

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the contribution of indigenous worldviews to Christian living and witness among the Basoga of Eastern Uganda. It critiques the use of foreign models in ministry, pastoral care and counselling of the Basoga for reasons that they hinder communication. In stead it unravels and advances ordinary cultural symbols of the pre-Christian worldview of the Basoga and suggests that pastors in the Church of Uganda (COU) and the Roman Catholic Church (RCC) could promote communication in ministry, pastoral care and counselling by adopting these. This imperative for change in communication is the central framework for the thesis and is supported by loads of evidence that reception of any new knowledge, and values does not occur except according to the perception or point of view of the receiver(s). The study contends that the redeeming of the culture of the Basoga by the Gospel is decisive for rooting the church in the cultural milieu of its receptors and to bearing authentic Christianity. Authentic Christianity is the reality of making the Gospel comprehensible to people within their culture and of enabling their response to it for transformation.

The thesis explores the problem of schizophrenic Christianity of the Basoga, the symptoms of which is a divorce between what the Basoga Christians believe (Gospel) and their lifestyle (culture). It investigates the perception of the Basoga by others and their own self-understanding, with a view to utilising these for the development of appropriate ways of communicating the Gospel and providing pastoral care and counselling within the Busoga context. The traditional therapeutic systems are seen to provide the important ways of addressing present pastoral needs in the search for wholeness. This is contrasted with the foreign models of ministry and pastoral care the missionaries imported which largely ignored local resources as the appropriate starting point for communication in ministry, pastoral care and counselling. The study then probes the cultural symbols suitable for pastoral care and counselling, and constructs the theological basis for the pastoral cycle of the encounter between culture and the Gospel among the Basoga. Arguing for the culture of the Basoga as the ordinary history where God's action for salvation starts to take place, the Gospel is of necessity God's revelation communicated to people through cultural means. Hence the need for the integration of the Gospel and culture as the way forward to authentic Christian living of the Basoga.