism, governance, and ecological degradation Africans confront today. These chapters—3, 4, and 5—could each stand alone as powerful readings for undergraduate courses that involve African studies, peace and justice, and applied theological ethics.

Overall, I found Katongole's latest book to be engaging and compelling. As he discussed the need to be liberated from the "imaginative grip of the burden of ethnicity" (94), and the zero-sum politics it yields, I could not help but wonder how Katongole's insights might address the growing "tribalism" of partisan polarization in the United States. *Who Are My People?* is a lively and life-giving book that tells a story of African modernity through the eyes of a seasoned Christian scholar dedicated to peace, compassion, and reconciliation.

ANNA FLOERKE SCHEID
Duquesne University