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**THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND ECCLESIA IN AFRICA  
AN INTERTEXTUAL INQUIRY**

**by  
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**A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Theology, Saint Paul  
University, Ottawa, Canada, in partial fulfillment of the requirements of  
the degree of Doctor in Biblical Theology**

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# **The Acts of the Apostles and Ecclesia in Africa**

## **An Intertextual Inquiry**

This present work consists of six points: (1) Nature and Scope of the thesis; (2) Problem and Method (first part of chapter one); (3) Research Hypothesis (second part of chapter one); (4) The use of quotations from Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* (chapters three and four); (5) The allusions to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* (chapter five); Finally, the synthesis and Evaluation of the results of the Research (chapter six).

### **1. The Nature and Scope of the Thesis**

The present study is hermeneutical and interdisciplinary in nature since it deals with the applied interpretation of Scripture (Acts) in a magisterial document (*Ecclesia in Africa*) and the meaning that results thereof. The thesis is a research inquiry, analysis and evaluation of the intertextual links between the Acts of the Apostles and *Ecclesia in Africa*. First and foremost, the work consists in identifying these intertextual links and secondly in analyzing and evaluating their significance in Acts and then in *Ecclesia in Africa*. This research is a pioneering work in the intertextual reading of Acts and *Ecclesia in Africa* in a way that has not been undertaken before.

### **2. Problem and Method**

Reading *Ecclesia in Africa* critically, one notices that it uses extensively quotations and allusions to the book of the Acts of the Apostles. The focus of the thesis, therefore, is on the study of these quotations from and allusions to Acts based on Gerard Genette's theory of intertextuality. Genette defines intertextuality as a relationship of copresence between two or among many several texts whose main categories are quotations, allusions

and plagiarism. Since I did not find any trace of plagiarism in *Ecclesia in Africa*, the study is, therefore focused on quotations and allusions as the prominent text linking devices between Acts and *Ecclesia in Africa*. The process involves a number of questions which are addressed throughout the thesis. (1) How judicious is the actual choice and selection of these passages from Acts? How consistent is their use within the overall story of Acts? (2) What is their function in the literary context of *Ecclesia in Africa*? Are they used according to any exegetical or theological method or are they used as prooftexts to confirm the argument of the author of *Ecclesia in Africa*? (3) What bearing does Acts have on the understanding of the identity of the African Church and its evangelizing mission? (4) What is the connection between these references to Acts with the main themes of the exhortation? (5) What light does Acts shed on the reading and understanding of *Ecclesia in Africa*, and does *Ecclesia in Africa* give any new insights in reading Acts? (6) Is there any ideological underpinning the use of Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*?

In order to have a sound philosophical and literary basis, Genette's theory of intertextuality is anchored on Paul Ricoeur's philosophical hermeneutics coupled with reader-response criticism as developed by Wolfgang Iser. Iser's theory is a phenomenological approach to reading. Iser focuses on the effect of the text on the reader. He speaks about the dynamic and creative power of texts. Texts invite, provoke and engage the imagination of the reader. He states that a text that is not being read is more or less dead. Only a text that is being read comes to life; the text evolves with its reader. And only then does meaning of this text comes to life in the individual reader. For Iser, the



meaning of literary texts is developed during the act of reading. The meaning does not reside in the text waiting to be uncovered, but instead is formulated by the reader while reading. Ricoeur furnishes philosophical hermeneutics for understanding texts through his theory of distanciation and appropriation. He maintains the semantic autonomy of texts and the need for appropriation since they have a surplus of meaning. Ricoeur and Iser provide us with necessary categories in order to understand and define the act of reading, that is, the relationship between the world of the text and the world of the reader.

### 3. Research Hypothesis

The underlying assumption throughout this study is that Acts (genotext) and *Ecclesia in Africa* (phenotext) mutually illuminate and transform each other. *Ecclesia in Africa* is considered the reader of Acts. Intertextually speaking, the phenotext can only be understood in relation to the genotext. In turn, the genotext acquires new dimensions of meaning from the phenotext. The phenotext receives, illumines and transforms the genotext within its literary fabric. In turn, the genotext enlarges the horizons of the phenotext and shapes a new identity for the African Church. This hypothesis is the unifying thread that knits together the whole thesis. Each reference to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* will be studied in relation to both the genotext and the phenotext.

### 4. Quotations from Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*

According to Genette, a quotation is the most explicit and literal form of intertextuality, characterized by quotation marks, with or without specific references. Generally, quotations are analyzed and evaluated according to the following criteria: (1) type, (2) frequency, (3) position (4) quantity, and (4) function. There are two main

types of quotations: those with and those without a quotation formula. There are twenty-five quotations from Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*, namely, Acts 1:8 (which is quoted sixteen times); Acts 2:11 (quoted twice); Acts 2:42; Acts 2:44-45; Acts 4:12; Acts 8:27-39; Acts 10:34-35,47; Acts 10:45-46; and Acts 20:28. Out of the twenty-five above mentioned quotations, five are introduced with a quotation formula, namely, Acts 1:8 (twice); Acts 2:11; Acts 10:34-35, 47, and Acts 10: 45-46. The remainder appear without any such formula.

Of all the quotations, Acts 1:8 is the most frequent and by far the most important quotation from Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*. It links together the other references to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*. It is interwoven within the literary fabric of *Ecclesia in Africa* and forms an integral part of the thematic structure of *Ecclesia in Africa*. It introduces the theme of the exhortation and is found in the headings of chapters five and seven of the document. It is therefore thematic in function. It introduces the concept of witness which has been illumined and transformed by *Ecclesia in Africa* to include evangelization, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace and means of social communication. Witness is a catalyst for evangelization in *Ecclesia in Africa* and a new way of being missionary. *Ecclesia in Africa* clearly prefers to speak about witnesses rather than missionaries. Whereas the word "missionary" is used thirty-three times, the word "witness" is used fifty-four times and is found in every chapter of the document: once in the introduction and conclusion; four times in Chapters One and Two; eleven times in chapter three; six times in chapter four; eight times in chapter five; nine times in chapter six; ten times in chapter seven. In turn, Acts 1:8 enlarges the missionary horizons of the

Church in Africa and gives it a new identity. The African Church is given a mandate by Christ to bear witness, not only in Africa, but in the whole world. Acts 1:8 is used as an authoritative warrant to give weight to the exhortation. The concept of witness is very pertinent and empowering to the Church in Africa whose soil has been sprinkled with the blood of the martyrs, witnesses of faith par excellence. The life of the African Church comes from the blood of the martyrs of the old and the contemporary ones, both recognized and unsung martyrs. The present challenges facing the Church call for authentic witnesses and effective testimony. Witness provides a sound biblical basis for the mission of the Church in Africa. Witness puts the African Catholics within the biblical tradition of witnesses of the death and resurrection of Christ. Witness is also pastorally fitting for the African Church. The present situation of the African continent cries for witnesses of hope and resurrection. The other quotations from Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* develop in their own way different aspects of the new identity of the African Church. Acts helps create a new vision and proposes new ways of being missionary for the African Church today.

##### 5. Allusions to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*

Whereas Genette defines quotations as explicit forms of intertextuality, he describes allusions as less explicit and less literal forms of intertextuality. Allusions are more subtle than quotations and therefore are not easy to detect. They are more engaging on the reader and presuppose a critical, competent, knowledgeable reader. There are two main criteria for detecting allusions. One is the recognition of a marker, that is, a signal of the presence of another independent text within a focused text. The other is the

identification of the evoked text (genotext). There are nine allusions to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*. They fall under four categories: first, six allusions to the event of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13); second, an allusion to Peter's kerygmatic discourse (Acts 2:14-40); third, an allusion to witness (Acts 1:8), and finally; an allusion to Paul's speech at *Areopagus* (Acts 17:22-34). From the above list of allusions, it is clear that most refer to the Pentecost event and evoke Acts 2:1-13. The word "Pentecost" is a outstanding marker. These allusions to Pentecost highlight the role of the Holy Spirit as the divine witness and the principal agent of evangelization and inculturation. The emphasis on Pentecost helps balance the presentation of witness through quotations. According to Acts human witnesses are empowered by the Holy Spirit. These allusions to Acts enlarge the horizons of the African Church. Its beginning and splendid growth are attributed to the Holy Spirit.

#### 6. Synthesis and Evaluation of the Results of the Research

This study has yielded interesting results concerning intertextuality as a methodological tool, the new understanding of Acts and the new identity of the African Church. In the first place, Genette's theory of intertextuality has proved illuminating and insightful. Genette gives a pragmatic and systematic way of determining intertextual relationship between the genotext and the phenotext. He highlights the value of quotations and allusions as intertextual devices. However, intertextuality would be superficial without Ricoeur's hermeneutics and Iser's theory of reading. Ricoeur and Iser give tools and meaning to the phenomenon intertextuality. As an ideologically charged concept, intertextuality helps unmask ideological underpinnings in the use of texts. Most quotations from and allusions to Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* have been chosen from the first part of

Acts which deals with Peter as the head of the college of the apostles and very little is said about Paul. Only one quotation and one allusion refer to Paul. This clearly shows the ideological use of Acts in the document.

Secondly, *Ecclesia in Africa* presents a fresh reading of Acts. References to Acts have acquired new dimensions of meaning. For example, the biblical notion of witness as used in *Ecclesia in Africa* receives a new emphasis: witness of life. It includes evangelization, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace and means of social communication. The use of Pentecost in *Ecclesia in Africa* makes it a dynamic concept applicable whenever and wherever the Gospel is preached and accepted. Acts is a record of accounts of the events of "Pentecost." Finally, this study has helped shape a new identity for the African Church. It is a mission church becoming missionary. Having been an object of evangelization, it has become a subject. Witness is its new metaphor for mission and inculturation is its new missionary paradigm. This research ends with suggestions of some hermeneutical principles which should guide a reader in interpreting a magisterial document. This work opens up new avenues for the critical study of Scripture in canonical and non-canonical texts, in official magisterial and non-official texts.

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## INTRODUCTION

### I. The Importance of the Topic

Before speaking about the importance of this research, I deem it useful to inform the reader of my social location and perspective. I have undertaken this project as an African missionary from Sub-Saharan Africa where Christianity, especially the Catholic Church, is a little over a hundred years old. Most local Catholic Churches in Sub-Saharan Africa have celebrated their centenaries of evangelization in recent decades. In the last hundred years the Churches in Sub-Saharan Africa have experienced a tremendous growth. There has been an increase in the number of native clergy, seminarians and candidates for Institutes of consecrated life and catechists, particularly women catechists.<sup>1</sup> Because of such an increase in vocations the leadership of the Church is now in the hands of the indigenous population. In most countries the presence of expatriate missionaries has been reduced to an insignificant level. e.g. the missionary congregations of both men and women in Lesotho are all run by indigenous leadership. Moreover, there are many new locally founded institutes which are sending their own missionaries to other African

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<sup>1</sup> T. TIENOU, "The State of the Gospel in Africa," *Evangelical Missions Quarterly* 37 (2001) p.156, says: "Christians are the majority of the populations of many African countries. The countries with the largest Christian majorities are: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Gabon, Lesotho, the Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Burundi, South Africa, Swaziland, Kenya, and Angola." I come from Lesotho which is 95% Christian of which 50% is Roman Catholic and whose centenary of evangelization was celebrated in 1962. J. C. OKOYE, "'Mutual Exchange of Energies' Mission in Cross-Cultural Perspective: An African Perspective," *Missiology: An International Review* 25 (1997) p. 469, writes: "Africa is witnessing the blossoming of religious institutes that take origin there." R. LUNEAU, "Les attentes de l'église catholique en occident," *Concilium* 227 (1990) p. 114, states: "Nulle part ailleurs dans le monde, la communauté chrétienne ne grandit aussi vite qu'en Afrique. La seule Eglise catholique célèbre chaque année plus de trois millions et demi de baptêmes, et ce chiffre croît régulièrement."

countries and abroad.<sup>2</sup> I am, therefore, writing from the perspective of an evangelized who has become evangelizer.

The three main reasons which motivated me to undertake the present research on the intertextual relationship between *Ecclesia in Africa* and the Acts of the Apostles are historical, pastoral and academic. Historically, the post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* is the fruit of what was an unprecedented event for the Catholic Church in Africa. To the surprise of many Catholics in Africa and elsewhere in the world, on January 6, 1989, Pope John Paul II announced plans for the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa, instead of the African council as it had been requested by some African theologians and members of the African episcopate. Despite the controversy among African bishops and theologians about the content, venue and participants at this special assembly, the African Church responded with great enthusiasm to the Pope's invitation.<sup>3</sup> Although there had been a number of African synods in the first centuries of the Church, the last synod of bishops for Africa has been described as the most significant ecclesial event, because it brought together representatives from the whole African

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<sup>2</sup>OKOYE, "'Mutual Exchange of Energies,' p. 469, writes: "African institutes for brothers count at least seven: Bayozefiti of Rwanda and Burundi (Sons of Joseph); the Josephite Brothers of Zaire (now Congo); the Brothers of St. Stephen (Nigeria); the Sons of Mary, Mother of Mercy (Nigeria); the Bannakaroli Brothers of Uganda; the Bene-Paulo of Burundi; and the Servants of the Immaculate Heart of Mary (Tanzania). Many African dioceses have begun sending *Fidei Donum* priests to Europe and America, as well as to other African dioceses. African institutes founded for women are more numerous [...]. Nigeria alone counts over ten institutes for women that started in that country, several of which have missionaries in many countries of Africa. Five of these institutes have missions in Europe and the United States."

<sup>3</sup> In *Ecclesia in Africa*, paragraph 26, the Pope makes this acknowledgement: "I must add that the response of the African peoples to my appeal to them to share in the preparation of the Synod was truly admirable. The replies to the *Lineamenta*, both within and beyond the African Ecclesial Communities, far exceeded every expectation." Among the regional special synods of bishops convoked by the Pope John Paul II, the African Synod was the most controversial one, as is evidenced by the amount of literature which has been produced on it.

episcopate, except for Rwanda.<sup>4</sup> For the first time in history, there took place a special assembly of the synod of bishops for the African Church involving the whole continent: from Alexandria to the Cape of Good Hope, from the Persian Gulf to the Atlantic islands of Cape Verde and Madagascar.<sup>5</sup> It was also the first time ever that the whole African Church was welcomed in Rome where it expressed with great joy its faith in Christ to the sound of drums and other African musical instruments. The liturgical celebrations of the opening and closing ceremonies, done in various African rites (Coptic, Ethiopian and Zairean), were of great symbolic significance for the African Church which is gradually asserting its rightful place in the communion of the Church.<sup>6</sup> The synod of bishops for Africa was an historic moment of grace, a *kairos*, for the local churches in Africa. It examined the lights and shadows, strengths and weaknesses of evangelization of the continent where Christianity is alive and growing rapidly. Statistically, the African Church

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<sup>4</sup> M. DUJARIER. "La tradition synodale africaine." *Concilium* 239 (1992) p. 14, states: "En parlant de tradition synodale 'africaine', nous limitons notre champ de recherche aux régions de l'actuel continent africain qui, aux premiers siècles, ont tenu une place importante dans la vie de l'Eglise: l'Egypte et l'Afrique du Nord, avec leurs deux capitales respectives, Alexandrie et Carthage [...]. La première est celle de l'Eglise de Carthage au milieu du IIIe siècle, marquée par la personnalité de Cyprien. La seconde est celle de l'Eglise d'Alexandrie où brilla particulièrement Athanase à l'époque de l'arianisme. Nous reviendrons enfin en Afrique du Nord pour examiner les synodes de la longue querelle donatiste à laquelle succéda l'affaire du pélagianisme, avec Aurélius, primat de Carthage, et Augustin d'Hippone."

<sup>5</sup> JOHN PAUL II. "The Message of the Synod, paragraph 2." *African Synod: Pope's Opening Homily, Message of the Synod, Message of the AME/CEA and IMBISA Bishops* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications, 1994), p. 4, says: "Today, as we begin the Synod of the Church for the African Continent, the first in history." L. MONSENGWO. "Un synode spécial de l'épiscopat africain." *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 13 (1989), p. 5, writes: "Important, cet événement l'est et le sera parce que la 1ère fois qu'un tel synode est convoqué au niveau d'un continent."

<sup>6</sup> A. VANNESTE. "Synode Spécial de l'Episcopat Africain." *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 70 (1994) p. 536, writes: "Aux yeux de tous les observateurs il est en effet apparu comme une manifestation éclatante de la vitalité des jeunes églises africaines, symbolisée en quelque sorte par la grande concélébration eucharistique d'ouverture en la basilique Saint-Pierre animée par de chants et des danses africaines. Pour l'Eglise africaine il s'agissait d'un véritable événement 'historique': c'était la première fois qu'elle se trouvait en tant que telle solennellement accueillie et reconnue dans son originalité et son authenticité."

was a success story of the 20th century.<sup>7</sup> However, despite the vibrant and dynamic growth, it is faced with daunting challenges.

The synod of bishops for Africa was described as a “synod of resurrection and hope.” It highlighted the fact that Africa has become one of the heartlands of the Christian faith. The centre of gravity of the Christian faith has shifted from the Northern Hemisphere to the Southern Hemisphere, including Africa, Latin America, and Asia.<sup>8</sup> *Ecclesia in Africa* describes the African Church as a “mission Church which is becoming missionary” and a church whose faith and witness are becoming increasingly mature. This message needs retelling if it is to influence the evangelizing mission of the Church today and tomorrow. Without retelling this message, the synod of bishops for Africa risks sinking into the abyss of history and being forgotten. The present research is meant to engage the African Church and all those interested in Africa in an ongoing conversation about the evangelization of the continent. While the synod of bishops in Rome has ended, the synod of the people of Africa in Africa must continue.

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<sup>7</sup> K. BEDIAKO, *Christianity in Africa: The Renewal of a Non-Western Religion*, (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, Orbis Books, 1995), p. 192, writes: “In a sense, though, there is probably only one word that can truly describe the present status of Christianity in Black Africa. That word is *surprise*. The surprise lies not just in the much-publicised demographic breakthrough that now makes Africa one of the heartlands of Christian religion: the surprise lies at a deeper level, quite simply in the fact that Africa has become so massively Christian at all.” T. BOKENKOTTER, *A Concise History of the Catholic Church*, (New York: Image Books, Doubleday & Company, Inc., 1979), p.374, writes: “Finally, we take up the mission story of Africa, which is one of incredible success during the past century.”

<sup>8</sup> OKOYE, “Mutual Exchange of Energies,” *Mission in Cross-Cultural Perspective*,” p. 470, writes: “The shift in mission is fast changing the face of the church and of many institutes [...]. Therefore, the churches of the South, who until recently have been the receivers of a one-way mission, would give the third millennium its drives and most important inspirations. This phenomenon is called *The Coming of the Third Church*.”



Pastorally, *Ecclesia in Africa* raises serious and urgent concerns for the local churches on the continent. The pastoral challenges facing the African continent arrest the attention of the reader of *Ecclesia in Africa*. The present research seeks to highlight the pastoral importance of this apostolic exhortation. As a matter of fact, *Ecclesia in Africa* was meant to help plan suitable pastoral structures at the national, regional and continental level. As we will see from the literature on the document, major pastoral concerns are treated in the light of the exhortation. For example, issues like the family, formation of future priests, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, and many others are evaluated in the light of *Ecclesia in Africa*.

Academically, there is a renewed interest in the study of the book of the Acts of the Apostles among African theologians, as can be seen in the bibliography of this thesis. In 1984, five years before the convocation of the synod for Africa, at Ibadan in Nigeria, there was a congress of African biblical theologians on the theme of "The Acts of the Apostles and the Young Churches."<sup>9</sup> African theologians highly esteem Acts as a suitable model and inspiration for the young and vibrant Churches of the continent. Acts is also seen as a model for inculturation, that is, an incarnation of the gospel message in African culture. Moreover, Acts provides interesting links between African Christians and the Bible through figures like the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40), Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13:1), and a number of unspecified pilgrims from Egypt and Libya (Acts 2:10).<sup>10</sup> The reading of Acts has, therefore, an affective effect on the African reader.

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<sup>9</sup> The results of that congress are published in *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 13 (1989) pp. 7-40.

<sup>10</sup> E. MVENG, *L'Afrique dans l'Église: Paroles d'un croyant*, Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1985, p. 66, speaks of the links between Africans and the Bible: "Ainsi, s'il y a un héritage des valeurs assumé dans la Bible, l'Afrique noire fait partie de cet héritage. La Bible est, au sens premier du mot, notre héritage spirituel." This work of Mveng is commented upon by P. POUCOUTA, "Une

The thirst for the Word of God is quite intense among the peoples of Africa and Scripture is given an important role in *Ecclesia in Africa*, especially the text of the Acts of the Apostles, which is referred to twenty-four times in the whole exhortation. As I was reading *Ecclesia in Africa*, I was intrigued by the use of the Bible in general and in particular the use of Acts of the Apostles. Curiosity led me to question how Acts is used in *Ecclesia in Africa*. Since I was dealing with two diverse texts at the same time, intertextuality as an approach became an obvious choice to help name and control the analysis and evaluation. But intertextuality is a vast phenomenon. Among the many approaches, I found the theory of Gérard Genette as the most suitable to facilitate the analysis and evaluation of intertextuality, particularly when coupled with reader-response criticism since intertextuality is mainly a reading exercise. The whole analysis and evaluation will anchor on Ricoeur's philosophical hermeneutics whose impact on biblical interpretation is well known and internationally accepted. Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory provides categories for interpreting religious discourse in its own right.

## 2. The Nature of the Work

This thesis is an intertextual inquiry exercise guided by Ricoeur's philosophical principles of interpretation. It is a hermeneutical study which analyses and evaluates the use of Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*. The language of Ricoeur will be used throughout the thesis to explain the interaction between Acts and *Ecclesia in Africa*. The focus of the work is intertextual; it deals with two texts which mutually interpret and interpenetrate each other in the process of meaning. On the one hand, *Ecclesia in Africa* refers to and

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lecture africaine de la Bible." *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 120 (1998) pp. 33, who writes: "C'est dans cette perspective que Mveng parle des liens entre l'Afrique noire et la Bible. Pour lui, nous l'avons dit, la Bible est notre héritage."

transforms Acts in its literary fabric. It re-actualizes and re-contextualizes Acts into its new literary environment. It brings its understanding of the African Church to Acts. On the other hand, Acts helps to name and configure the African Church in *Ecclesia in Africa*. A new meaning results from the interaction of both texts. It is this new meaning that gives a new identity to the African Church. The search for a new identity for the African Church is at the core of this work.

### 3. The Scope of the Work

The present work is clearly limited in its approach and scope. It consists of four main parts: the first part deals with the method and the variety of literary features which will help us analyze and evaluate the relationship between Acts and *Ecclesia in Africa*. This part also focuses on the question how much Acts and *Ecclesia in Africa* have in common and to what extent they differ. The second part is concerned with the analysis and evaluation of quotations from Acts and how they are illuminated and transformed by *Ecclesia in Africa*, all the while helping to shape a new identity for the African Church. The third part deals with the analysis and evaluation of allusions to Acts and how they are illuminated and transformed by *Ecclesia in Africa*. These also help shape a new identity for the African Church. Finally, the thesis ends with the evaluation and synthesis of the whole research.

*Ecclesia in Africa* could be studied from many other perspectives. However, this work is focused only on the use of Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa*. Basing my research on the theory of intertextuality, I am concerned with quotations of and allusions to Acts as the most prominent intertextual devices in *Ecclesia in Africa*. I leave aside other intertextual

devices such as echo, trace, parody, plagiarism and pastiches because they are not relevant in the present study.

Although it is not the main focus, this study on the use of Acts in *Ecclesia in Africa* will shed some light on the use of Scripture in ecclesiastical documents in general. By doing so, this study may bring some contribution to knowledge about the interdisciplinary study of texts.

## THE ACTS OF THE APOSTLES AND *ECCLESIA IN AFRICA*

### *An Intertextual Inquiry*

#### CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM AND METHOD

This chapter deals with the following points: (1) general observations concerning *Ecclesia in Africa*;<sup>1</sup> (2) the statement of the problem; (3) the state of the research; (4) the research hypothesis; (5) the method, which includes the following: a) intertextuality; b) philosophical criteria; c) literary criteria for the evaluation of the use of Acts in *EiA*; and d) tools for the analysis of the quotations and allusions to their context in Acts and *EiA*: Finally, (6) the plan of the thesis.

##### 1. General Observations

*EiA* is a post-synodal apostolic Exhortation written and promulgated by Pope John Paul II on September 14, 1995. It was officially signed and handed to the African bishops at Yaoundé, in Cameroon.<sup>2</sup> It is the first of the series of post-synodal exhortations that John Paul II promulgated in the light of the celebration of the Great Jubilee Year 2000.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Hereafter referred to as *EiA*. Such an abbreviation is used by J. ELSENER, "The African Synod in the Light of the Post-Synodal Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* of Pope John Paul II," *Neue Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft* 53 (1997) pp. 69-71. The Book of the Acts of the Apostles will be referred to mostly as Acts.

<sup>2</sup> The official text of the Exhortation was given in French in Yaoundé (Cameroon) and in English, in Johannesburg (South Africa) and in Nairobi (Kenya) in 1995.

<sup>3</sup> The other apostolic post-synodal exhortations that were promulgated after *EiA* are the following: (1) *Ecclesia in America* (January 22, 1999), (2) *Ecclesia in Asia* (November 6, 1999), *Ecclesia in Oceania* (November 22, 2001). Amongst all these exhortations, *EiA* is the only one whose theme consists of Acts 1:8.

*EiA* is the result of the last special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa which took place in Rome from April 10 to May 8, 1994. A seven chapter document, it contains one hundred and forty-four paragraphs in English, and is also available in French, Portuguese, Italian, Spanish, German, Latin, Polish and Sesotho.<sup>4</sup> For practical purposes, I will be using the English text, which is the official text used in the anglophone region of Africa which includes my country.<sup>5</sup>

One of the striking features of *EiA* is the frequent use of quotations from and allusions to the Acts of the Apostles. Of the many biblical quotations found in this exhortation, Acts has the highest number of occurrences.<sup>6</sup> It is quoted twenty-five times out of the ninety-six biblical references found within the exhortation.<sup>7</sup> For instance, Acts 1:8 alone is quoted sixteen times and forms part of the titles of chapters five and seven. Acts 1:8 is also found in footnote thirty-two of *EiA*.<sup>8</sup> It is used extensively within the

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<sup>4</sup> Sesotho is an African language spoken in Lesotho and South Africa. It is one of the few African languages into which *EiA* has been translated from the English text.

<sup>5</sup> The Latin text is the basic text and is found in *Acta Apostolicæ Sedis* 78 (1996), pp. 5-82. Where there are differences in translation between the Latin text and the English one I will indicate. The Latin text of the Scripture quotations and allusions is also read against the New Testament Greek. The English text is found in *L'Osservatore Romano* n. 38, 20 September 1995, pp. 1-16.

<sup>6</sup> P. POUCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique: Quelle est la Fécondité de la Parole de Dieu?* (Paris: les éditions de l'Atelier, 1999), p. 20, says: "Une table biblique de l'exhortation post-synodale, *L'Eglise en Afrique* montre que les Actes des Apôtres constituent le livre le plus cité par le Synode africain." The list of quotations of Acts found in *EiA* is given in chapter three below.

<sup>7</sup> M. CHEZA, "Synode Africain," in *Revue théologique de Louvain*, 27 (1996) p. 212. Cheza gives a statistical list of all the documents that are cited in the exhortation. It is interesting to note that non-biblical texts, such as the Vatican II documents, Papal encyclicals, make up the bulk of the references within the exhortation.

<sup>8</sup> W. FRAWLEY, *Text and Epistemology* (New Jersey: Norwood, Ablex Publishing Company, 1987), pp. 75-76, writes: "The function of the footnote is to locate current statements in relation to a body of discourse accepted as argued truth or falsity, and the power of the footnote is to raise a set of propositions as more legitimate than other propositions because of their location within the set of legitimized statements."

exhortation and is skilfully woven into its literary fabric. Acts 1:8 is like a thread that knits together the whole exhortation since it is repeated so many times. The quotations from Acts will be the subject of chapters three and four below while chapter five will address allusions to Acts.

Finally, the language of Acts, especially concerning evangelization, mission and witness, resonates throughout the entire exhortation.<sup>9</sup> The expression “evangelizing mission,” which is part of the theme of the exhortation, is repeated twelve times. Thus, the exhortation could be rightly called “the missionary document for the Church in Africa.”<sup>10</sup>

## 2. Statement of the Problem

When one looks at *EiA* and Acts objectively, it may seem as if they have nothing or very little in common. Not only were they written two thousand years apart, but both texts are also diverse in many aspects, such as literary genre, content, context, author, addressees, and purpose. Acts is a narrative containing diverse literary genres, for example, speeches and exhortations, whereas *EiA* is an exhortation containing entirely different literary genres, narrations (paragraphs 30-34) and descriptions (paragraphs 39-40). Acts is an ancient document while *EiA* is a contemporary one. Theologically

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<sup>9</sup> G. H. PRATS, *L'Esprit force de l'église: Sa nature et son activité d'après les Actes des Apôtres*, (Paris: Les Editions du Cerf, 1975), highlights the link between evangelization and witness in Acts. He says: “Cette application du témoignage à un ensemble de vérités qui assimile pratiquement témoignage et évangélisation: d'une façon générale il s'agit d'une même situation qui peut être considérée comme témoignage ou comme kerygma. La prédication de Pierre est en même temps un témoignage et une évangélisation, bien que la nuance de témoignage domine.” *EiA* 21 states: “The Special Assembly rightly went on to add that evangelization is also a mission which the Lord Jesus entrusted to his Church under the guidance of the Holy Spirit.”

<sup>10</sup> POUCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique*, p. 21, says: “Le témoignage est l'élément essentiel de la mission de l'Eglise d'Afrique à l'orée de 2000.”

speaking, Acts is sacred scripture, that is, the Word of God, an inspired and revelatory text.<sup>11</sup> Canonically, Acts is normative for all Christians at all times. Doctrinally, Acts has religious authority over all Christians and is a religious classic of the Christian faith whose message is universal. Its meaning is not only in the past, but has significance for the present. *EiA*, on the other hand, is a papal document. It is an apostolic exhortation addressed specifically to the Church in Africa.<sup>12</sup> Canonically speaking, it is not a legislative text.<sup>13</sup> Despite their differences, both texts are intimately connected by the way Acts is interwoven into the literary fabric of *EiA*. The author of *EiA* has carefully selected texts from Acts and cleverly embedded them into its literary fabric. The goal of this study is to show the significance of this intertextual relationship established between the two texts.<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>S. M. SCHNEIDERS, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture* (New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991) p. 61.

<sup>12</sup>*EiA*, 7.

<sup>13</sup>F. G. MORRISEY, *Papal and Curial Pronouncements: Their Canonical Significance in the light of the Code of Canon Law* (Ottawa: Faculty of Canon Law, Saint Paul University, 1996) p. 13. Morrisey explains the legislative import of papal pronouncements, such as decretal letters, encyclicals etc. F. A. SULLIVAN, *Creative Fidelity: Weighing and Interpreting Documents of the Magisterium* (New York: Paulist Press, 1996). He shows the importance of interpreting magisterial documents and proposes ways of doing it. M. MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II* (Huntington, Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor Publishing Division, 1998) p. 42. He says that, "Post-synodal apostolic exhortations are documents in which the Successor of Peter invokes his authority as the Church's chief teacher; issued in his name, these exhortations belong to the ordinary papal magisterium." He has written extensively on the nature of Encyclicals and Post-synodal Exhortations of John Paul II and is quite knowledgeable in this area. His work mentioned above will be referred to many times in the next chapter.

<sup>14</sup>The term "intertextuality" was first coined by Julia Kristeva. It is concerned mainly with the relationship between texts, that is, how texts affect one another through quotations, allusions and echoes. It is not, however, confined to these categories only. According to G. GENETTE, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1982) p. 8, quotations and allusions are the main subcategories of intertextuality. He says: "Sous sa forme la plus explicite et la plus littérale, c'est la pratique traditionnelle de la citation (avec guillemets, avec ou sans référence précise); [...] sous forme encore moins explicite et moins littérale, celle de l'allusion, c'est-à-dire d'un énoncé dont la pleine intelligence suppose la perception d'un



To show how Acts and *EiA* affect one another, I will focus on the significance of quotations of and allusions to Acts in *EiA*. To begin with, I will investigate and evaluate how Acts has been used within the exhortation.<sup>15</sup> Subsequently, I will show how it could have been used. For example, is it used according to a specific method of biblical interpretation or is it merely a proof-text?<sup>16</sup> According to critical literary approaches, the

rapport entre lui et un autre auquel renvoie nécessairement telle ou telle de ses inflexions, autrement non recevable.” T. K. BEAL provides an interesting glossary of the terms such as traces, echoes, intertext and allusion which are linked to intertextuality, in N. D. FEWELL (ed.), *Reading between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1992) pp. 21-24. He defines allusion as an “implicit, indirect, or hidden reference” (p. 21). See R. B. HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1989) p. 23, says: “Quotation, allusion, and echo may be seen as points along a spectrum of intertextual reference, moving from the explicit to the subliminal.” See also N. PIEGY-GROS, *Introduction à l’Intertextualité* (Paris: Dunod, 1996) p. 3. Quotations, allusions, traces and echoes are intertextual links. They suggest that there is more than one text involved in the interpretation of another. See also G. AICHELE and G. A. PHILLIPS, “Glossary” *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) pp. 299-301. Quotations from Acts found in *EiA* will be explained further in Chapters Three and Four of the thesis. POUCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d’Afrique: Quelle est la fécondité de la parole de Dieu?* p. 20, says: “Le livre des Actes correspond bien à un modèle pour l’Afrique, comme le montre le synode africain, tenu à Rome du 10 avril 1994 à mai 1994.”

<sup>15</sup>MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 38, says that: “When the Holy Father cites from Scripture in his post-synodal exhortations, he draws very little on the contemporary biblical scholarship, despite his acknowledgement elsewhere of its importance. His concern is not the original historical context or the stages of a text’s formation. The Pope’s purpose is not to distinguish different authors or traditions, as in historical-critical exegesis, but to ‘sustain a unitary vision of the one God who speaks equally powerfully through every biblical witness.’”

<sup>16</sup>S. B. BEVANS, “The Biblical Basis of the Mission of the Church in *Redemptoris Missio*,” in Charles Van ENGEN & D. S. GILLILAND, Paul, PIERSON, *The Good News of the Kingdom* (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993) p. 41. Bevans remarks the use of Scripture in the encyclical as reflecting mainly “proof-text.” However, he expresses satisfaction with the way Scripture is used in chapter three of the same encyclical. It would be interesting to know his criteria of assessment since they are not explicitly formulated. MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 38, says that, “The Holy Father stresses the Scriptures’ unity and coherence as a witness to the whole revelation. By no means does he limit the meaning of the Bible to an exclusively historical one, but he opens up its meaning for today. Indeed, it is always the religious and spiritual message that catches his interest and it is that message which he seeks to convey in his writings [ . . . ]. This means that he reads Scripture and uses it in his documents in order to bring the word of God into the present.”

Bible is not a storehouse where one chooses any text at random in order to support one's argument. Moreover, it does not follow that "we can attribute to a biblical text whatever meaning we like, interpreting it in a wholly subjective way."<sup>17</sup>

The process will involve addressing a number of questions: (1) What are the position and the function of quotations and allusions to Acts in their original literary context in Acts? (2) What are the position and function of these references in their new literary context within *EiA*? Are they found in the headings or footnotes of *EiA*? Are they found at the beginning of paragraphs or towards the end? What bearing and relevance do they have on the section in which they are found? (3) What new significance have these references acquired in *EiA*? (4) How judicious is the actual choice and selection of passages from Acts? How consistent is the use of these passages within the overall story of Acts? (5) What theological significance does each quotation from or allusion to Acts have within the exhortation? As the direct quotations of Acts cover mainly chapters one to ten of Acts, is there any literary or theological connection between these quotations? For example, is there any link between Acts 1:8 and Acts 10:45-47? (6) What connection is there among these quotations, allusions and the different themes of the Exhortation? For example, is there any link between Acts 1:8 and inculturation? (7) All these quotations and allusions considered, what light does Acts shed on the reading and understanding of the exhortation? Does *EiA* give us any new insights into the reading of Acts? Does it illuminate Acts? How does it comment on Acts? (8) Are there any ideological

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<sup>17</sup>*The Pontifical Biblical Commission: The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church* (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993, II. B.1) p. 80

underpinnings in the use of Acts in *EIA*?<sup>18</sup> And finally, what bearing does Acts have on the understanding of the identity of the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission as presented in *EIA*? The above questions will be answered throughout the present thesis. This interweaving between Acts and *EIA* is called intertextuality which leads to the next section. Later, when dealing with the question of method, criteria will be established for assessing the use of Acts in this exhortation.

### 3. State of the Research

Intertextuality is a vast field and there is a growing interest in its use in biblical studies. "Intertextuality has emerged as a fertile concept that, for many scholars, has expanded the ways of accounting for the complex relations of texts to texts, to interpretative traditions, to writers and readers, and to institutional contexts."<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Looking at the quotations from Acts, one observes that all except one refer to the ministry of Peter in Acts.

<sup>19</sup> G. AICHELE and G.A. PHILLIPS, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," *Semeia*, 69/70 (1995) p. 7. This issue of *Semeia* has gathered together essays on the different ways of applying intertextuality in biblical studies and it shows its implications. It is not an exhaustive study on intertextuality. However, it shows the state of affairs within biblical studies. R. P. CARROLL, "Literary Criticism and Introduction (Including History of Interpretation, Canon and Special Studies)" *Journal for the Study of the Old Testament* 79 (1998) calls the work, "a most fascinating collection of material demonstrating the power of intertextual readings of the Bible," p. 101. G. A. PHILLIPS, "Sign/ Text/Difference: The Contribution of Intertextual Theory to Biblical Criticism," in H. F. PLETT, *Intertextuality* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) pp. 78-97. He outlines the importance of intertextuality within biblical criticism. Another important contribution to intertextuality is by U. J. HEBEL, *Intertextuality: Allusion and Quotation: An International Bibliography of Critical Studies (Bibliography and Indexes in World Literature, Number 18)*, New York, Westport Connecticut, London: Greenwood Press, 1989. It offers a panoramic view of the study on the subject. But all these contributions remain rather at the theoretical level. They offer us very little concrete method to analyze the use of one text in another text. D. MARGUERAT et A. CURTIS, *Intertextualités: La Bible en échos* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2000), is a valuable and most recent collection on intertextuality. GENETTE, *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Paris: éditions du Seuil, 1982). He defines intertextuality as a category of transtextuality. This work will be examined later within the thesis.

A common practice within biblical studies has been to limit intertextual reading within the Bible itself.<sup>20</sup> The later books of the Bible are regarded as “readings” (intertexts) of the earlier ones. They interpret and re-write the earlier ones. The earlier books become, therefore, ‘pretexts’ for later books. The Old Testament becomes a ‘pretext’ of the New Testament. The New Testament becomes a ‘reading’ of the Old Testament. The Old Testament is read and interpreted in the light of the New Testament. This intertextual relationship within the Bible is done through explicit direct references, such as allusions, echoes, allegories, typologies and metaphors.<sup>21</sup>

In that way, different types of intertextuality have been studied within the Bible itself: (1) intertextual reading of two Old Testament texts,<sup>22</sup> (2) intertextual reading of an Old Testament text and a New Testament text,<sup>23</sup> and (3) intertextual reading of two New

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<sup>20</sup> J. A. SANDERS, “Intertextuality and Dialogue,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 29 (1999) p. 35, writes: “The Bible is also very intertextual: it is full of itself. From the earliest literary forms to the latest, earlier traditions and texts, national and international, are interwoven developing new meanings out of old ideas.”

<sup>21</sup> *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, pp. 88-89, R. B. HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of St Paul* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 1989). See G. THEISSEN, *The Sign Language of Faith: Opportunities for Preaching* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1995) p. 4. For him intertextuality is nothing new in biblical exegesis.

<sup>22</sup> S. DRAISMA (ed.), *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings: Essays in honour of Bas van Iersel* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1989). This is another valuable collection of texts on the use of intertextuality. See also, D. N. FEWELL, *Reading between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (Louisville, K. Y: Westminster, John Knox Press, 1992).

<sup>23</sup> G. R. O'DAY, “Jeremiah 9:22-23 and 1 Cor. 1:26-31: A Study in Intertextuality,” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 109/2 (1990) pp. 259-267. W. J. C. WEREN, “Psalm 2 in Luke-Acts: An intertextual study,” in DRAISMA, pp. 189-203. There are many examples of the intertextual reading involving two texts, one from the Old Testament and the other from the New Testament. It is by far the most common application of intertextuality. See also *The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, pp. 88-90 One work in particular needs special attention: B. T. ARNOLD, “Luke’s Characterizing use of the Old Testament in the Book of Acts,” Ben. WITHERINGTON (ed.), *History, Literature, and Society in the Book of Acts* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996). The author shows how Acts borrows, transforms and absorbs Old Testament texts.

Testament texts.<sup>24</sup> The most common intertextual analysis or interpretation within the Bible remains the interrelationship between Old and New Testament literature.

One recent contribution to this field is a piece of work by Vernon K. Robbins.<sup>25</sup> He prefers to use the word 'intertexture' rather than 'intertextuality' as such. He holds that texts are made up of multiple textures, that is, they refer to other texts which they imitate, reconfigure and echo.<sup>26</sup> He expands the notion of intertextuality to include the socio-cultural, ideological and historical aspects of texts. This theory looks attractive, but lacks clear philosophical presuppositions on the nature of language and meaning.<sup>27</sup> It is,

BELLINGER. "The Psalms and Acts: Reading and Rereading" in KEATHLEY, *With Steadfast Purpose* (Waco, Texas: Baylor University, 1990) pp. 127-143.

<sup>24</sup>S. FREYNE. "Reading Hebrews and Revelation Intertextually." DRAISMA, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, pp. 83-93. I. R. KITZBERGER. "Love and Footwashing: John 13:1-20 and Luke 7:36-50 Read Intertextually." *Biblical Interpretation* 2 (1994) pp. 190-205.

<sup>25</sup>V. K. ROBBINS, *Exploring the Texture of Texts: A Guide to Socio-Rhetorical Interpretation* (Valley Forge PA: Trinity Press International, 1996). See also, his other book, *The Tapestry of Early Christian Discourse: Rhetoric, Society and Ideology*, Routledge (London and New York, 1996).

<sup>26</sup>ROBBINS, *Exploring the Texture of Texts*, p. 40.

<sup>27</sup>A. R. CULPEPPER. "Mapping the Textures of New Testament Criticism: A Response to Socio-Rhetorical Criticism." *Journal for the Study of New Testament* 70 (1998) p. 71, writes: "To fulfill the potential of socio-rhetorical criticism, I would encourage Robbins to take the next step and show how the method works not just in serial treatment of the various textures but in their correlation and their critical dialogue with one another." M. E. DEAN. "Textured Criticism." *Journal for the Study of New Testament* 70 (1998) pp. 79-91. G. D. NEWBY. "Quranic Texture" *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 70 (1998) pp. 93-100. J. D. H. AMADOR, *Academic Constraints in Rhetorical Criticism of the New Testament: An Introduction to a Rhetoric of Power* (Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplement Series 174 ) (England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1999) who says in a footnote on page 207: "Unfortunately, the promise of socio-rhetorical [totalizing] methodological superstructure to bring together the multidisciplinary tasks of interpretation still can't seem to escape these same difficulties of engaging in reconstruction of historical 'meaning effects' for the sake of 'equipping the interpreter for exploring the convictions, beliefs, values, actions, and attitudes in other religions at the present time.'"

however, suggestive of new avenues in intertextual analysis or interpretation and puts forth evidence for the role of ideology and culture in textual interpretation.

Another way of doing intertextual reading is between the Bible and secular literature, especially prose and poetry.<sup>28</sup> It is to be remembered that intertextuality belongs primarily to any form of literature and is not restricted to biblical literature.<sup>29</sup> How intertextuality applies to a biblical text such as Acts and a magisterial document, such as *LiA* seems to be, at this point, an unexplored area.<sup>30</sup>

There is, however, a plethora of works on Acts alone.<sup>31</sup> Acts has become an important document for intertextual study due to its open-endedness. It has an open-ended plot, open-ended promises and open-ended audiences.<sup>32</sup> It lends itself easily to

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<sup>28</sup>D. H. PURDY, *Biblical Echo and Allusion in the Poetry of W. B. Yeats: Poetics and the Art of God* (London and Toronto: Associated University Press, 1994). See also M. GATTI-TAYLOR, "Silone's Moses at the Bitter Fountain: Exodus as Subtext," in E. D. Cancalon and A. Spacagna (ed.), *Intertextuality in Literature and Film* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1994) pp. 61-71. P. MILWARD, *Biblical Influence in Shakespeare's Great Tragedies* (Tokyo: Renaissance Institute, Sophia University, 1985).

<sup>29</sup>J. P. PLOTTEL and H. CHARNEY, *Intertextuality: New Perspectives in Criticism*, volume 2, (New York: New York Literary Forum, 1978). This is a collection of articles on the understanding and the application of intertextuality in literature.

<sup>30</sup>SULLIVAN, *Creative Fidelity*, p. 113, gives some useful insights on the evaluation of dogma in the light of Scripture. However, he does not claim to do intertextuality.

<sup>31</sup>M. DUMAIS, "Les Actes des Apôtres: Bilan et orientations," in *ACEBAC: De Bien des manières (Lectio Divina 163)* (Montréal: éditions Fides / Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1995) pp. 307-364. This is an up-to-date study of Acts in current biblical scholarship. Another important work is that of F. S. SPENCER, "Acts and Modern Literary Approaches," in B. W. WINTER and A. D. CLARKE, *The Book of Acts in its Ancient Literary Setting* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, England: The Pater Noster Press, 1993), pp. 381-414. Also, E. RASCO, "Le tappe fondamentali della ricerca sugli Atti degli Apostoli", *Gregorianum* 78 (1997) pp. 5-32.

<sup>32</sup>W. K. KURZ, "The open-ended nature of Luke and Acts as inviting canonical actualisation," *Neotestamentica* 31 (1997) pp. 289-308.

intertextuality since it is replete with intertextual voices from other passages of scripture. "The surface of Luke-Acts ripples with intertextuality because it constantly folds textual patterns from scripture into its text."<sup>33</sup> Acts alone "is full of citations, allusions and references from the Old Testament which are everywhere interpreted in the light of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and the advent of the Messianic Age."<sup>34</sup>

Concerning the apostolic exhortation *EiA*, while no major works as yet have been published on it in the area of intertextuality, much less has been done on its intertextual relationship with Acts.<sup>35</sup> To date, it appears that there are no articles on the exhortation which speak about the intertextual reading of *EiA* and Acts.<sup>36</sup> It is this aspect of the research which I intend to pursue.

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<sup>33</sup>R. L. BRAWLEY, *Text to Text Pours Forth Speech: Voices in Luke-Acts* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995) p. 3. G. STEYN, *Septuagint Quotations in the Context of the Petrine and Pauline Speeches of the Acta Apostolorum* (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1995).

<sup>34</sup>A. A. TRITES, *The New Testament Concept of Witness* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 147.

<sup>35</sup>There are three main works on the African Synod in which the exhortation appears: M. CHEZA, *Le Synode africain: Histoires et Textes* (Paris: edition Karthala, 1996); M. BROWNE, *The African Synod: Documents, Reflections, Perspectives*, (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1996). Both works help one to read the exhortation in the context of the ongoing reflection on the last African Synod. Another work is that of R. LUNEAU, *Paroles et silences du Synode africain (1989-1995)*, (Paris: éditions Karthala, 1997). Unlike the former works, this one is a personal reflection of the writer himself alone. POUCCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique*, is by far the most pertinent study for this thesis. He enlists references to Acts in *EiA* and makes an interesting study of Acts 8:27-37 which is one of the texts used in *EiA*.

<sup>36</sup>There is a good number of works on the intertextual reading between Acts and other books of the Bible for instance: ARNOLD, "Luke's Characterizing Use of the Old Testament," W. WEREN, "Ps. 2 in Luke-Acts: an Intertextual Study" in DRAISMA, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, pp. 189-203.

#### 4. Research Hypothesis

My research hypothesis is that there is an illuminating intertextual relationship between Acts and *EiA* through the use of quotations and allusions. Since an intertextual relationship is a two-way process, Acts has become part of the literary fabric of *EiA* whereas *EiA* has become part of the open-ended story of Acts. Acts also provides dimensions of meaning to the Church in Africa as described in *EiA* and in so doing Acts, receives new dimensions of meaning from its use therein. In other words, *EiA* reads the African Church into Acts, importing to it the world of the African Church. In turn, Acts helps name and configure the experience of the African Church as described in *EiA*. This mutual illumination and transformation between Acts and *EiA* will be the guiding thread (*le fil conducteur*) that weaves together the whole thesis. This research hypothesis has influenced my choice of the method in showing the mutual illumination and transformation between Acts and *EiA*.

First, I maintain that quotations and allusions to Acts in *EiA* are used rhetorically to exhort, persuade and encourage the Church in Africa to reflect on its identity and its evangelizing mission in the light of the third Millennium of the Christian faith. They are used to create and shape a new identity for the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission. I intend to explore this new identity, or missionary paradigm, which the use of Acts, in *EiA*, provides for the African Church. Second, I also hold that these references to Acts have acquired new significance in *EiA*. I therefore intend to demonstrate how *EiA*, as a reader of Acts, opens up new dimensions of meaning for these selected passages from the ancient text.



In this thesis I also intend to evaluate *EiA*'s faithfulness to Acts. By faithfulness I do not merely mean its ability to reproduce citations from Acts literally, but faithfulness in meaning dependent on context. Is the use of quotations from or allusions to Acts in *EiA* faithful to their meaning as intended in the original context?

This hypothesis of a mutually illuminating interpretation between Acts and *EiA* will be substantiated by using the option of philosophical and literary criteria for the evaluation of intertextuality.

## 5. Method

The study of the quotations of and allusions to Acts will be done in three steps: (1) the analysis of each quotation or allusion in the context of Acts; (2) the analysis of each quotation or allusion in the context of *EiA*; and (3) an evaluation of the use of each quotation or allusion. For the first and second steps I will draw on tools of literary analysis. The criteria for the evaluation of the use of Acts in *EiA* will be based on the philosophical hermeneutical theory of Ricoeur and the literary theory of reader-response, as developed by W. Iser. But before expounding on my intended method, it is useful to reflect on the basic issue of intertextuality.

### 5.1. Intertextuality

As the sub-title of this thesis indicates, it is an "intertextual inquiry."<sup>37</sup> Intertextuality is indeed a broad concept and very elusive to define.<sup>38</sup> A neologism

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<sup>37</sup>J. KRISTEVA, *Desire in Language: Semiotic Approach to Literature and Art*, ed. by L. S. ROUDIEZ, Trans. by T. GORA, A. JARDINE, and L. ROUDIEZ, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980) p. 15.

<sup>38</sup> PLETT, "Intertextualities," in *Intertextuality*, prefers to speak about different ways of intertextuality. He, therefore, uses the plural "intertextualities." See also, O. Miller, "Intertextual

appropriated from secular literary and cultural criticism and linguistic studies, it is derived from *intertexto*, meaning to intermingle while weaving. In its simplest form it refers to the interrelationship between texts, "inter-text-uality." It involves at least two texts "Any text is constructed as a mosaic of quotations and is the absorption and transformation of another."<sup>39</sup> A text is made up of innumerable tissues of quotations drawn from different sources. "Etymologically text, texture and tissue derive from the Latin verb *texere*, to weave. To weave implies threads, plurality, process and (in) substantiality (text and tissue)."<sup>40</sup> Intertextuality, therefore, invokes the image of a tapestry, network or web. It is an all-embracing term that covers all the possible relations between texts. These relations can be based on anything from quotations, allusions, common vocabulary, echoes to lexical links.

There are many different theories of intertextuality, as Plett has indicated.<sup>41</sup> Given the nature of the present thesis, Genette's definition of intertextuality is the most

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Identity." in M. J. Valdes and Owen Miller, *Identity of the Literary Text*, (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1985). S. MOYISE, "Intertextuality and the Study of the Old Testament in the New Testament," in *The Old Testament in the New Testament*, (Essays in Honour of J. L. North, Journal for the Study of New Testament Supplement Series 189, 2000 Sheffield Academic Press, 1980) pp. 14-41. He classifies intertextuality into three categories: (1) Intertextual Echo (2) Dialogical Intertextuality (3) Post-modern Intertextuality. C. K. TUCKETT, *The Scriptures in the Gospels* (Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologiarum Louvansiensium, Pease, 131, 1997) p. 3, says: "The word 'intertextuality' has become something of an 'in word' for New Testament studies in recent years. What the word may mean when used in one context may not mean the same when used by others in another context."

<sup>39</sup>KRISTEVA, *Desire in Language*, p. 66. See also W. S. VORSTER, "Intertextuality and Redaktionsgeschichte," in DRAISMA, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, p. 20.

<sup>40</sup>P. D. MISCALL, "Texts, more Texts: A Textual Reader and a Textual Writer," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) p. 225

<sup>41</sup>PLETT, "Intertextualities" in *Intertextuality*, p. 5. The study of intertextuality has produced a host of other new literary terms: subtext, intertext, hypertext, pretext, etc. GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, pp. 8-13: He treats *intertextualité* under *transtextualité*. He presents five types of transtextual relations: 1) *intertextualité* 2) *paratexte*, 3) *métatextualité*: 4) *hypertextualité*, 5)

appropriate one: "L'intertextualité, une relation de co-présence entre deux ou plusieurs textes, c'est-à-dire, la présence effective d'un texte dans un autre"<sup>42</sup>. In other words, intertextuality in the present thesis is the effective presence of one text (Acts) in another text (*EiA*). It is a demonstrable manifestation of the presence of Acts in *EiA*. According to Genette, this presence can be manifested in three ways: (1) quotations, (2) allusions, and (3) plagiarism.<sup>43</sup> Genette's description of intertextuality gives us a pragmatic and determinable way of dealing with the intertextual relationship between individual texts. Applied to the thesis, it will help us to see the significance of the use of quotations from and allusions to Acts within *EiA* and the new identity of the African Church. Although Genette speaks about three forms of intertextual relationship, there are two main forms which are applicable to *EiA*: quotations and allusions.

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*architextualité*. Genette's definition of intertextuality is larger and more comprehensible than the classical definition of Julia Kristeva. D. MARGUERAT et A. CURTIS, *Intertextualités: La Bible en échos*, Labor et Fides, 2000. MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du christianisme: les Actes des Apôtres* (Labor et Fides, 1999) pp. 375-378. THISELTON, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, p. 38, who mentions six ways of transforming texts and their meaning: 1) inter-textual; 2) situational or temporally contingent; 3) horizontal; 4) semiotic; 5) hermeneutical; and 6) relating to theories of texts.

<sup>42</sup>GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 8. MARGUERAT, *Intertextualités*, p. 9, paraphrasing Genette, says: "L'intertextualité proprement est 'une relation de co-présence entre deux ou plusieurs textes,' que concrétise la présence effective d'un texte dans un autre par voie de citation ou d'allusion." He leaves out Genette's category of plagiarism.

<sup>43</sup>GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 8. G. ALLEN, *Intertextuality*, (London and New York: Routledge, 2000) p. 101, modifies Genette's position: "Genette's *intertextuality* is, however, not the concept employed within poststructuralism, since he reduces it to 'a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts' and as 'the actual presence of one text within another'" (ibid.:1-2). Reduced now to issues of quotation, plagiarism and allusion, intertextuality thus defined is no longer concerned with the semiotic processes of cultural and textual signification." Allen modifies the position of Genette. M. PFISTER, "How Postmodern is Intertextuality?" in H. F. PLETT, *Intertextuality*, p. 211, states: "Gérard Genette in his impressive study *Palimpsestes: La littérature au second degré* (Genette, 1982) has, so far, pursued this structuralist approach to intertextuality with more systematic rigour and cogency than anyone else, working out a coherent classification of the various intertextual devices and illustrating them with examples taken from a vast range of texts from all periods and many different national literatures." Genette's theory sets limits thereby making intertextuality manageable and focused.

In intertextuality, texts are classified into genotext and phenotext. The genotext is an earlier text. It is the quoted text while phenotext is the quoting text.<sup>44</sup> The distinction between the two types of texts is best explained by Ellen van Wolde:

Comparative studies of the Bible start from the assumption that an older text or genotext has influenced a later text or phenotext (terms taken from Claes, 1981). The genotext determines the phenotext in this view. The intertextual approach, however, assumes the opposite: the phenotext assimilates and adapts the genotext. The genotext is not the pre-text or the text that already existed before the phenotext, but the genotext only becomes a text or only achieves significance through what the phenotext makes of it. The selection and form of the phenotext are therefore factors that help to determine the meaning of the genotext. Thus, the chronological or diachronical approach of comparative exegesis is replaced with the synchronic approach of the intertextual exegesis.<sup>45</sup>

The earlier text becomes an intertext of the latter. An intertext is therefore the genotext as used in the phenotext. Applied to the thesis, Acts is the genotext while *LiA* is the phenotext. Intertextuality is not to be confused with the comparative study of texts in order to find sources. It is not about a one-way process of source-tracking as such; rather it works both ways, dealing with the interrelationship between texts. It is a literary approach to texts based on post-modern literary theories of reading. "As a concept, intertextuality cuts across different methodological and theoretical borders (including those of formalism, semiotics, discourse analysis, narratology, poststructuralism,

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<sup>44</sup>KRISTEVA, *Desire in Language*, p. 7. Other terms used in connection with intertextuality are "pretext" and "intertext" or "focused or target" text: quotee and quoter.

<sup>45</sup>E. WOLDE, "Trendy Intertextuality?" in DRAISMA, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, 1989, pp. 45-46. J. CLAYTON & E. ROTHSTEIN, *Influence and Intertextuality* (Wisconsin: The University of Wisconsin, 1991) p. 50, say: "The intertextual network is 'open' in a way that the relation of influence is not. Influence is unidirectional, flowing from earlier to later author, whereas intertextuality establishes a flexible relation among texts."

deconstruction, and other post-modern approaches), as well as widely varying disciplinary fields (including literature, film, architecture, ethnography)."<sup>46</sup> Intertextuality is indeed broad in scope. It comprises a number of literary approaches like reader-response criticism.<sup>47</sup> As applied in this thesis, intertextuality is to be understood: (1) as a dialogical relationship between Acts as genotext and *LiA* as a phenotext; (2) as a literary component of reader-response criticism.<sup>48</sup>

Thus, the intertextual inquiry, that is, the study of how the implied author of *LiA* reads Acts, is based on certain philosophical presuppositions about (a) reading, (b) texts, (c) the reader, and (d) meaning.

#### a) Reading

Reading is a creative, dynamic and interpretative activity. It concerns an interaction between the reader and the text(s). The reader approaches the text with some preconceived ideas of the text. On the other hand, the text impacts and provokes the reader. It "reads" the reader, so to speak. A reader who engages in reading allows himself or herself to be guided by the text towards a new understanding of reality. Reading is also

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<sup>46</sup>AICHELE and PHILLIPS, "Introduction: Exegesis, Eisegesis, Intergesis," *Semeia* 69/70 (1995) p. 7. J. A. SANDERS, "Intertextuality and Dialogue," *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 20 (1999) p. 38. He mentions three ways in which intertextuality can be used: (1) between two contiguous blocks of literature, large or small; (2) recognition that all literature is made up of previous literature and reflects the earlier through citation, allusion, use of phrases and paraphrases... (3) recognition that the reader is also a text.

<sup>47</sup>R. DETWEILER (ed.), "Reader Response Approaches to Biblical and Secular Texts," in *Semeia* 31 (1985) pp. 5-29. Reader Response criticism takes varied forms, ranging from that of the moderate Iser to that of the radical Fish as we shall mention later.

<sup>48</sup>KITZBERGER, "Love and Footwashing: John 13:1-20 and Luke 7:36-50 Read Intertextually," 2 (1994) pp. 190-206. He uses a similar approach to intertextuality.

transformative, having power to change the reader's perspective, stir emotions, and provoke action. It elicits response in the reader.

Every reading is an interpretation. As such, it is guided by certain principles of interpretation, as B. J. Malina points out: "Every theory of reading presupposes a set of assumptions concerning the nature of language and the nature of texts. How does language work? How does text work? And how does reading work?"<sup>49</sup> Reading points to the dynamic and creative power of texts. No single reading of a text can exhaust its meaning. The words of W. Jeanrond express this idea well: "Reading can never be compared to a jig-saw puzzle where the individual parts only require to be assembled in order to present a picture composed by the producer which then remains constant. The reading of a text is, on the contrary, a dynamic process which remains in principle open-ended because every reader can only disclose the sense of a text in a process and as an individual."<sup>50</sup>

## b) Texts

Intertextuality is a text-and-reader centered approach which focuses on the relations between a text and its reader. "It allows that all texts are reflections of all other texts. That is, they all contribute to the production of meaning because they have been read."<sup>51</sup> They echo, interact and interpenetrate, interfere and inter-illuminate other texts. No

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<sup>49</sup>MALINA, "Reading Theory Perspective: Reading Luke-Acts," in J. H. NEYREY, *The Social World of Luke-Acts: Models for Interpretation* (Peabody, Massachusetts: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc., 1991) p. 8.

<sup>50</sup>W. G. JEANROND, *Text and Interpretation as Categories of Theological Thinking*, (New York, Crossroad, 1988) p. 104.

<sup>51</sup>FEWELL, *Reading Between Texts*, p. 60.

text is an island. "No text exists in a vacuum. All texts are embedded in a larger web of related texts, bounded together only by human culture and language itself."<sup>52</sup> Every text is a mosaic composed of linguistic fragments from a variety of sources and is a collage of pieces of language brought together. Texts act as regulatory mechanisms of control in reading so that reading does not become a purely subjective interpretation. It is texts as they are that set parameters for their own interpretation. They establish their own horizons of interpretation. They also provide some criteria for evaluation and interpretation.

The Pontifical Biblical Commission document states: "To avoid, then, purely subjective readings, an interpretation valid for contemporary times will be founded on the study of the text and such an interpretation will constantly submit its presuppositions to verification by the text."<sup>53</sup> Reading is, therefore, controlled by the text. The dialectical process between a reader and a text is not arbitrary, but has to respect the integrity of the text. The text invites, provokes and engages the imagination of the reader. "As the reader uses the various perspectives offered him by the text in order to relate the patterns and the 'schematized views' to one another, he sets the work in motion, and this very process results ultimately in the awakening of responses within himself. Thus, reading causes the literary work to unfold its inherently dynamic character."<sup>54</sup> Written texts guide and direct the reader to adopt a point of view that is consonant therewith. Texts are not merely at the mercy of the readers; they have the power to determine meaning. They control

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<sup>52</sup>FEWELL, *Reading Between Texts*, p. 17.

<sup>53</sup>*The Interpretation of the Bible in the Church*, p. 77.

<sup>54</sup>ISER, "The Reading Process: A Phenomenological Approach," p. 51.

interpretation to the extent of resisting any tendency to interpret them freely. They impose constraints upon the reader.

### c) Readers

Intertextuality is a hermeneutical, reader-oriented approach in which every text known to a reader functions as an intertext. It focuses on the reader rather than the author of texts, assuming that the reader is looking at the text critically.<sup>55</sup> Without the reader's critical involvement intertextual interpretation is not possible. The importance of the reader is highlighted by E. van Wolde: "The writer assigns meaning to his own context and in the interaction with other texts he shapes and forms his own text. The reader, in much the same way, assigns meaning to the generated text in interaction with other texts that he knows. Without a reader a text is only a lifeless collection of words."<sup>56</sup> The reader reacts and enters into dialogue with texts in as much as they offer possibilities for such an interaction. Applied to *EiA* and Acts, *EiA* is a reading of Acts. The implied author of *EiA* is a reader of Acts, having brought selected texts of Acts to bear on *EiA* and having been influenced by all that the implied author of *EiA* has read.

### d) Meaning

Reading aims at producing meaning that results from the interaction of different texts and the reader. Meaning is not to be understood as an immovably fixed point of

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<sup>55</sup>FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark* (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1991) p. 27, makes a distinction between the reader and the critic. I prefer to speak of a critical reader as opposed to an uncritical reader.

<sup>56</sup>WOLDE, "Trendy Intertextuality?" in DRAISMA, *Intertextuality in Biblical Writings*, p. 47. R. M. FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand* p. 26, says that, "Unless the text is read [...] it is simply a lifeless assemblage of paper, biding, and dried ink. The text has no life or meaning unless life and meaning are conferred upon it by the reader."



view, as something static that lies buried within a text, awaiting excavation by the reader. It is to be perceived rather as a dynamic encounter.<sup>57</sup> The reception of the text by the reader is not passive but active and constructive.<sup>58</sup> In decoding the message of the text, the reader participates in the production of meaning. The reader certainly participates in the process but the production of meaning does not depend on the reader alone. Neither reader nor text creates meaning on their own. Meaning is derived from their interaction in an intertextual relationship. This helps to avoid arbitrary interpretation, ensuring that the reader's prejudices do not go unchecked and untested since the reader's prejudices can certainly transform or distort texts.

Reading is a dialectic between the world of the text and the world of the reader. It is this dialectic between texts and reader that renders possible multiple readings.<sup>59</sup> Multiple readings of texts, however, do not imply an infinite or limitless number of meanings.

## 5.2 Philosophical Criteria for Evaluating the Use of Acts in *EiA*

A sound reading of one text, and consequently a sound evaluation of the use of another text, needs a well-founded philosophical basis. Any reading that is not founded on clear philosophical hermeneutics stands on shaky ground; it lacks the necessary

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<sup>57</sup>FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand*, p. 3.

<sup>58</sup>M. DAVIES, "Reader-Response Criticism," in R. J. COGGINS and J. L. HOULDEN, *A Dictionary of Biblical Interpretation*, (London, SCM Press, 1990) p. 578.

<sup>59</sup>P. RICOEUR in VALDES, *A Ricoeur Reader*, p. 492. Ricoeur recognizes the multiplicity of readings in a text but also affirms that there are limits imposed by the text.

hermeneutical infrastructure.<sup>60</sup> In any event, any approach to texts is always guided, consciously or not, by some philosophical presuppositions, concerning language itself, interpretation and meaning.<sup>61</sup> Philosophical criteria are the basis for the literary theory and the tools of analysis that will be used to evaluate the use of Acts in *EiA*. They clarify the nature of texts, the act of reading and the formation of meaning. Iser expresses a similar idea: "Techniques of any interpretation can no longer be practised without due consideration of the philosophical presuppositions underlying them."<sup>62</sup> This is certainly the case with intertextual reading.

In order to evaluate whether *EiA* makes a sound reading of Acts, this thesis will rely on the philosophical theory of reading and meaning of Ricoeur which have made a remarkable contribution to philosophical and biblical hermeneutics.<sup>63</sup>

Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory of reading and meaning can be summarized by the notions of "distanciation" and "appropriation."<sup>64</sup> By distanciation he means that, "From the moment that the text escapes from the author and from his situation, it also escapes

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<sup>60</sup> J. T. K. LIM, "Hermeneutical Rules of Reading Biblical Texts," *Mission Today* 4 (2001) p. 175. "Any reading that is not founded on the hermeneutical infrastructure of textuality should be considered a suspect."

<sup>61</sup> JEANROND, *Theological Hermeneutics*, p. 94, stresses the need to look at the basic assumptions that guide the phenomenon of reading.

<sup>62</sup> ISER, *The Act of Reading: A Theory of Aesthetic Response*, (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1978) p. 10

<sup>63</sup> RICOEUR, "Biblical Hermeneutics," in *Semeia* 4 (1975) pp. 29-148.

<sup>64</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation" in *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* (edited and translated by J. B. THOMPSON London: Cambridge University Press, 1981) p. 183. "The dialectic of distanciation and appropriation is the final figure which the dialectic of explanation and understanding must assume. It concerns the way in which the text is addressed to someone."

from its original audience. Hence, it can procure new readers for itself."<sup>65</sup> The text is, therefore, distanced from its original author and from its original audience. It enjoys a semantic autonomy; it may be actualized and be re-interpreted. Firstly, this implies that the text means more than what the author meant when he wrote it. Secondly, what is important is not the original audience, but the response of the audience created by the text. Ricoeur distinguishes two worlds: (1) the world of the text and (2) the world of the reader. By the world of a text, he says: "What must be interpreted in a text is a proposed world which I could inhabit and wherein I could project one of my ownmost possibilities. That is what I call the world of the text, the world proper to this text."<sup>66</sup> He describes reading as a "confrontation between two worlds, the fictive world of the text and the real world of the reader [...]. Meaning is found in the intersection of the world of the text and the world of the reader."<sup>67</sup> In the process of interpretation the reader enters the world of the text. "Appropriation does not imply any direct congeniality of one soul with another. Nothing is less intersubjective or dialogical than the encounter with a text, what Gadamer calls the 'fusion of horizons' expresses the convergence of the world horizons of the

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<sup>65</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation," *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences* pp. 192. FOWLER, *Let the Reader Understand: Reader-Response Criticism and the Gospel of Mark*, p. 26, says that, "Once out of the author's hands, the text is dependent on its readers."

<sup>66</sup> RICOEUR, "Hermeneutical Function of Distanciation," in *Hermeneutics and Human Sciences* p. 142. See also *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the surplus of meaning* (Texas: Fort Worth, Texas Christian University Press) p. 36, says, "For us, the world is the ensemble of references opened up by the texts, or, at least for the moment, by descriptive texts."

<sup>67</sup> RICOEUR, "The World of the Text and the World of the Reader," *Time and Narrative*, vol. III, translated by K. MCLAUGHLIN and D. PELLAUER (Chicago, London: University of Chicago Press, 1985) p. 179.

writer and the reader. The ideality of the text remains the mediator in this process of the fusion of horizons."<sup>68</sup>

According to Ricoeur, texts contain a surplus of meaning that was hardly imagined by the writer during the time of their composition. They are, therefore, capable of re-interpretation, re-contextualization and re-actualization by various readers (interpreters). This is particularly true of biblical texts. They have survived throughout the centuries because they have been made adaptable to different changing situations. "The biblical events can never become static, lifeless beads which can be strung on a chronological chain."<sup>69</sup>

For Ricoeur, reading is a dialectic of distancing and appropriation. By appropriation he means the application of a text in the actual situation of the reader. It means making one's own what was previously foreign. Ricoeur defines it thus:

'Appropriation' is my translation of the German term *Aneignung*. *Aneignen* means to make one's own what was initially 'alien' [...]. Interpretation actualizes the meaning of the text for the present reader. Appropriation is the concept which is suitable for actualization of meaning as addressed to someone [...]. As appropriation, the interpretation becomes an event. Appropriation is thus a dialectical concept.<sup>70</sup>

Appropriation is not opposed to distancing. "It is a complement not only of the distancing of the text, but also of the relinquishment of the self."<sup>71</sup> The text invites the

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<sup>68</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation" *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, pp. 191-192.

<sup>69</sup> B. S. CHILDS, *Memory and Tradition in Israel* (London: SCM Press Ltd. 1962) p. 83.

<sup>70</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation" J. B. THOMPSON (ed. and trans.) *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, p. 185.

<sup>71</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation" p.183. DUMAIS, "L'actualisation de l'écriture: fondements et procédures," *Science et Esprit*, vol. LI (1999) p. 32, says, basing himself on Ricoeur:

reader by unfolding, revealing its world to the reader. The reader is related to the text inasmuch as s/he enters the kind of world which the text presents. Ultimately the culmination of reading is the appropriation of the meaning by a concrete reader. This appropriation is revelatory. It reveals the new modes of being and gives the reader new capacities of self-knowledge. "To understand is not to project oneself into the text; it is to receive an enlarged self from the apprehension of the proposed worlds which are genuine objects of interpretation."<sup>72</sup> The interpretation that respects the text engenders a new self-understanding. It helps build a new self-identity.

The above mentioned philosophical theory of reading and meaning will become a useful basis for a critical evaluation of the use of Acts in *LiA*. A way is now paved for a suitable method. Paul Ricoeur illustrates well the intertextual dynamics of biblical revelation. For him "the Bible maintains a dialectical relationship to the areligious revelatory power of figural literature as such: it is at one and the same time both a general example and a unique expression of this literature."<sup>73</sup> The Bible is an open text which must be interpreted. Ricoeur's contribution to biblical hermeneutics finds eloquent expression in these words:

Religious language is not itself a one-level mode of discourse. It implies a *tension* between "image" and "meaning" which calls for *interpretation*. Nowhere is

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"L'appropriation s'opère dans une relation dialectique entre le monde du texte et le monde du lecteur." It is with this understanding that "appropriation" is used in the thesis.

<sup>72</sup> RICOEUR, "Appropriation," *Hermeneutics and the Human Sciences*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>73</sup> RICOEUR in D. E. KLEMM and William SCHWEIKER, *Meanings in Texts and Actions: Questioning Paul Ricoeur* (Charlottesville and London: University Press of Virginia, 1993) p. 240.

religious discourse freed of a minimal attempt to interpret it. *Kerygma* and *hermeneia* go hand in hand.<sup>74</sup>

The philosophical hermeneutics of Ricoeur will provide us with some criteria in order to evaluate the use of Acts (genotext) in *EiA* (phenotext). We will see later in this thesis how Ricoeur's hermeneutical theory of interpretation applies to the evaluation of the use of Acts in *EiA*. We will examine the following points: (1) distanciation in regard to the text of Acts by *EiA*: a certain distanciation is necessary in reading Acts; (2) two worlds: the world of Acts and the world of *EiA* as the reader of Acts; (3) faithfulness: the appropriation by *EiA* must be faithful to the meaning of the text of Acts in its world; (4) appropriation: the actualization of Acts (genotext) in *EiA* (phenotext); (5) the new capacities of self-knowledge and self-understanding engendered by the use of Acts in *EiA*.

In conclusion, a sound reading of Acts by the author of *EiA* is one that is in line with the basic meaning of the text quoted or alluded to, in the context of Acts. The text quoted is likely to receive a new dimension of meaning in the new context of *EiA*. Consequently, the text of Acts will be expanded by being used and appropriated in a new text. As a result, the Church in Africa as described in *EiA* will be shaped in its identity by the text of Acts which are used therein. At the heart of this thesis is the issue of a new identity for the African Church.

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<sup>74</sup>P. RICOEUR, "Biblical Hermeneutics," *Scripta* 4 (1975) p. 35. Ricoeur's hermeneutics is widely used in biblical studies. Ricoeur is quoted by D. MARGUERAT, *Intertextualités. La Bible en échos* (Genève: Labor et Fides, 2000) p. 9. "Paul Ricoeur a dit de la Bible qu'elle constitue le plus grand intertexte vivant."

### 5.3. Literary Criteria for the Evaluation of the Use of Acts in *EiA*

Since intertextual reading is precisely about reading, that is, the interaction between the reader and the text, the reader-response theory developed by Iser seems the most viable option for this work.<sup>75</sup> This literary theory is in accord with the philosophical hermeneutics of Ricoeur. It focuses on the reactions of the reader in the reading-process, that is, how the text affects the reader and how the reader responds to it. It is at the cutting edge of intertextuality. This theory will guide us for the evaluation of the use of the quotations and allusions to Acts in *EiA*.

Reader-response criticism, however, cannot be defined precisely, since it includes a cluster of theories and critical practices.<sup>76</sup> There is a wide spectrum of reader-response theories also called 'audience-oriented criticism'.<sup>77</sup> These differ in the degree of control over the production of meaning which they grant to the reader and the text respectively. The fundamental question is, "Who controls the meaning, reader or text?"

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<sup>75</sup> RICOEUR, "The World of the Text and the World of the Reader," pp.166-167, says: "Another theory of reading is required, one that places an emphasis on the reader's response – the reader's response to the stratagems of the implied author. A new element enriching poetics arises here out of an 'aesthetic' rather than a 'rhetoric,' if we restore to the term 'aesthetic' the full range of meaning of the Greek word aisthesis, and if we grant to it the task of exploring the multiple ways in which a work, in acting on a reader, affects that reader. This being affected has the noteworthy quality of combining in an experience a particular type passivity and activity, which allows us to consider as the 'reception' of a text the very 'action' of reading it. As I announced in Part I (Time and Narrative) p. 77 this aesthetic, as it complements poetics, encompasses in turn two different forms, depending on whether the emphasis is placed on the effect produced on the individual reader and his response in the reading process, as in the work of Wolfgang Iser or on the response of the public on the level of its collective expectations, as in the work of Hans Robert Juss." Ricoeur links his theory of reading to that of Iser. He refers to two important works of Iser, namely, *The Implied Reader* and *The Act of Reading*

<sup>76</sup>E. A. CASTELLI, S. D. MOORE, G. A. PHILLIPS, *The Postmodern Bible* (New Haven and London, Yale University Press, 1995) p. 25.

<sup>77</sup>CASTELLI, *The Postmodern Bible*, p. 24,26.

That very question led to the development of two prominent schools of literary theories of reading, namely those of Stanley Fish and Wolfgang Iser. They propose two different models of reading texts based on distinct philosophical assumptions concerning language, interpretation and meaning.

The model of reading that this thesis follows owes its substance to the work of Iser. He writes "Reading is not an internalization, because it is not a one-way process, and our concern will be to find means of describing the reading process as a dynamic interaction between text and reader."<sup>78</sup> Iser has developed his own phenomenological theory of the way in which reading is an interactive process between text and reader. More specifically he maintains that: "Central to the reading of every literary work is the interaction between its structure and its recipient [...]. The literary work has two poles, which we might call the artistic pole which is the author's text, and the aesthetic which is the realization accomplished by the reader. In view of this polarity, it is clear that the work itself cannot be identical with the text or with its realization but must be situated somewhere between the two."<sup>79</sup> Iser's theory has become a suitable basis for the reader-response criticism and we shall see its advantages below. It teaches that a text that is not being read is lifeless. Reading is the means by which a text and its meaning come to life for the reader

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<sup>78</sup>ISER, *The Act of Reading*, p. 107. JEANROND, *Text and Interpretation As Categories of Theological Thinking*, pp. 106-110. A. C. THISELTON, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, pp. 516-523.

<sup>79</sup>ISER, "Interaction between Text and Reader," in A. BENNETT, *Readers and Reading*, (London and New York, 1995) pp. 20-21.



Iser's theory of reading presents certain advantages over that of Fish, and has a strong appeal for most biblical critics. It focuses on the individual reader while Fish focuses on the community of readers.<sup>80</sup> Rather than place all power in the hands of the community, as Fish does, Iser emphasizes the interaction of text and reader, and the process whereby the way a text prompts the reader to fill in gaps and indeterminacies. The text, not the community, is the primary regulatory agency in the process of reading. Biblical reader-response critics who maintain that latitudes of the real reader's responses are controlled by the objective text find this theory appealing.<sup>81</sup> The text sets constraints on its interpretation. It allows the reader certain possibilities for interpretation but resists others. Iser holds in tension the twin poles of the textual object and the real reader's subjectivity, so that one is not erased by the other. The reader actualizes and makes concrete dimensions of meaning that would otherwise be potential versus actual.

It can be said that, on the one hand, Iser investigates the act of reading from the point of view of the effect of the text. He attributes an authority to the text. He respects the text and refuses to transform and dissolve it either into the subjectivity of the reader or the interpreter.

On the other hand, Fish adopts a different approach altogether for interpreting texts. He carries reader-response theory one step further than Iser and claims that the text as such is virtually nonexistent. For him the text does not really direct the reader's realization of its meaning. The reader's activity manifests the meaning of the text. He

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<sup>80</sup>CASTELLI, *The Postmodern Bible*, p. 57-58.

<sup>81</sup>CASTELLI, *The Postmodern Bible*, p. 41.

asserts that meaning cannot be extracted from the text but interpretation lies within the interpretative community: "No interpretative community exists in a hermetically sealed or monolithic state; the activities of any interpretative community are legitimized not only by the interests and goals it explicitly proclaims, but by the more general interests of a layered society, interests that provide a rationale when the activities of the community are interrogated by those who are not members of it."<sup>82</sup>

In stripping texts of all authority, Fish rejects the text's autonomy in favour of the reader's active participation and creation of meaning. He maintains that texts are themselves products of interpretative activity. They do not exist prior to any interpretative process. "The question of whether or not a text invites a particular interpretation (or a range of interpretations) only becomes urgent within the assumption that at some level the text exists prior to interpretation; but if one rejects that assumption, as I do, then the question becomes at once unaskable and trivial. It is (strictly speaking) unaskable because the specification of what the text is will vary with interpreters."<sup>83</sup> Fish clearly denies any objective status of the text: "The point then is that no text has existence independent of the categories of understanding within which it is seen as this rather than that."<sup>84</sup>

There are, however, some noteworthy points raised by Fish which require further reflection. First, he has raised an interesting point about the role of a reader in constructing meaning. Second, he has highlighted the role of interpretative or text-

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<sup>82</sup>S. FISH. "Resistance and Independence: A Reply to Gerald Graff." *New Literary History* 17 (1985) p. 126.

<sup>83</sup>FISH. "Resistance and Independence." p. 119.

<sup>84</sup>FISH. "Resistance and Independence." p. 120.

receiving communities in constructing meaning. Fish's overall contribution to literary criticism is quite remarkable: "Literary criticism will never be the same after his demonstration that interpreters run in packs, and that how we read texts has as much to do with these 'interpretative communities' as with texts themselves. This deeply enabling insight makes it possible to talk about interpretation as a collective and institutional phenomenon, not just a random set of individual responses."<sup>85</sup> Indeed, Fish's shift in focus has swung the pendulum of literary criticism to a new vantage point, enhancing the field of inquiry.

It remains true that no single theory of reading is altogether satisfactory.<sup>86</sup> In some cases a combination of theories might be useful. My preference for Iser's theory is primarily based on the philosophical hermeneutics which I have assumed, and the fact that it is in accord with the philosophy of Ricoeur as presented above. Both Iser and Ricoeur respect the autonomy of the text and focus on its effect upon the reader. This preference is also guided by the nature of the work I am doing and the result which I desire to obtain. I hope this work will assist in analyzing and evaluating the use of Scripture in official magisterial documents. Such a path would not be agreed to by Fish. "He totally objects to all forms of the endeavour to find eternally valid criteria in texts and their interpretations"<sup>87</sup> The most outstanding flaw I have found in Fish's theory is the

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<sup>85</sup> G. GRAFF in H. A. VEESER, *The Stanley Fish Reader* (Black Publishers Ltd. 1999) p. 38.

<sup>86</sup> THISELTON, *New Horizons in Hermeneutics*, pp. 515-550, gives a good summary appraisal on the different reader-response theories of literary meaning.

<sup>87</sup> JEANROND, *Text and Interpretation as Categories of Theological Thinking*, p. 112.

outright denial of the objective text interpretations. I do not believe that texts are merely a product of a reading community.

In summary, intertextuality is to be seen as the relationship created when Acts is read by *EiA*. In quoting from and alluding to Acts in *EiA*, its author has established an intertextual relationship between the two. My task is to analyze and evaluate the way intertextuality has been done and discover the new meanings engendered. The selected texts of Acts are found in *EiA*. Acts is an intertext resonating within the textual network of *EiA*. Acts has been re-contextualized, re-formulated, re-interpreted and even transformed, bringing theological bearing on *EiA*. The significance of intertextuality finds eloquent expression in J. A. Sanders. "Reading Scripture dialogically through intertextuality provides rich lodes within Scripture rarely explored. Since Scripture is intertextual in nature, it has depths that can reach into the very essence of human experience."<sup>88</sup>

#### 5.4. Tools for the Analysis of the Quotations and Allusions in their Context of Acts and *EiA*

Intertextual reading is a twofold dynamic which concerns two texts. In order to evaluate the relationship between two texts, one must begin by analyzing the quoted or alluded to text in both its original context (Acts) and the new context (*EiA*). This analysis will proceed in the following manner. Firstly, the significance of each quotation from and allusion to Acts in the original context of Acts will be explained. Secondly, the significance

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<sup>88</sup> SANDERS. "Intertextuality and Dialogue." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 29 (1999) p. 42.

of each quotation from and allusion to Acts in *EiA* will be examined. (a) Since context gives meaning, the paragraph<sup>89</sup> in which each quotation or allusion appears will be transcribed in order to study its significance in the immediate context of a given paragraph. (b) The location of the quotation or allusion within a paragraph and within a page will be indicated: Is it found at the beginning, middle or towards the end of a paragraph? The position of a quotation within a paragraph might indicate how it is used. For example, quotations used as prooftexts are usually found towards the end of a paragraph. What bearing and relevance does a quotation or an allusion have on the section where it is found? Obviously not all quotations or allusions have the same intertextual weight and relevance to the quoting text. (c) The contribution that a quotation from or allusion to Acts found within *EiA* makes to the argument will be ascertained. (d) The aspect which a quotation or an allusion is emphasizing will be studied. Quotations and allusions are not always verbatim repetition of the quoted text. For example, Acts 1:8 in *EiA* stresses witness, but the complete verse in Acts has other aspects which have been omitted. (e) Verbal links will be studied. (f) The study of the use of a quotation or an allusion will go beyond the scope of a given paragraph; it will be done in the larger context of what precedes and follows the paragraph. (g) The function of each quotation or allusion will be evaluated in terms of its contribution to the argument of the exhortation. The new significance the quotation or allusion gives to the quoting text will be examined, along

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<sup>89</sup> For a lack of a better word I refer to each article within *EiA* as a paragraph, that is, *EiA* 1 to 144 are paragraphs although there may be many other paragraphs within each article, e.g. *EiA* 55 has five paragraphs.

with “the nature of quotation as a rhetorical device and its resultant effect on the reading process.”<sup>90</sup>

Focusing back on the quoted text, the significance of the quotation from or allusion to Acts will be studied in the following manner: (a) its significance in the context of the pericope in Acts since a knowledge of the context is essential for proper understanding of its meaning; (b) its significance in the context of the whole of Acts, since any quotation or allusion is a part of a larger story;<sup>91</sup> and (c) their literary genres: narration, command, and exhortation will be noted.

## 6. The plan of the thesis

The general orientation of this thesis is a movement from explicit intertextual relationships between Acts and *EiA* to implicit intertextual relationships. In other words, it is a movement from quotations from Acts to allusions to Acts, since quotations and allusions are the main intertextual devices along a spectrum of intertextual references to Acts in *EiA*. First, we will study and evaluate the use of quotations of Acts in *EiA*. Subsequently, we will make a critical evaluation of allusions. It will be seen that as the thesis moves away from quotations, the intertextual relations between Acts and *EiA* become less determinate.

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<sup>90</sup>SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, p. 233, says: “Synchronic analysis focuses on a quotation’s effect rather than on its origin. One should examine a quotation for evidence of editorial intention, since a quotation’s ability to evoke another context makes it useful as a structuring device.” This is true of the use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* as we shall see in chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>91</sup>SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, p. 233, says: “To analyse a quotation synchronically involves interpreting it within the context of the entire book or books in which it is located. This places the interpreter’s focus on the final canonical form of the book rather than on the antecedent oral or written stages or posited historical influence.”

Chapter two will give the overview of *IiA* describing the exhortation as it stands. Some lexical links and affinities between *IiA* and Acts will be shown. The core of the thesis consists of Chapters three, four and five which deal with quotations and allusions. Chapter Three will be devoted entirely to the study of Acts 1:8 as a thematic framework of *IiA*, demonstrating that Acts 1:8 has been used as the commanding text in *IiA*. Chapter four presents a literary analysis of the rest of the quotations of Acts in *IiA* while chapter five examines the allusions to Acts in *IiA*. Each allusion will be treated in the same way as the quotations. Finally, Chapter Six will provide a synthesis and evaluation of the use of Acts in this ecclesial document. This chapter will discern and assess the proper use of Scripture in an official magisterial document such as *IiA*.

## CHAPTER TWO: AN OVERVIEW OF *EiA*

This chapter presents an overview of *EiA* in order to enable the reader to obtain a general understanding of the document. Intertextually speaking, *EiA* is the phenotext while Acts is the genotext. Intertextuality demands that the reader be thoroughly familiar with both the focused text and the quoted text. In this case *EiA* is the focused text or the quoting text, while Acts is the quoted text. The chapter consists of five parts: literary genre and tone, outline and content, texts, lexical links, and biblical references.

### 1. Literary Genre and Tone of *EiA*

*EiA* is a post-synodal apostolic exhortation, that is, the fruit of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa. The Church has instituted assemblies where Christian communities come together periodically to discuss pastoral issues and resolve problems. These meetings are called synods. Etymologically, "the word synod, in Greek, *synodos*, comes from the elision of two Greek words, *syn* meaning 'together' and *hodos*, which means a 'road' or a 'way'. The word conveys the idea of moving on a journey together. And this is precisely what the Church was attempting to do in calling synods whenever there were problems to be solved."<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> C. McGARRY, *What Happened at the African Synod?* (Nairobi: Pauline Publications Africa, 1995), p. 13.



A synod implies communion, cooperation, collaboration and solidarity. Canonically, it means an official ecclesiastic gathering convoked by the competent authority. A synod may be held at the diocesan level, the regional level or at the level of the universal Church. At the diocesan level, it is convoked by the local ordinary. It is convoked by the Pope at the level of both the regional and the universal Church. "There are three types of synods according to the *motu proprio*: ordinary, extraordinary and special. Special synods deal with issues of a particular region or nation."<sup>2</sup> The synod for Africa belongs to this latter category. It was meant solely for the continent of Africa, even though there were participants from other regions of the world.<sup>3</sup> It was meant to study "lights and shadows, the challenges and future prospects of evangelization in Africa on the threshold of the Third Millennium of the Christian faith" (*EiA* 1).

There are two main documents that help prepare a synod, namely the *Lineamenta* (the discussion outline) and the *Instrumentum Laboris* (the working document).<sup>4</sup> The

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<sup>2</sup> J. T. REESE, "The Experience of Special Synods," *Canon Law Society of America Proceedings*, 59th Annual Convention: Woodstock Theological Center, 1998, p. 1. There have been a number of special synods convoked by Pope John Paul II: Holland (1980); Europe (1991); Lebanon (1995); America (1997); Oceania (1998); Asia (1999).

<sup>3</sup> REESE, "The Experience of Special Synods," p.3, says: "Some of the bishops appointed to a special synod come from the geographical territory, to give the synod representation from the whole church. Thus U.S. and Latin American bishops were appointed to the African and European synods." All heads of Roman dicasteries were *ex officio* members whose presence coloured the regional representativeness of the synod.

<sup>4</sup> MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 27. The *Lineamenta* is the preliminary document which gives the initial outline of the specific issues that need attention. It is meant to encourage participation at all levels of the Church by stimulating discussions, observations, and suggestions. At the end of the document there are a series of open-ended questions whose purpose is to stimulate discussion at the grassroots level. *Instrumentum Laboris*

final document of a synod is therefore called a post-synodal exhortation. Each document presupposes and builds upon the other. The *Instrumentum Laboris* presupposes the *Lineamenta* and evolves from it and the reports of episcopal conferences. The final exhortation presupposes the *Lineamenta*, *Instrumentum Laboris* and the synodal discussion and builds upon them. The post-synodal exhortation consists of many other documents which the Pope may wish to include.<sup>5</sup> At the level of a region and the universal Church the post-synodal exhortation is called apostolic since the preceding synod is convoked by the Pope, in his function as the apostolic vicar of Christ. Being a fruit of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa, *EiA* is called a post-synodal apostolic exhortation.

As regards the type of document, *EiA* is in all respects a post-synodal apostolic exhortation, in as much as, it belongs to the papal magisterium. "Post-synodal apostolic exhortations are a new genre of magisterial statement" " begun by Pope Paul VI after the 1974 Roman synod on evangelization. Pope John Paul II uses them extensively as an exercise of his Petrine ministry. "He calls the synod, specifies the issues to be discussed, determines the agenda, presides over its sessions either in person or through his

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is the working document that results from the responses of the *Lineamenta*. It provides a kind of general summary of the Church's teaching on the theme of the synod. It is designed to help guide the deliberations of the synod assembly.

<sup>5</sup>McGARRY, *What Happened at the African Synod ?*, pp. 4-5, gives the full list of the documents of the African Synod and the list of the Church documents referred to, in the text of *EiA* or footnotes.

<sup>6</sup>MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 41.

appointed delegate, and can suspend or dissolve it. In order for any recommendations to take effect, he must approve them. Thus the synod can play as large or as small a role in the Church as the pope likes."<sup>7</sup> *EiA* claims to be "the result of an intense and prolonged collegial endeavour" (*EiA* 1).<sup>8</sup> It is an exhortation, a rhetorical form of discourse by means of which the author urges a reader to undertake action represented as worthy of merit.<sup>9</sup> *EiA* is a wake-up call to action employing diverse persuasive strategies. Its overarching intent is persuasion. Even the narrative portion in chapter two serves that

<sup>7</sup> REESE, "The Experience of Special Synods", p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> REESE, "The Experience of Special Synods," p. 4, says, "A critical factor in determining the procedures and success of any synod is the amount of time given for preparation. The Synod for Africa, for example, was convoked in January 1989 (the presynodal council was appointed in June 1989), but it did not meet until more than five years later in April of 1994 because African bishops insisted on a long process of local consultation. This allowed the African bishops plenty of time to follow consultative procedures, and many observers thought this was the best-prepared synod yet." Pope John Paul II in *EiA*, paragraph 26, says, "I must now add that the response of the African peoples to my appeal to them to share in the preparation of the synod was truly admirable. The replies given to the *Lamentata*, both within and beyond the African Ecclesial Communities far exceeded every expectation." In the preface of the *Instrumentum Laboris*, p. 3, we read: "The interest generated by the announcement by His Holiness of a synod for Africa is shown by the percentage of responses, so far the highest ever recorded for a synod. Of the 34 episcopal conferences in Africa and Madagascar, fully 31 sent in responses; the remaining three were under very difficult circumstances at the time." LUNEAU, *Paroles et Silences du Synode Africain*, p. 12, writes: "A ma connaissance, aucun Synode des évêques ne fut plus longuement préparé que celui-là."

<sup>9</sup> B. DUPRIEZ, *A Dictionary of Literary Devices: Gradus A-Z* (Toronto and Buffalo: University of Toronto Press, 1991) p.181. P. E. SATTERTHWAITTE, "Acts against the Background of Classical Rhetoric," in B. W. WINTER and A. D. CLARKE, *The Book of Acts in Its Ancient Setting* (Michigan, Grand Rapids: W. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., Paternoster Press, 1993) p. 338-339, says: "Rhetoric has to do with persuasion, specially the persuasive powers of words, spoken or written. It is helpful to distinguish between 'primary' rhetoric, the art of persuasive public speaking as part of social and civil life, and 'secondary' rhetoric, the use of the techniques of 'primary' rhetoric in literature whose focus is not a public speech. Just like 'primary' rhetoric, 'secondary' rhetoric aims to persuade the reader or hearer."

same purpose: to persuade the reader to see the need for a new missionary paradigm for the Church in Africa today

The stated main purpose of *EiA* is to offer encouragement and hope to the Church in Africa "at the very moment when human events seemed tempting Africa to discouragement and despair" (*EiA* 1). It urges, encourages, challenges, confirms and affirms the Church in Africa. "It has more a character of a pontifical letter addressed to the Church in Africa than a document of the African Church."<sup>10</sup> It not only bears the signature of the Pope; it generally has his personal tone. His voice dominates throughout the document. At various places within the exhortation, the Pope speaks in the first person singular "I".<sup>11</sup> He makes strong personal appeals and gives advice on moral, doctrinal and disciplinary questions. He appeals to young people to love their respective countries and cultures (*EiA* 115), and to the world's scientists and political leaders to

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<sup>10</sup>ELSENER, "The African Synod..." p. 69. There was a lot of controversy concerning the venue, and the themes of the synod. HEIJKE, "The African Bishops' synod of 1994" *Exchange* 25 (1996) pp. 136-162. HEIJKE, "African Synod-Colonization of Africa." *Exchange* 21 (1992) pp. 177-230. Of the many regional synods of bishops convoked by Pope John Paul II, the African synod was the most controversial. There were questions about the nature and the timing of the synod, the venue and the choice of topics. L. MAGESA, "A Note on the Future of the African Synod: the End of the Assembly," *Sedos Bulletin* 27 (1995) p. 8, writes: "The Bishops' Assembly of the African Synod has ended in Rome, in May 1994. Just how "African" was the Assembly in terms of motivation and commitment to the African ecclesial cause? How "African" was it with regard to content? In other words, did the Assembly itself, and the preparation leading to it, measure up to the central theme of the Synod, that is, the task of building an inculturated Church on the African continent, an African Church?"

<sup>11</sup>The first person pronoun singular "I" appears eighty-six times throughout the English text of the exhortation. Ten times the Pope clearly says: "I said..." Only five times do we find the first person plural "we" referring to synod fathers. The pope is the implied author of *EiA* and the implied reader of Acts. This is reflected in the text of *EiA*. It is in this capacity that he is referred to, either directly or indirectly in this thesis.

combat AIDS (*EiA* 116). He pleads to all of God's people in Africa to accept with open hearts the message of hope addressed to them by the Synodal Assembly (*EiA* 14). He encourages the Church in Africa to continue to bear witness (*EiA* 44). He urges African Catholics to look inside themselves for the solution to their problems (*EiA* 48). He invites God's people in Africa to the Great Jubilee (*EiA* 141). Much of the exhortation is written in a personal and encouraging tone.

The Pope also declares himself as the one promulgating this exhortation in his capacity as the apostolic authority of the successor of Peter (*EiA* 1, 41). He maintains that he had been involved throughout the different stages of the preparation for the synod (*EiA* 5).<sup>12</sup>

Subsequently, from 1977 to 1983, some Bishops, priests, consecrated persons, theologians and lay people expressed a desire for an *African Council* or *African Synod*, which would have the task of evaluating evangelization in Africa vis-à-vis the great choices to be made regarding the Continent's future. I gladly welcomed and encouraged the idea of the 'working together in one form or another,' of the

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<sup>12</sup>In *EiA*, paragraph five, the Pope alludes to the failure of the proposed African synod or African council. The idea of an African Council was a singular initiative of the African Church which was promoted mainly by the episcopate of the Democratic Republic of Congo. In *EiA*, paragraph five, the Pope says he was, in principle, in favour of the idea of the 'working together, in one form or another.'" The Pope's announcement of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa in 1989 was greeted with surprise both in Rome and in Africa. In the preface, p. 3 of the *Instrumentum Laboris* Cardinal J. P. SCHOTTE writes, "With the surprise announcement of 6 January, the Holy Father communicated that, in response to the suggestions expressed in a wide consultation of the African Episcopate, he had decided to convene a Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops." For discussions on the failure of an African Council see, E. MVENG, "Le Synode Africain. Prolegomenes pour un Concile Africain," *Concilium* 239 (1992) p. 165, says: "Bien sûr, il s'est trouvé dans l'épiscopat africain, plusieurs qui ont applaudi en croyant que le pape avait purement et simplement pris le parti des adversaires d'un concile africain. Erreur grossière!..."

whole African Episcopate in order to study the religious problems that concern the whole continent.

The Pope explains the measures he took to enable the people of God in Africa to prepare for the synod (*LtA* 23).

Between the beginning of my Pontificate and the solemn inauguration of the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of bishops, I paid a total of ten pastoral visits to thirty-six countries. On my Apostolic visits after the convocation of the Special Assembly, the theme of the Synod always figured prominently in my meetings with the people of Africa. I also took advantage of the *ad limina* visits of the Continent's bishops in order to ask for the co-operation of everyone in the preparation of the Special Synod for Africa.

The Pope addresses the exhortation to a wide audience "to the pastors and lay Catholics, and then to our brothers and sisters of other Christian confessions, to those who profess great monotheistic religions, in particular the followers of African traditional religions, and to all people of good will who in one way or another have at heart Africa's spiritual and material development or who hold in their hands the destiny of this great Continent" (*LtA* 7). Right from the beginning the exhortation is open to interreligious dialogue since it is addressed even to believers of the non-Christian religions, in particular Muslims and the adherents of African traditional religion. They must be respected (*LtA* 67).

The Pope describes the exhortation as an invitation to the celebration for the Great Jubilee 2000 (*LtA* 141) which was to be one of the keys for the interpretation of his pontificate (*LtA* 18). It is noteworthy to realize that the idea of the celebration of the great Jubilee 2000 is found neither in the *Lineamenta* nor in the *Instrumentum Laboris*. The Pope himself introduces it.

great Jubilee 2000 is found neither in the *Lineamenta* nor in the *Instrumentum Laboris*. The Pope himself introduces it.

An obvious question is to what extent the exhortation is a product of the African bishops. Miller clarifies the nature of an exhortation: "post-synodal exhortations are therefore the outcome of two complementary factors: the vast collective input of the bishops and the personal contribution of the Pope [...]. According to the Pope, a post-synodal exhortation is 'a fruit of collegiality,' a response to what the Synod Fathers have asked him to do."<sup>15</sup> The Pope also makes such an acknowledgement in *EiA*. He makes it clear that he speaks in the name of his brother bishops, giving them a single voice: "The members of the Synodal Assembly asked me to bring to the attention of the whole Church the results of their reflections and prayers, discussions and exchanges" (*EiA* 1). In many places within the exhortation, there are references to the interventions and propositions of the synod fathers (*EiA* 14):

During their discussions the synod fathers, fully aware that they were expressing the expectations not only of the African Catholics but also those of all men and women of the Continent, squarely faced the many evils which oppress Africa today. The Fathers explored at length and in all its complexity what the Church is called to do in order to bring about the desired changes, but they did so with an attitude free from pessimism or despair

Concerning the burning pastoral issue of the relevance and the credibility of the message of the Church, the exhortation states, "the synod fathers faced the question directly, with genuine frankness and devoid of any complacency" (*EiA* 21). "That same

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<sup>15</sup>MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 34.

Assembly had declared that the credibility of the Church in Africa depended upon the bishops and priests who followed Christ's example and could give witness of an exemplary life: upon truly faithful men and women religious, authentic witnesses by their way of living the evangelical counsels: upon a dynamic laity, with deeply believing parents, educators conscious of their responsibilities and political leaders animated by a profound sense of morality" (*LtA* 22).

Essentially, *LtA* is a papal document that draws most of its material from the synod's interventions and propositions. As this is clearly reflected in the exhortation, *LtA* becomes, not merely a record of the interventions and propositions of the synod, but rather the reflection of the Pope based on the synod experience. Before analysing it, it is necessary to clarify the nature of this document and its canonical status. It is neither an encyclical nor a decree, being exhortative in nature, not legislative.<sup>14</sup> But more than an encyclical, a post-synodal exhortation emphasizes the pope's role within the college of

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<sup>14</sup>MORRISEY, *Papal and Curial Pronouncements*, p. 13, makes an interesting distinction between Decretal and Encyclical Letters and between Apostolic Epistles and Apostolic Exhortations. *LtA* is a post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation, that is, a document that puts forward the teaching that has been studied at the assembly of synod of bishops. MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, has made an interesting study of the six post-synodal apostolic exhortations of John Paul II, namely, "Catechesi Tradendae," "Familiaris Consortio," "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia," "Christifideles Laici," "Pastores Dabo Vobis," and "Vita Consecrata". On page 41, he says that, "Post-Synodal apostolic exhortations are issued by the Pope in his own name and are sealed with his own authority [...] They are not 'papal' in exactly the same way that encyclicals, apostolic constitutions, and apostolic letters are. But neither are they 'collegial' in the traditional sense, as are the decrees of Ecumenical Councils. Rather, these exhortations combine both elements."



bishops.<sup>15</sup> *EiA* is a pastoral, missionary document addressed to the Church in Africa by the pope in his capacity as the successor of Peter. As a genre, *EiA* is a papal document which is an expression of affective and effective communion of the African episcopate with the pope. It is an open-ended document calling for further research and for the study of some issues of pastoral and theological interest, such as marriage, ancestral veneration and the spirit world (*EiA* 64). It does not have any definitive pronouncements or binding deliberations but consists of propositions by the pope.

## 2. The General Outline and Content of *EiA*

### 2.1 Outline and Content

*EiA* has seven chapters as well as an introduction and a conclusion. The introduction describes the background history of the synod, that is, where the idea came from and the change in venue from the African council or synod to the special assembly for Africa of the synod of bishops (*EiA* 5). It concludes with the general outline of the exhortation (*EiA* 8). The introduction has eight biblical references of which three are from Acts (8:27-39; 1:8). Acts 1:8 is even quoted twice within the same paragraph.

Chapter one underscores the synod as a moment of grace for the Church in Africa. The synod is depicted as one of resurrection and hope (*EiA* 13). “Like Mary Magdalene on the morning of the Resurrection, like the disciples of Emmaus with burning hearts and

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<sup>15</sup>MILLER, *The Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortations*, p. 7.

enlightened minds, the special Synod for Africa, Madagascar and the Islands proclaims: Christ, our Hope is Risen. He has met us, has walked along with us. He has explained Scriptures to us" (*EiA* 13). It also speaks about the relevance and the credibility of the message of the Church. "The synod's debate on the relevance and credibility of the Church's message in Africa inescapably entailed consideration of the very credibility of the proclaimers of this message" (*EiA* 21). In this chapter there are twelve biblical references, three of which are from Acts (1:8; 10:45-46; 10:34-35,47).

Chapter two presents a brief history of the evangelization of the continent, paying particular tribute to expatriate missionaries: "The splendid growth and achievements of the Church in Africa are due largely to the heroic and selfless dedication of generations of missionaries. This fact is acknowledged by everyone. The hallowed soil of Africa is truly sown with the tombs of courageous heralds of the gospel" (*EiA* 35). This is indeed a selective presentation since it stresses only the positive things that had been accomplished but says absolutely nothing about the mistakes which were committed during the process of evangelization.<sup>16</sup> The chapter also highlights some positive African values. "The synod Fathers highlighted some of these cultural values, which are truly a providential preparation for the transmission of the Gospel" (*EiA* 42). It also presents a sobering picture of the present-day problems of the Church in Africa. "Tribal oppositions

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<sup>16</sup> New People Media Centre. "An Analysis of the Church in Africa." BROWNE, *The African Synod*, p. 16, says: "These successes should not lead to complacency or to overlooking mistakes of the past methods of evangelizing Africa." Indeed many mistakes were committed mostly out of ignorance about the cultural values of Africa since most missionaries did not have any study in African culture and world-view.

at times endanger if not peace. at least the pursuit of the common good of the society” (*IiA* 49). The chapter ends with a note on the formation of the agents of evangelization, particularly the laity. “The whole community needs to be trained, motivated and empowered for evangelization, each according to his or her specific role within the Church. For this reason the synod emphasized the training of the agents of evangelization in Africa” (*IiA* 53). Chapter Two has seven biblical references of which two are from Acts (1:8; 2:11).

Chapter three is central in importance since it deals with the major tasks of evangelization, namely, proclamation, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and the means of social communication. The implications of inculturation for the African Church are spelled out: it is an urgent priority, a requirement for evangelization and a great challenge. There are twenty-seven biblical references in this chapter only one of which is from Acts (1:8)

Chapter four speaks about the present-day challenges facing the Church in Africa in the light of the third Christian Millennium. First of all, there is an urgent need for first evangelization. “There are millions who are not yet evangelized” (*IiA* 74). Secondly, the issue of adult Christian formation for the laity is discussed (*IiA* 75). Finally, the dignity of the family is underlined: “Not only is the Christian family the first cell of the living ecclesial community, it is also the fundamental cell of society” (*IiA* 80). This chapter has twenty biblical references of which two are from Acts (2:11; 4:12).

Chapter five takes up from where Chapter three left off. It systematically presents the agents and structures of evangelization that would help the bearing of witness to the gospel in Africa. It describes the role and function of each agent of evangelization, including both laity and clergy. "Evangelization needs agents.[...]. The proclamation of the Gospel can be fully carried out only through the contribution of all believers at every level of the universal and local Church" (*EiA* 88). The structures of evangelization include schools and universities. This chapter has six biblical references, three of which come from Acts (1:8; 2:42; 20:28).

Chapter six is entitled "Building the Kingdom of God." It explores the means and ways to build the kingdom of justice and peace on the continent. "The Church's witness must be accompanied by a firm commitment to justice and solidarity by each member of God's people" (*EiA* 105). It proposes strategies for establishing the Kingdom of God amidst the harsh realities facing the continent. "The Church, as a community of faith, must be an energetic witness of justice and peace in her structures and in the relationships among her members" (*EiA* 106). The chapter has five biblical references, none of which is from Acts.

Chapter seven focuses on the universal mission of the Church in Africa. "The Church in Africa is not called to bear witness to Christ only on the Continent" (*EiA* 128). Its evangelizing mission is not confined within the boundaries of the continent. It extends to other parts of the world. There are five biblical references in this chapter and out of

these, three are from Acts (2:44-45; 1:8). Acts 1:8 alone is referred to on six separate occasions. *EvA* concludes with an invitation to the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000.

## 2.2. Some Reflections on the Content

There are two voices within the exhortation which need to be distinguished in order to avoid confusion in the interpretation. On the one hand, there is the voice of the Pope himself who speaks in the first person singular. For example, he denounces African authoritarian and oppressive regimes (*EvA* 112); arms trade (*EvA* 118) and the burden of the international debt (*EvA* 120). On the other hand, there is the voice of the synod fathers which is reported in the first person plural (*EvA* 13). In most cases the Pope speaks as a spokesperson of the synod fathers, but there are also times when he speaks in his own name: "Echoing, the voice of Synod Fathers, I too ask pastoral workers to bring to their brothers and sisters affected by AIDS all possible material, moral and spiritual comfort" (*EvA* 116).

The Pope calls the exhortation "a collegial endeavour." This may be true from his own perspective but may not necessarily be true for the African bishops who attended the synod. "Out of the sixty-four propositions, fifty-two have been included in the exhortation. It is not easy to determine the extent to which the final exhortation accurately reflects the deliberations of the synod because of the aura of secrecy that

surrounds its proceedings.”<sup>17</sup> Therefore the affirmation of the collegiality of *EiA* needs to be nuanced.

Seen as a whole, the exhortation lacks a rigorous and logical plan. “It does not follow the clear structure of the *Lineamenta* and of the *Instrumentum laboris*”<sup>18</sup> Its seven chapters are not logically sequenced. The main themes of evangelization, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and means of social communication are frequently reiterated. While these themes are identifiable in the *Lineamenta* and *Instrumentum Laboris*, they are hardly distinguishable in *EiA* since they permeate the whole of it

Evidently, there is a strong emphasis on inculturation and the image of the Church as a family of God, which is an important contribution of the synod. One would have to read *EiA* quite closely in order to grasp the significance of these issues. The lack of a coherent and logical presentation of these issues renders the understanding of the exhortation more complex.

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<sup>17</sup>ELSENER, “The African Synod” p. 69. MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Exhortations*, pp. 33-34, makes this clarification that, “The Bishop of Rome is not juridically bound to accept a Synod’s *propositiones*. The Pope treats the Synod Fathers’ official proposals as an authoritative witness to the life and faith of the whole Church. But, at the same time, he carefully avoids saying that the Fathers’ proposals oblige him, leaving himself free to incorporate the Synod’s views as he sees fit.”

<sup>18</sup>J. HEIJKE, “The African’s Bishops’ Synod of 1994,” *Exchange* 25 (1996) p. 155. The *Lineamenta* and *Instrumentum Laboris* were the preparatory documents for the synod assembly.

The interesting part of the exhortation is that it is an open document which calls for further reinterpretation and actualization of its message. In some cases it raises issues without explaining them, as can be seen in the following excerpt. "It is earnestly to be hoped that theologians in Africa will work out the theology of the Church as a family with all the riches contained in this concept, showing its complementarity with other images of the Church" (*EiA* 63). It is in response to that challenge of reinterpretation and further development that this thesis has been undertaken. The exhortation therefore calls for research and further reflection on the issues raised but not discussed in depth.

*EiA* suffers from two important omissions on the history of the Church in Africa. In the first place, it pays great homage to missionaries but says nothing whatsoever about some of the mistakes that were committed in the process of evangelization during the course of history. There have been a number of abuses committed by the Church on those being evangelized. The link between missionary activity with colonial politics has been one of them. In addition, a total disregard of the positive cultural and spiritual values of the evangelized simply because they did not fit the European moral standard, emerged as another failure.<sup>19</sup> More information on the historical background can be

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<sup>19</sup> M. ROSTKOWSKI, *La Missione senza Confini: Ambiti della missione ad gentes*, Roma, 2000, p. 72, writes: "The result of misunderstanding the second aspect of missionary activity – adaptation (accommodation) – was the identification of Christianization with Europeanization. This was a phenomenon especially characteristic of the post-Reformation period." I. P. MWAKYOLILE, "African Identity Within the Christian Church: A Quest for Reconstructing Our Theology," *African Theological Journal* 23 (2000) pp. 51-52, writes: "Some methods did not impress many of the Africans, because they did not consider the cultural setting the Africans had. They presented the Gospel in the garment of the western lifestyle and tradition, so that it could not be understood by many of the Africans. On the other hand, the alliance some early

found in the *Lineamenta* than in *EiA*. Secondly *EiA* is quite silent on the humiliation and shame endured by Africans through slavery and colonialism.<sup>20</sup>

### 3. Texts Used in *EiA*

As it was stated in the previous chapter under method, intertextuality proposes that no text is an island, but can be looked upon as a network or mosaic of other texts. *EiA* is no exception to this rule. It is made up of many other texts, particularly the Bible which is referred to many times. Much of the documentation generated during special assemblies comes from the synod's preparatory stages, especially in the initial outline for discussion, *Lineamenta*, and the working document, *Instrumentum Laboris*. *EiA* has,

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missionaries had with the colonial power was still another open wound to Africans, so that it was difficult for some of them to make the way open for the missionary work."

<sup>20</sup> *Lineamenta* (Vatican City, 1990) pp. 1-13, evaluates the decline and the eventual disappearance of the flourishing Church of North Africa in the 13th century and history was repeated in the sub-Saharan Africa by the beginning of the 19th century. The Church had completely disappeared. L. MAGESA, "Africa's Struggle for Self-Definition During a Time of Globalization," *African Ecclesial Review* 40 (1998) p. 1, writes: "It is definitely impossible to consider the Africans' experience in history without taking into serious account this expropriation of their power and ability to name themselves. What else did the slave trade, slavery and the colonial experience do to them, but remove ability to name themselves?" L. ACCATTOLI, *When a Pope Asks Forgiveness: The Mea Culpa's of John Paul* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1998) p. 239, writes: "The Pope spoke of this matter on three special occasions: during the two visits to Africa (Cameroun [1985] and Senegal [1992] and during his visit to Santo Domingo in 1992. On all three occasions he spoke with deep emotion and in a spirit of repentance." A. CIPOLLINI, "Pour une nouvelle évangélisation en Afrique: Introduction à la réflexion sur certaines lignes de force émanant de l'Assemblée sur le Synode africain et de l'Exhortation Apostolique post-synodale *Ecclesia in Africa*," *Cahiers de Réflexion Ecclesia in Africa: approfondissements*, p. 7, states: "Cela ne justifie pourtant que partiellement l'absence de toute référence aux confrontations entre la mission et le colonialisme dans le chapitre consacré à l'histoire de l'évangélisation du continent, dont les hauts faits n'ont fait que l'objet d'un bref rappel. En dépit du climat établi d'une communion positive, il n'est pas moins frappant qu'on a gardé un silence notable sur les responsabilités historiques pesant sur l'Occident chrétien dans le rôle joué dans la traite esclavagiste des Noirs."



therefore, interwoven into its literary fabric a network of other texts. This is manifested by the number of references, quotations and allusions that are found within the text and are referred to in notes at the bottom of each page of the exhortation. The Bible is quoted ninety-six times. Out of the one hundred and ninety-seven non-biblical references, one hundred and thirty-three refer to the document of the synod, eighty-seven refer to the propositions and twenty to the final message of the synod. John Paul II quotes his own writings seventy-eight times, the Vatican II documents thirty-six times, and the writings of Pope Paul VI thirty-four times.<sup>21</sup> The nature of the texts cited ranges from the *Lineamenta*, papal addresses, apostolic exhortations, and encyclicals to the Catholic Catechism.

*EiA* is a tapestry made up of interwoven literary threads that have been reformulated and reconfigured within the basic composition of the exhortation. Acts is one of those many literary threads that make up this tapestry. It is important to focus on Acts specifically because of its unique importance within the exhortation. The key

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<sup>21</sup>CHEZA, "Synode africain," p. 212. He gives the statistical datum of all the texts of the exhortation. It is quite obvious that the exhortation is largely marked by the Pope's official teaching on the missionary activity of the Church, based on his encyclical, *Redemptoris Missio* which is referred to, sixteen times in *EiA* and quotes Acts profusely and treats similar themes to *EiA*, namely, proclamation, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace, and means of social communications. L. MAGESA, "Redemptoris Missio, Centesimus Annus and The African Synod," *African Ecclesial Review* 33 (1991) p. 314, writes: "In view of the fact that Africa has the fastest growing number of converts to Christianity, it is safe to assume that Pope John Paul II had the Synod in mind when he wrote *Redemptoris Missio*." It is not possible to prove for sure what the Pope had in mind when writing the encyclical. But it is to be remembered that *Redemptoris Missio* and *Centesimus Annus* were published right in the middle of the preparation for the African synod.

questions are how Acts has been used in the exhortation and how it could have been used in order to improve the biblical import of *EiA*.

#### 4. Lexical Links Between *EiA* and Acts

As we have seen previously, intertextuality maintains that all texts can be regarded as the rewriting of previous texts, and also as a reaction to them. As stated under distanciation, readers may also find some interrelationships between two texts which were not at all intended by the author. There are different ways of establishing intertextual links between texts, including quotations or allusions. In the case of Acts and *EiA*, the first step to showing some affinities between them is to look at their lexical links. This does not, of course, make any argument about dependency. There are a number of important terms/expressions in *EiA* which are also found in Acts. The frequency of their use in each can be seen from the following list below.<sup>22</sup>

<b>Important terms /expressions<sup>23</sup></b>	<b><i>EiA</i></b>	<b>Acts</b>
Church /εκκλησία	286	23
Witness/μάρτυς	54	13
Gospel/ εὐαγγελιον	60	2
Proclamation/kerygma+	32	6
Faith/πίστις	61	15

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<sup>22</sup>R. MORGENTHALER, *Statistik des Neutestamentlichen Wortschatzes* (Zürich: Gotthelf-Verlag, 1958) gives the statistical datum for Acts. D. L. GUDER, *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message and Messengers* (Grand Rapids Michigan: W. E. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1985), demonstrates the relationship in Acts among the following terms: (witness) *martyrs*, (testimony) *martyria*, *koinonia*, *kerygma* and (service) *diakonia*. The importance of this list of terms will be seen later within the thesis.

<sup>23</sup>There are two words transliterated from Greek into English and they are marked with (+). The statistics above on Acts is based on the Greek words while the one on *EiA* is based on the English words.

Word/λόγος	26	65
Service/ διακονία	14	8
Communion/κοινωνία	22	1
Hope/έλπις	30	8
Holy Spirit/πνεύμα άγιος	44	70
Apostles/άπόστολοι	14	28
Salvation/σωτηρία	22	6
Martyr/μάρτυς	8	13
Pentecost /πεντεκοστή	9	2
Plan of God/βουλή του Θεού	12	7
Conversion/metanoia +	8	6

Besides the above list of important terms and expressions the following themes found in *EiA* resonate in Acts: evangelization, mission, community, inculturation and dialogue. Evangelization is the main theme of *EiA* under which all others can be subsumed. The significance of these themes will be explained together with references to Acts below.

The list of the important terms, expressions and themes indicates, perhaps superficially, the intertextual links between these two texts. An interconnectedness appears between them and shows how Acts has become part of the intertextual web of *EiA*.

From the viewpoint of style also *EiA* resembles Acts in an analogous way. Both are exhortative and encouraging <sup>24</sup> using different persuasive strategies. They are

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<sup>24</sup>M. L. SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts: Content, Context, and Concerns* (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1994). All these speeches which constitute an important part of the narrative of Acts are exhortations. The argument here is not about the overarching literary genre of Acts but the common elements between Acts and *EiA*. For the persuasive qualities of Acts see P. E. SATTERTHWAITHE, "Acts Against the Background of

comprised of other texts,<sup>25</sup> and there is a lot of repetition. Some of the main themes of *EiA* (evangelization, mission, communion, community and inculturation) are reiterated. In Acts, we find repetitions and allusions to a number of episodes. Stephen's martyrdom, Acts 7:51-8:3, is alluded to in Acts 9:1; 11:19; the following are repeated: the conversion of Paul (Acts 9, 22, 26), the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10, 11, 15), and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (2:3-4; 4:31; 8:17; 10:45-46; 19:1-6) and the Holy Spirit as a gift of God (Acts 2:38; 8:20, 10:45, 11:17). Repetition, sometimes called redundancy, is a common literary device in Luke-Acts.<sup>26</sup> *EiA* uses a similar device, quoting Acts 1:8 in succession. The aim of the synod is also repeated: "In order to promote an organic pastoral solidarity within the entire African territory and nearby Islands" (*EiA* 5.16, 76.131). A similar pattern is found in Acts whereby the text: "We are

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Classical Rhetoric." B. W. WINTER and A. D. CLARKE. *The Book of Acts in its Ancient Literary Setting*, vol. 1. (William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1993) pp. 375-376. He speaks about overt and covert persuasion in Acts. DUMAIS, "Les Actes des Apôtres" *De bien des manières*. La Recherche biblique aux abords du XXI<sup>e</sup> siècle (ACEBAC 163, Montréal: éditions Fides, 1995) p. 342, says: "On peut assigner en priorité les deux buts suivants à l'oeuvre lucanienne: (1) un but pastoral indiqué en Lc 1.4 (à considérer comme préface des deux tomes): renforcer la foi des disciples; (2) un but missionnaire indiqué en Ac 1.8: présenter les grandes étapes de l'expansion de la foi et montrer que l'ouverture aux païens (l'universalité du salut) est l'oeuvre de l'Esprit." There is some persuasive intent in Acts. Luke in Acts helps to consolidate and create identity for his community, as does *EiA*.

<sup>25</sup>J. A. FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary*, (Anchor Bible; New York: Doubleday, 1998) pp. 90-95, discusses the use of the Old Testament in Acts.

<sup>26</sup>R. C. TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, vol. 2. The Acts of the Apostles (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 1994) p. 74. He discusses the different functions of repetition in Luke-Acts.

witnesses” is repeated many times (2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39; 13:31 ). These words are repeated in *EiA*.

On the level of characters, analogously speaking, the most important ones in Acts are Peter and Paul. In *EiA* the name “Peter” is used ten times and “Paul” is used twice. That is relatively few compared to fifty-six times and one hundred and thirty-seven times respectively in Acts. Peter and Paul are the most prominent characters in Acts where the first twelve chapters are dedicated to the ministry of Peter (Acts 1-12) and the rest of the book is dedicated to the ministry of Paul (Acts 13-28).<sup>27</sup> Not being a narrative, *EiA* has no characters but the times their names are mentioned is quite significant.

*EiA* shows evidence of the penchant for male–female parallelism found in Acts.<sup>28</sup> Like in Acts, “men and women” (*EiA* 36, 38) are referred to together fifteen times in *EiA*. In some places outstanding women are singled out by name: “Blessed Clementine Anwarite and Blessed Isidore Bakanja” who were both martyrs of Congo (*EiA* 34).

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<sup>27</sup>M. GOURGUES, “Mission et Communauté (Ac 1-12)” in *Cahiers Evangile* 60 (1989) pp. 4-66 et “L’evangile aux païens (Ac 13-28)” *Cahiers Evangile* 67 (1989) pp. 5-64. See also BOSSUYT et RADERMAKERS, *Temoins de la Grâce*, p. 19.

<sup>28</sup>J. NAVONE, *Themes of St Luke* (Rome, Gregorian University Press, 1970) p. 224, gives the following examples from Acts: Ananias and Sapphira (5:1ff); Acneas and Tabitha (9:33-36); Dionysius and Damaris (17:34); Priscilla and Aquila (18:18).

*EiA* uses the leitmotif of “growth,” which is also common in Acts.<sup>29</sup> The Church in Africa is described as young and the most rapidly growing.<sup>30</sup> It grows in faith: “The list of saints that Africa gives to the Church, the list that is its greatest honour continues, to grow. [...]. Faced with the tremendous growth of the Church in Africa over the last hundred years and the fruits of holiness that it has borne, there is only one possible explanation: all this is a gift of God, for no human effort alone could have performed this work in the course of such a relatively short period” (*EiA* 34). “The fact that in the course of almost two centuries the number of African Catholics has grown quickly is an outstanding achievement by any standard” (*EiA* 38).<sup>31</sup> Truly the African Church has grown in faith, holiness and number.

The study of lexical links between *EiA* and Acts has revealed significant intertextual relationship between them. There are, of course, other biblical texts which are part of the literary mosaic of *EiA*, but the connections to Acts stand out from these in ways which will be explored later in this thesis.

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<sup>29</sup>Acts speaks about the growth of the Word (6:7, 12:24, 19:20) and the increase in the number of believers (2:41,47; 4:4; 5:14; 6:1,7; 9: 31; 11:21, 24; 16:5).

<sup>30</sup>*Lineamenta*, paragraph 8.

<sup>31</sup>M. ZAGO, “Commentary On *Redemptoris Missio*,” in W.R. BURROWS, *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading Redemptoris Missio and Dialogue and Proclamation*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1993), p. 78, says: “The strength of a theological sign is not caused purely by numbers of the adherents to the Christian faith, but quantity does have an importance. The rationale for counting missionary dynamism as a sign of a Church’s health derives from the centrality of mission to the essential nature of the Church.”

## 5. Biblical References in *EiA*

It is worth noting that there are more biblical references in the *Lineamenta* and *Instrumentum Laboris* than in *EiA*. The number of references diminishes gradually from the *Lineamenta*, to *Instrumentum Laboris* and to *EiA*. Nonetheless, the Bible is still used quite extensively in *EiA* as we will see from the schema below.<sup>32</sup>

<b>Old Testament Quotations</b>	<b>Position of Quotations in <i>EiA</i> (Number of Paragraph)</b>
1. Genesis 1:27	82, 121
2. Genesis 2:18-25	82
3. Genesis 3	82
4. Isaiah 2: 4 (twice)	117
5. Isaiah 49: 14	143
6. Isaiah 49: 15-16	143
7. Isaiah 55: 11	58
8. Isaiah 61:1-2	68
9. Isaiah 61: 10	61
10. Psalms 8:6-7	82
11. Psalms 28:7	143
12. Psalms 118: 23	34
14. Psalms 118: 24	6
<b>New Testament Quotations</b>	<b>Position of Quotations in <i>EiA</i> (Number of Paragraph)</b>
15. Matthew 2:14-15	81
16. Matthew 5:9	118
17. Matthew 5: 9-10	105
18. Matthew 5:13,14	74
19. Matthew 8: 17	68
20. Matthew 22: 30	83
21. Matthew 28:19	29, 73 (twice).
22. Matthew 28:20	12
23. Mark 8:35	55
24. Mark 15:21	27
25. Mark 16: 15	55

<sup>32</sup> P. POUÇOUTA, *Lettres aux églises d'Afrique* (Paris:éditions Karthala,1997) pp. 283-284.

26. Mark 16:20	55
27. Luke 1:49	34
28. Luke 2:10	142
29. Luke 2: 19, 51	58
30. Luke 2: 34	55
31. Luke 4:18-19	68
33. Luke 5:4	6
34. Luke 10:30-37	41
35. Luke 22:32	7
36. Luke 24:40-41	12
37. John 1:14	60
38. John 3:5	73
39. John 6: 67-69	10
40. John 12:24	61
41. John 12:32	61
42. John 13:35	79
43. John 16: 13	57,78
44. John 17:3	77
45. John 17:21,26	77
46. John 20:21,26	12
47. John 20:29	12
48. Acts 1:8	8 (twice), 18, 38, 56, 86, 128,129, 130, 133 (twice), 135, 138, title of chapters 5 and 7, footnote 32.
49. Acts 2:11	32, 76.
50. Acts 2:42	100
36. Acts 2:44-45	129
51. Acts 4:12	74
52. Acts 8:27-39	6
52. Acts 10: 34-35, 47	28
53. Acts 10:45-46	28
54. Acts 20:28	98
55. Romans 5:8	60
56. Romans 6: 4-5	74
57. Romans 10: 14-15	88
58. 1 Corinthians 1:2	87
59. 1 Corinthians 1:17	127
60. 1 Corinthians 1:23	55
61. 1 Corinthians 9:16	55
62. 1 Corinthians 15:24	87
63. 2 Corinthians 11:28	2, 132
64. Galatians 4:4	60
65. Ephesians 2:14	79



66. Ephesians 2:16	79
67. Ephesians 3:8	47
68. Ephesians 5:32-33	83
69. Philippians 2: 6-9	61
70. Colossians 1:15	69
71. 1Timothy 2:4	73, 128
72. 1Timothy 2:4-6	27
73. 2 Timothy 4:2	58, 71
74. Hebrews 1:1-2	71
75. Hebrews 4:12-13	58
76. Hebrews 13:7	35
77. 1 Peter 3:15	55
78. 2 Peter 1:20	58
79. 1 John 4:8	83
80. Revelation 1:17-18	13

The schema above shows that in all there are fewer Old Testament references than New Testament ones. From the books of the Old Testament *EiA* only quotes Genesis (four times), Isaiah (seven times), and Psalms (four times). The New Testament books are quoted far more extensively: Matthew (nine times), Mark (four times), Luke (nine times), John (thirteen times), Acts (twenty-five times), Romans (three times), 1 Corinthians (five times), 2 Corinthians (twice), Galatians (once), Ephesians (four times), Philippians (once), Colossians (once), 1 Timothy (three times), 2 Timothy (twice), Hebrews (three times), 1 John (once), 1 Peter (once), 2 Peter (once), and Revelation (twice).

This statistical datum shows clearly that the majority of biblical references in *EiA* are from the New Testament, mainly from the book of the Acts of the Apostles,

followed in frequency by the Gospel of John.<sup>33</sup> Acts is the most important biblical text in *EiA*, not only because of its extensive use, but because it is used in a special way, particularly Acts 1:8. Chapter three of this thesis will reveal that Acts 1:8 is the thematic framework of *EiA*. It is the commanding biblical text and the most important missionary text in *EiA*.<sup>34</sup>

## CONCLUSION

Intertextuality exists at different levels, from micro to macro levels. “On the smallest linguistic level (individual words and phrases), the relationship is easily recognizable. The study of lexical similarities and differences is, in fact, one of the mainstays of biblical criticism.”<sup>35</sup> This chapter, has identified intertextual links between Acts and *EiA* at the micro level of words. The intertextual links at the macro level, the one of quotations and allusions, will be seen in the following chapters of the thesis.

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<sup>33</sup>MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Exhortations of John Paul II*, pp. 37-38, says that: “Pope John Paul II refers liberally to the Bible in his exhortations. Although he cites from a broad range of scriptural texts, the Pope shows preference for certain books: above all the Gospels, especially John, Romans, 1 Corinthians, and Ephesians in the Pauline literature; Genesis and the Psalms in the Old Testament.” The use of Scripture in *EiA* contradicts this above mentioned statement. In *EiA* the pope uses Acts extensively contrary to what Miller says.

<sup>34</sup>POUCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d’Afrique*, p. 21, says: “Le passage le plus abondamment cité est celui d’Actes 1.8. Ce verset est la grille de lecture du thème du synode: “*L’Eglise en Afrique et sa mission évangélisatrice vers l’an 2000, ‘Vous serez mes témoins’* (Actes 1, 8).”

<sup>35</sup>RASHKOW, “Intertextuality, Transference, and the Reader in/of Genesis 12 and 20,” in FEWELL, *Reading Between Texts*, p. 57. Although this above quotation refers to intertextuality between two biblical texts, it can help to highlight the issue at stake in this chapter.

## CHAPTER THREE: THE THEMATIC FRAMEWORK OF *EiA*: ACTS 1:8

This chapter has two main parts: firstly, general observations on quotations as intertextual devices with the list of quotations of Acts; and secondly, the literary analysis of Acts 1:8 as the major biblical quotation in *EiA*. The importance of this chapter is that it presents the first demonstration of the intertextual relationship between Acts and *EiA* and paves the way for the analysis of other quotations and allusions to Acts. The first part will serve as a prelude to the second.

### 1. General Observations

#### 1.1. The Significance of Quotations as Intertextual Devices

Speakers and writers often use quotations to enhance the rhetorical quality of their works, without defining what they mean by quotations. The study of intertextuality has shown the need for a clear definition of quotations in order to evaluate their significance. Genette defines a quotation as intertextuality at its most explicit and literal form (with quotation marks, with or without references).<sup>1</sup> It is marked either by inverted commas, is

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<sup>1</sup> GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 8. E. STEFFEK, "Luc-Actes et l'Ancien Testament," *Foi et Vie* 4 (2001) p. 31, says: "La citation est un opérateur trivial d'intertextualité: Elle fait appel à la compétence de lecteur..." J.-J. MÜLLER, "Les citations de l'Écriture dans le quatrième Évangile," *Foi et Vie* 4 (2001) p. 43, says: "La citation est l'une des manières pour un texte d'être présent dans un autre [...] Comparée à l'allusion, qui ressemble à un jeu subtil et riche en possibilités, la citation apparaît comme une opération plutôt pauvre et brutale: un texte est fragmenté, un morceau en est isolé pour être "collé" à un autre texte[...] La citation a cependant l'avantage de l'évidence [...] Dans la citation il y a à la fois appropriation d'un texte et reconnaissance de son altérité." PIEGY-GROS, *Introduction à l'intertextualité*, pp. 45-46, writes: "La citation apparaît légitimement comme la forme emblématique d'intertextualité. Elle rend

italicized or is preceded by a quotation formula. This definition of a literary quotation suits the type of quotations from Acts in *LJA* and therefore will be used in this thesis.

Quotations are certainly the most conspicuous of intertextual devices and are indeed the most significant. They arrest the reader's attention, thereby making an irresistible "intertextual noise" for their recognition.<sup>2</sup> Easily noticeable, they do not require any special perspicacity to identify them, as is the case for the use of Acts 1:8 in *LJA*. Quotations are persuasive rhetorical strategies, that is, they are meant to convince the reader that the information one has is reliable and valid. They invoke past memories from other known texts and entice the reader to find something s/he already knows in the focused text.<sup>3</sup>

Quotations facilitate interrelatedness between texts of different epochs or literary genres, for example, the use of Acts 1:8 in *LJA*. They help overcome the distance between the time of an ancient text and a contemporary text. Depending on how well they are used they can enrich and clarify the passage in which they are found. "They constitute the epitome of a perennial and inexhaustible heritage, a way of making oneself

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visible l'insertion d'un texte dans un autre... Simple et évidente, la citation s'impose dans le texte, sans requérir du lecteur une perspicacité ou érudition particulière. Son repérage va de soi."

<sup>2</sup> THEISSEN, *The Sign Language of Faith*, p. 3, explains 'intertextual noise' as a literary resonance of the quoted text in the quoting text.

<sup>3</sup> W. FRAWLEY, *Text and Epistemology* (New Jersey, University of Delaware, Ablex Publishing Corporation, 1987), p. 76, says: "Citationality shows up the text in relation to other texts; citationality is the means by which previous meaning is redeployed in order to engulf an argument in the appearance of impenetrability."

understood. of arresting attention. an exhortation to learn and to create an irrefutable evidence of our concern with tradition. not to imitate as to reshape and re-interpret."<sup>4</sup> This is true with regards to the quotations of Acts in *EiA*. as we shall see later in this thesis. Quotations of Acts within *EiA* create an irrefutable evidence of the concern for the continuity between the Church of Acts and the African Church.

Quotations are supposed to remain faithful to their original wording and context. They point out to the reader that there are other texts involved and as such they are useful intertextual indicators.<sup>5</sup> The significance of quotations is not limited to linguistic fidelity; but it goes far beyond the verbatim repetition. The context in which a quotation is found is essential for the meaning given to the quotation.

Quotations are a means of communication between two diverse texts. They relativize the chronological gap between the quoter and the quotee,<sup>6</sup> and create an illusion of immediacy. They render the ancient text contemporaneous with the latter text, thereby declaring that enunciations of the past hold true in the present. For instance, *EiA* has contemporized and actualized Acts. Quotations make possible the interpenetration of two texts. Acts enters the semantic world of *EiA* and vice versa. It is not only the

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<sup>4</sup>WEISGERBER. "The Use of Quotations in Recent Literature." *Comparative Literature* 22 (1970) p 45

<sup>5</sup> FRAWLEY. *Text and Epistemology*. p. 84. says. "The essence of citationality is accessibility. Readers must know not whole texts. but only signals to recover whole texts."

<sup>6</sup>SCHULTZ. *The Search for Quotation*. p. 198.

quoted text that becomes part of the quoting text. Since it is a two-way process, the latter also becomes part of, and may serve as a commentary, an explanation or an actualization of the former. Conversely, the former may clarify and illuminate the latter. Quotations are such powerful intertextual devices that the recognition of their source affects not only how the quoting text (phenotext) is read, but also how the quoted text (genotext) is read.<sup>7</sup> As we will see later in this thesis, the use of quotations from Acts in *IiA* affects not only the way *IiA* has to be read but Acts also acquires a new perspective for an African reader of *IiA*.

## 1.2. Structure of Quotations

In terms of structure, a quotation has three basic elements irrespective of where it occurs: (1) the quoting text or the target text, otherwise called phenotext; (2) the genotext, the quoted text; and (3) the quotation proper.<sup>8</sup> The intertextual dynamic comes from the reproduction of the genotext in the phenotext and the new significance thus produced.<sup>9</sup> The genotext as used in the phenotext becomes the intertext. As a rule, when a text is quoted from one context to another it acquires new signification. In most cases

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<sup>7</sup> SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*: p. 207.

<sup>8</sup> PLETT, *Intertextuality* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) p. 8

<sup>9</sup> SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, pp. 205-206, gives useful insights in the study of biblical quotations. I wish to present some of them: a) there is no such thing as a simple quotation; b) the proper assessment of quotation is inherently problematic; c) identification of a quotation is only the first step in its assessment; d) the degree and extent of linguistic identity between the quotation and the original statement may determine whether one chooses the term 'quotation', 'allusion', or 'echo' to describe it.

only a segment of the genotext is reproduced in the phenotext. It is either abbreviated or expanded. The quotation proper links the world of the genotext to the world of the phenotext and belongs at one and the same time to each.

Nor are quotations always verbatim. "Verbatim repetition in quotation is rare, and any divergence may have a profound effect on the meaning of the whole."<sup>10</sup> Quotations are never self-sufficient or self-explanatory and as such; they need to be interpreted in the context of the genotext from which they are derived. "Simply put, a quotation is not intended to be self-contained or self-explanatory; rather a knowledge of the quoted context also is assumed by the speaker or author."<sup>11</sup>

It is therefore incumbent on the quoter to evaluate the significance of a quotation in its new context. The quoter need not be content with merely quoting parallel texts parenthetically, without need for further comment. A quotation necessarily requires interpretation since it means the transfer of meaning from one context to another.<sup>12</sup> Intertextuality makes a genuine comparison between the genotext and phenotext. The focus is on how much they have in common and to what extent they differ, as well as on

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<sup>10</sup> SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, p. 180.

<sup>11</sup> M. SILVA, *Biblical Words and their Meaning: An Introduction to Lexical Semantics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1983, p. 145, no. 18) quoted in SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, p. 224.

<sup>12</sup> J. NIEUVIARTS, *L'Entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem (Mt 21,1-17): Messianisme et accomplissement des écritures en Matthieu*, (Paris: édition du Cerf, 1999), p. 23, says: "Citer, ce n'est pas emprunter des paroles pour se dissimuler derrière elles, mais laisser parler le texte cité à l'intérieur du texte où il prend place."

the function of the genotext in the phenotext. It is not enough, therefore, to discuss one and the other text without making connections between the two.

### 1.3. Criteria for Detecting Quotations

Since not all quotations are the same, a mechanism is needed to detect them. The diverse ways in which they are presented give them a different intertextual weight. One needs some criteria of assessment.

Plett proposes some criteria for detecting quotations, namely, quantity, quality, distribution, frequency, interference and markers.<sup>15</sup> Quantity refers simply to the size of the quotation, that is, the number of words taken from the genotext that are found in the phenotext. In this respect, quotations vary greatly. Quality refers to the appropriateness of the quotation within the new text. It is not so much the number of words that counts here, but the transformative power of the quotation. Distribution refers to the prominent position of the quotation text: beginning, middle or end. These structural positions may vary in significance. In a number of cases, a quotation at the beginning of a paragraph or passage is used in a proper manner. A number of quotations at the end of a passage are often used as proof-texts. Frequency suggests that it requires a certain number of quotations in order to make a significant impact on the new text, although in some cases quotations might rightly be seen as interference depending on the manner in which they

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<sup>15</sup> PLETT, *Intertextuality*, pp. 9-12, explains the function of each element. SCHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, pp. 222-227, proposes two criteria for identifying quotation: (1) verbal and syntactical correspondence; (2) contextual awareness, including interpretative use.



have been used. This is more obvious when one quotes in a foreign language where there is an interference of codes. Another indicator is quotation marks, which are either explicit or implicit formulae that introduce quotations. Obviously, none of these elements is absolute.

#### 1.4. Types of Quotations:

Quotations can be classified under four main categories according to Plett.<sup>14</sup> They are authoritative, erudite, ornamental and poetic. Authoritative quotations impose themselves on the reader. They are derived from an acknowledged literary authority, such as a quotation from the Bible for Christian believers or from the Koran for Muslims. The text is regarded as sacred and therefore is invested with unquestionable authority for believers only. This can be likened to lawyers quoting a constitution.

The erudite type of quotations occurs in scientific texts which refer to other texts. Their authority lies in the incontestable knowledge they contain since they have been proven to be scientifically valid to the area of research in question. They are open to debate and can be challenged only by argument and persuasion. It is a case of scientific formulae. Quotations can be ornamental eliciting appreciation for their aesthetic value. The last type of quotations is poetic, so named because it is very common in poetic

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<sup>14</sup> PLETT, *Intertextuality*, pp. 13-14.

literature. It involves one text quoting another or is sometimes a quotation within another.

### 1.5. The List of Quotations from Acts in *EiA*

The schema of the quotations from Acts in *EiA*:<sup>15</sup>

<b><i>Quotations from Acts</i></b>	<b><i>Position of Quotations in EiA (Number of Paragraph).</i></b>
1. Acts 1:8	8 (twice), 18, 38, 56, 86, 128, 129, 130, 133 (twice), 135, 138, (headings of chapters 5 and 7 and footnote 32)
2. Acts 2:11	32, 76
3. Acts 2:42	100
4. Acts 2:44-45	129
5. Acts 4:12	74
6. Acts 8:27-39	6
7. Acts 10:34-35	28
8. Acts 10:45-46,47	28
9. Acts 20:28	98

The schema above helps the reader to see clearly the frequency and the position of each quotation from Acts in *EiA*. Frequency and position are to be considered in analyzing a quotation since they indicate its function. Depending on where it is placed, the quotation takes on different functions. A quotation in a title or at the beginning of a paragraph has a character of a theme, headline or main topic. Placed in the middle it is

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<sup>15</sup>For the list of references to Acts in *EiA*, see POUCOUTA, *Lettres aux Eglises d'Afrique*, pp. 283-284. POUCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique*, p. 20. It is to be noted that the Scriptural references to Acts include direct and indirect quotations. A biblical quotation normally appears within quotation marks with a clear indication of the chapter and verse. I have indicated earlier that I follow Genette's definition of a quotation.

more illustrative, and placed towards the end it acts like a conclusion or a proof-text. For example, Acts 1:8 is the most significant quotation in *EiA* since it forms part of the titles of chapters five and seven. This means that the whole of these two chapters are to be interpreted in the light of Acts 1:8 which is interwoven throughout them. Acts 1:8 is also found at the beginning of paragraphs 8, 18, 56, 128, 133, 135, 138 in which it introduces the theme of witness. So, regarding its position in *EiA*, Acts 1:8 obtains even greater significance than it had originally.

#### 1.6. Classification of Quotations

There are two main categories of quotations according to how they are introduced in a new text. There are quotations with a quotation formula and some without one. The quotation formula refers specifically to the original context of a quotation and demonstrates its authority, while quotations without a formula are meant to express the thoughts of the person using them. In *EiA* the following quotations are introduced with a quotation formula: Acts 1:8 (paragraphs 86 and 128); Acts 2:11 (paragraph 32); Acts 10:34-35,47; and 10:45-46 (paragraph 28). These are the clearest form of intertextuality between Acts and *EiA*. The remainder appear without any such formula: Acts 1:8; 2:42; 2:44-45; 4:12; 8:27-39; and 20:28.

## 2. Literary Analysis of Acts 1:8 in *EiA*:

This part is devoted solely to the study of Acts 1:8, which is treated separately from other quotations from Acts in *EiA* for three main reasons. Firstly, Acts 1:8 is an integral part of the central, recurring theme of *EiA*: “The Church in Africa and Her Evangelizing Mission Towards the Year 2000: ‘You shall be my witnesses’ (Acts 1:8)” (*EiA* 18). Secondly, it forms the thematic framework of the document: “‘You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:8).’ This exhortation will therefore endeavour to follow closely the same thematic framework.” (*EiA* 8). Thirdly, it is the most quoted text from Acts in *EiA* and has been quoted sixteen times. As the dominant biblical text in *EiA*, it deserves a special treatment.

It is at this juncture that the philosophical and literary criteria mentioned in chapter one will come to bear on this thesis, consistent with the following caveat: “In order to avoid, then, a purely subjective reading, an interpretation valid for contemporary times will be founded in the study of the text, and such an interpretation will constantly submit its presuppositions to verification by the text.”<sup>16</sup> The study of the dynamics of Acts 1:8 will proceed in three steps. First of all, the significance of Acts 1:8 will be analysed in its original context in Acts. Secondly, each paragraph containing Acts 1:8 will be quoted verbatim, since the context gives meaning to a quotation. Finally, for each quotation, we

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<sup>16</sup>*The Pontifical Biblical Commission: The Interpretation of Bible in the Church*, II. A. 2. p. 77.

will answer two questions: (1) how *LitA* enlightens and transforms the quotation from Acts 1:8 and whether that significance is faithful or not to Acts; and (2) how the quotation of Acts 1:8 helps shape a new identity for the African Church. Intertextual hermeneutics teaches that the fusion of two texts results in a new significance which can be either the reduction or the expansion of the original meaning.

The two main approaches for analyzing quotations are: (1) diachronic analysis and (2) synchronic analysis. Diachronic analysis treats quotations as a historical phenomenon while synchronic analysis treats quotations as a literary phenomenon. Synchronic analysis is the one used in this thesis. It is twofold: firstly, it focuses on the significance of a quotation within a quoting text; secondly, it looks at the nature of a quotation as a rhetorical device and its resultant effect on the process of reading. The focus is on the effect of a quotation rather than on its origin.<sup>17</sup> While it is essentially important to know about the origin of a quotation, synchronic analysis concentrates more on the function of a quotation in its new context. It is also in line with the philosophical criteria and the literary criteria of reader-response criticism which are used in this thesis.

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<sup>17</sup> SHULTZ, *The Search for Quotation*, p. 233.

## 2.1. Significance in Acts <sup>18</sup>

### The Greek /English Text of Acts 1:8

ἀλλὰ λήμψεσθε δύναμιν  
ἐπελθόντος τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος  
ἐφ' ὑμᾶς καὶ ἐσεσθε μου μάρτυρες  
ἐν τῇ Ἰερουσαλῆμ καὶ ἐν πάσῃ τῇ  
Ἰουδαίᾳ καὶ Σαμαρείᾳ καὶ ἕως  
ἐσχατοῦ τῆς γῆς.

But you shall receive power when the  
Holy Spirit has come upon you and you  
shall be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all  
Judea and Samaria and to the end of the  
earth<sup>19</sup>.

From the information above on quotations, we remember that a quotation is a segment of the original text inserted into another independent text, and even though it has been removed from its original context into a new context it still has traces of the former. In order to assess its intertextual significance it is important to start with its meaning in the original context and then examine its meaning in the new context. Acts 1:8, therefore, will be examined below starting with its original context in Acts and then within its new context in *EVA*.

Since witness is the central theme of Acts 1:8, each quotation will be interpreted in relation to a specific aspect of witness: (1) literary context; (2) literary genre; (3) agents

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<sup>18</sup> It is to be noted that this division on “the significance of Acts” appears only here because the original meaning of the text of Acts needs to be presented only once for the whole chapter. But wherever necessary we will add supplements on the meaning of Acts 1:8 in the section on evaluation.

<sup>19</sup> All the English translations from the Greek texts in this thesis are taken from Alfred MARSHALL, *The R.S.V. Interlinear Greek - English New Testament*, 3rd edition, Britain: London, 1975. If the wording is changed for what seems to be a more literal and accurate translation of the Greek Text, we will indicate. Translation is another aspect of intertextuality. It is the transference of meaning from one language to another.

of witness: (4) criteria for becoming witness: (5) content of witness: (6) type of witness and (7) sphere of witness. These above mentioned aspects will be used in variety of ways in evaluating each quotation of Acts 1:8. They will serve as a checklist throughout this chapter. The literary context of each citation of Acts 1:8 will determine which of the points mentioned above are pertinent in each case of the analysis.

### (1) Literary Context of Acts 1:8 in Acts

Acts 1:8 is an integral part of a much larger narrative of Acts which unites the gospel according to Luke with Acts by echoing the final words of the risen Christ before his Ascension: "You are witnesses of these things" (Luke 24:48), and unfolds their significance throughout Acts. Acts 1:8 is a programmatic verse and a keynote text that provides a ground-plan for the whole of Acts.<sup>20</sup> It announces one of the major themes in Acts which is "witnesses" (μαρτυρες) and which reappears in a number of places in Acts (1:22, 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:32; 8: 25; 10:39, 41). The theme of witness receives a great prominence in Acts, especially when it applies to the mission of the Church.<sup>21</sup> Acts 1:8 highlights the missionary witness in Acts and outlines the missionary trajectory of the Church in three parts, from Jerusalem (Acts 1-7); in Samaria (Acts 8-12); and to the end

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<sup>20</sup> FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 206. See also Ben WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, p. 110.

<sup>21</sup> C. K. BARRETT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, vol.II, (Scotland: Edinburgh, T& T Clark Ltd, 1998) p. xxxiii. He says: "it is right to say Acts presents the history 'of the Christian mission' rather than 'of the Christian Church', for Acts shows little interest (it would be wrong to say, no interest) in the structure and development of the Church as an institution."

of the earth (Acts 13-28). In Acts, "Church and mission are inseparably interrelated."<sup>22</sup> The Church is for mission and vice versa. Acts 1:8 announces the kerygmatic and geographical program of Acts.

## (2) Literary Genre of Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 is a command and promise of the Resurrected Christ to the apostles.<sup>23</sup> It bears the last words of Christ to his disciples before ascending into heaven, marking a turning point in the relationship between Christ and his disciples through an extraordinary encounter. He leaves them with a promise (ἐπαγγελίαν) of power (δύναμιν) of the Holy Spirit. In order to carry out the mission of the Church, the disciples needed to be empowered, something that had been promised by the Risen Christ: καὶ ἰδοὺ ἐγὼ ἐξαποστελλῶ τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν τοῦ πατρὸς μου ἐφ' ὑμᾶς (Luke 24:49a). This promise that Christ made to his disciples will be fulfilled in

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<sup>22</sup> S. G. WILSON, *The Gentiles and Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1973) p. 95, says, "According to Luke's definition, a Church with no missionary activity is not a true Church."

<sup>23</sup> TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, vol. two, p. 17, says that "Jesus' final words in Acts 1:8 are his commission to those who will carry on his work." FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 200, says that "Acts 1:8 sets the goal that the commissioned apostles are to attain as they bring the word from Jerusalem to 'the ends of the earth.'" G. KRODEL, *Acts*, p. 61, says that, "The final mandate of Jesus in Acts 1:8 calls the Church of Luke to continue the task of carrying the apostolic witness to the end of the earth." HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 144, says that, "This utterance is command and promise in one." GAVENTA, "You Will be my Witnesses," p. 416 says that "Although we sometimes read this statement as a command, it is actually a promise." I concur with most commentaries who interpret Acts 1:8 as a command, or mandate.



Acts 2 on the occasion of Pentecost, during which they will receive power and become his witnesses (μαρτυρες).

### (3) Agents of Witness

Acts 1:8 is addressed to one of two categories of the agents of the missionary witness. The two main categories of the agents of witness in Acts are: the divine and the human. At the divine level, the Holy Spirit is the principal agent of apostolic witness and empowers human witnesses to testify with boldness (2:29; 4:13,29,31; 9:27,28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8; 26:26; 28:31). At the human level, the apostles are the prime agents of witness and are eye-witnesses of Christ since they have been with Him throughout His earthly ministry until His death (Acts 1:21-22). The apostles bear witness together, testifying to His resurrection which is the main object of bearing witness. They are qualified witnesses of the public ministry of Jesus (Acts 10:39) and of His resurrection. Chosen by God to be Christ's witnesses, they ate and drank with Him after He rose from the dead (Acts 10:41). This is the characteristic mark of an apostle of Christ in Acts.

In the first part of Acts, chapters 1-12, the title of "witness" refers exclusively to the eleven apostles. The apostles are sent out to be witnesses to what Jesus did and taught. In addition, they are also witnesses to His passion, death, appearances after resurrection and of His Ascension (Acts 1:1-4). Acts 1:8 clarifies the new identity and

role of the apostles as crucial witnesses.<sup>24</sup> It is to the eleven apostles that the Risen Christ first shows Himself and to whom He addresses His very first words. The eleven are given a new designation and a new identity which develop throughout Acts. They are witnesses par excellence, chosen to be His witnesses right from the beginning of His ministry in Jerusalem and continuing through to the ends of the earth. However, the apostles are not the only witnesses throughout Acts.<sup>25</sup>

Later in Acts the title of witness is extended to other people besides the apostles. For example, Paul is also called a witness (Acts 13: 31, 22: 15, 18, 20; 23: 11; 22:15; 26:16) as well as Stephen (Acts 22:20). Both Paul and Stephen are given the title of witness only late in Acts. According to Acts 7 Stephen has not been given the title of witness nor has Paul in Acts 9. Paul is given the title of apostle for the first time in Acts 14:14 along with a mandate similar to that given to the other apostles. "Take courage, for as you have testified about me in Jerusalem, so you must bear witness also in Rome" (Acts 23:11). As was Paul, Stephen too is acknowledged as a witness late in Acts. Paul

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<sup>24</sup> SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts: their Content, Context, and Concerns*, p. 197, says that, "Jesus speaks to 'the apostles' (1:8) and as the story unfolds it is initially clear that the witnesses are the Eleven who are joined by Judas's replacement, Matthias (1:15-26)".

<sup>25</sup> SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts*, p. 197, identifies five distinct groups or persons who are called "witnesses" (μαρτυρες): 1) the apostles 2) the Holy Spirit (5:32) 3) Paul 4) Stephen 5) false witnesses against Stephen (6:13; 7:58) and he also lists seven who "bear witness" (μαρτυρειν) 1) the twelve, 2) all the prophets (10:43), 3) God (13:22), 4) the Lord (14:3), 5) Paul, 6) Holy Spirit (20:23), and 7) Paul's opponents (22:5; 26:5).

calls Stephen a martyr (Acts 22: 20). He interprets Stephen's death as martyrdom. "In Luke-Acts the deaths of Jesus and Stephen are portrayed as martyrdom."<sup>26</sup>

#### (4) Criteria of Being Witness

The first part of Acts 1:8 stipulates an important criterion for becoming a witness of Christ, that is, one should have received the Holy Spirit since He is the principal agent of missionary witness. Another criterion for becoming a witness of Christ is that one has to be chosen by God, as were Matthias (Acts 1:24) and Paul (Acts 9:15). It is in the election of Matthias that three important conditions are established for apostolic witness. Firstly, one must be familiar with the public life of Jesus beginning from His baptism (Acts 1:21; 10:39; 13:31). Secondly, one has to have the experience of the Risen Christ to be called to witness to His resurrection (Acts 1:22). This experience of the Risen Christ is a fundamental condition for becoming a witness of Christ according to Acts (cf 2:32; 3:15). Thirdly, one must bear witness in solidarity with other disciples (Acts 1:22; cf 5:31-32; 10:40-41; 13:31). The apostles had to fulfil the above mentioned criteria.

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<sup>26</sup> C. H. TALBERT, "Martyrdom in Luke-Acts and the Lukan Ethic," in Richard J. CASSIDY and P. J. SCHARPER, *Political Issues in Luke-Acts*, (New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1983), p. 99. S. T. PINCKAERS, *La Spiritualité du martyr... jusqu'au bout de l'amour* (Versailles: éditions Saint-Paul, 2000), p. 45, writes: "Paul parle du 'sang d'Etienne, ton témoin'. Remarquons ici que le diacre Etienne n'est pas nommé *martus* parce qu'il est mort pour Jésus, mais qu'il meurt parce qu'il a témoigné en faveur de Jésus dans son activité évangélique. Nous n'avons pas encore le sens technique chrétien du martyr lié à la mort, mais il est en préparation."

### (5) Content of Witness

The content of apostolic witness is fourfold. Firstly, the apostles are witnesses to the facts of the public ministry of Jesus (Acts 1:21). Secondly, they testify to his life as holy and righteous (Acts 3:14) and to the good deeds He performed (Acts 10:38). Thirdly, they are witnesses to his death and resurrection (Acts 1:22). Fourthly, their testimony is not simply a testimony of fact, but a testimony of faith that leads the Jews, and later the Gentiles, to faith in Christ.<sup>27</sup> It is the resurrection of Jesus which is at the heart of apostolic witness.

### (6) Type of Witnessing

Acts 1:8 does not specify any particular type of witness. Within Acts, however, there are two main types of witnessing, namely by word and deed. Acts gives considerable importance to the primacy of the word. Apostolic witness is done almost exclusively through preaching. The missionary speeches in Acts which are attributed to Peter and Paul attest to this. The content of these speeches is the apostolic *kerygma* which focuses on Jesus' appointment by God, His mighty works, His death and resurrection in accordance with the Scriptures, alongside with His exaltation in heaven (Acts 2:14-36, 3:12-26, 10:34-43, 13:16-41). The apostles declare themselves as witnesses of these things mentioned above. The most emphasized point in these speeches is the resurrection. "The heart of the apostolic testimony, however, is not the passion but

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<sup>27</sup> TRITES, *New Testament Concept of Witness*, p. 144.

the resurrection, for the apostles are pre-eminently witnesses of the resurrection (Lk 24:48; Acts 1:22; 2:32; 3:15; 4:33; 5:31f.; 10:40f.; 13:30).<sup>28</sup> The apostles did not witness to the Risen Lord through words only but also by the quality of their lives (Acts 2:47; 5:12-14). Together with the entire community, the apostles shared their possessions and cared for one another so that there was no needy person among them (Acts 4:32-34). This quality of their life together was a force of attraction to outsiders. The martyrdom of Stephen adds more weight to the issue of a witness of life. "The witness is capable of suffering and dying for what he believes. When the test of conviction becomes the price of life, the witness changes his name; he is called a martyr. But is it a change of name? *Martus* in Greek means 'witness'. Certainly it is not without danger that one evokes this link between witness and martyr."<sup>29</sup> Being a martyr implies giving up one's life for Christ. This type of witnessing by deed and life is less developed in Acts than preaching the *kerygma*.

#### (7) Sphere of Witness

Acts 1:8 describes the sphere of witness as starting from Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and moving on to the end of the earth. Jerusalem has a special theological and symbolic significance in Luke-Acts. Important events like the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus take place in Jerusalem. It is the birthplace of the early Church. Jerusalem

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<sup>28</sup> TRITES, *New Testament Concept of Witness*, p. 144.

<sup>29</sup> P. RICOEUR, "The Hermeneutics of Testimony," in *Essays on Biblical Interpretation*, (L. S. MUDGE, ed.) (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980) p. 129.

represents the Jews whereas Samaria represents Samaritans. The expression ἕως ἔσχατου τῆς γῆς in Acts 1:8 refers to the geographical and ethnic expansion of the Gospel, but it is ambiguous. Does it refer to Rome or to a determinate place elsewhere?<sup>30</sup> It echoes Isaiah 49:6 τέθεικά σε εἰς ὥς ἔθνῶν τοῦ εἶναι σε εἰς σωτηρίαν ἕως ἔσχατου τῆς γῆς which is quoted in Acts 13:47: "I have set you to be a light to the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the uttermost parts of the earth." The Isaianic background of Acts 1:8 carries both geographical and ethnic significance. "It signifies Luke's universalistic perspective regarding the expansion of the Gospel by means of the apostolic mission" says T. S. Moore.<sup>31</sup> Tannehill holds that "there is no firm basis for identifying 'the end of the earth' with Rome."<sup>32</sup> J. Dupont asserts that verse 8 means more than geographical designation.<sup>33</sup>

What is clear from the debate on Acts 1:8 is that it has to be understood in the context of Luke-Acts and in the light of the quotation of Isaiah 49:6 in Acts 13:47. It echoes Luke 24:47 καὶ κηρυχθῆναι ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι αὐτοῦ μετάνοιαν εἰς

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<sup>30</sup> T. S. MOORE, "'To the End of the Earth' The Geographical and Ethnic Universalism of Acts 1:8 in the Light of Isaianic Influence", *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 40 (1997), p. 391.

<sup>31</sup> MOORE, p. 399.

<sup>32</sup> TANNEHILL, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, vol. 2, p. 17; he maintains that v. 8 carries also an ethnic significance, denoting Gentiles.

<sup>33</sup> J. DUPONT, *The Salvation of the Gentiles. Essays on the Acts of the Apostles* (New York: Paulist Press, 1979) pp. 18-19.

ἀφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν εἰς πάντα τὰ ἔθνη ἀρξάμενοι ἀπὸ Ἱεροσαλήμ and fulfils Isaiah 49:6 "Au plan narratif, le texte de 13. 46-48 marque le passage au monde païen annoncé dans le mandat inaugural (1.8)."<sup>34</sup> Acts 13:46-48 marks a turning point of the mission to the nations (Gentiles) and announces the universal mission of the Church. Moore explains the significance of Acts 1:8 in Luke-Acts thus: "'To the end of the earth' denotes both geographical and ethnic universalism. In this sense, Acts 1:8 carries programmatic significance and not only suggests the plan of Acts narrative – that of the universal geographical and ethnic expansion of the gospel – but also looks beyond Acts 28 to the continued spread of the gospel and proclamation of salvation to Jews and Gentiles."<sup>35</sup>

In summary, the close reading of Acts 1:8 reveals that as Luke 4:18-19 is programmatic for the mission of Jesus, Acts 1:8 is programmatic for the mission of the Church. Acts 1:8 is a promise and command of the Risen Lord to the eleven apostles. It refers to the apostolic witness as the norm based on the resurrection of Christ. Apostolic witness has legal and religious connotations since the apostles had to testify to Christ amidst opposition and hostility. Witnessing implies a collegial and corporate effort. Acts shows a progression in the understanding of witness from apostolic witness to other

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<sup>34</sup> DUMAIS, "Le salut universel par le Christ selon les Actes des Apôtres", in A. FUCHS (éd), *Studien zum Neuen Testament und seiner Umwelt*, Band 18, Linz, Drückerei Plöchl, 1993, p. 114.

<sup>35</sup> MOORE, "To the End of the Earth" p. 398.

forms of witnessing, for example in the cases of Paul and Stephen. The martyrdom of Stephen gives much weight to the significance of the witness of life which is less developed in Acts. In Acts, the idea of witness is that of a living metaphor: "mission and witness are integrally related."<sup>36</sup> Mission is witness and "witnessing is the prime activity of mission"<sup>37</sup> The next step of this intertextual dynamic is to analyze and evaluate the significance of Acts 1:8 in the new context of *EiA*. The use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* has created an intertextual hermeneutic as we will see below.

## 2.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

### 2.2.1. Introduction, Paragraph 8 of *EiA*

Acts 1:8 is quoted for the first time in paragraph eight of *EiA* which is the last paragraph of the introduction and it reads as follows:

The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops examined thoroughly the topic which had been placed before it: "The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission towards the Year 2000: **You shall be my witnesses** (Acts 1:8)." This Exhortation will therefore endeavour to follow closely the same thematic framework. It will begin from the historic moment, a true *kairos*, in which the Synod was held, examining its objectives, preparation and celebration. It will consider the current situation of the *Church in Africa*, recalling the different phases of missionary commitment. It will then examine the various aspects of the *evangelizing mission* which the Church must take into account at the present time: evangelization, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and the means of social communication. A mention of the *urgent tasks and challenges* facing the Church in Africa on *the eve of the Year 2000* will enable us to sketch out the tasks of Christ's witnesses

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<sup>36</sup> P. G. BOLT, "Mission and Witness," in MARSHALL, *Witness*, p. 195.

<sup>37</sup> GAVENTA, "You Will be My Witnesses," p. 417



in Africa, so that they will make a more effective contribution to the building up of God's Kingdom. It will thus be possible at the end to describe the responsibilities of the Church in Africa as missionary Church: a Church of mission which itself becomes missionary: **"You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).**<sup>38</sup>

As a prelude to the study of the significance of Acts 1:8 in *EiA*, we need to recall Iser's theory of reading a text and of the production of meaning. Reading is a dialectic between the world of the reader and the world of the text that leads to a better self-understanding, and then meaning is the encounter and interpenetration of these two worlds. The use of Ricoeur's theory of distanciation and appropriation continues to give meaning to the interaction of both texts. *EiA* as a reading and an appropriation of Acts has consequences for the understanding of the significance of Acts 1:8. Acts 1:8 is revitalized and activated when read and appropriated in *EiA* as we will see below.

As noted earlier in the present chapter, the significance of Acts 1:8 throughout *EiA* will be analysed and evaluated under the seven points which have been discussed in Acts, namely, (1) context, (2) literary genre, (3) agents of witness, (4) criteria to be witness, (5) content of witness, (6) type of witnessing and (7) sphere of witness.

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<sup>38</sup> This thesis uses the English text of *EiA* as it stands, since it is the official one that is used in anglophone Africa. It will be indicated whenever this translation does not appear to be faithful to the basic Latin text. The bold font is mine in order to highlight the biblical reference for the reader and will be used with every quotation of *EiA*. Concerning the language of the document, there is inconsistency throughout in speaking about the Church. In some places it is feminine (she) e.g. paragraphs 8, 18. In other places it is neutral (it) e.g. paragraphs 6, 144. For the sake of consistency I will be using the neuter (it) throughout the thesis.

### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 8

As a change in context affects the meaning of the text, context is essential in interpreting the meaning of a quotation. Acts 1:8 is quoted for the first time in the introductory chapter of *EIA* in paragraph eight. Herein lies the general outline of the whole document. Paragraph eight calls for the examination of the current situation of the evangelizing mission of the Church in Africa and seeks new prospects for the future. Acts 1:8 is quoted twice within the paragraph, both at the beginning and the end. It forms, therefore, an *inclusio*<sup>39</sup> within this paragraph and thus indicates its importance. Acts 1:8 both announces and concludes the theme of the paragraph. Every item in paragraph 8 reflects the central theme of Acts 1:8 which is “being witness.”

At the beginning of the paragraph Acts 1:8 is modified; it is quoted in an abbreviated form: “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8b). This first excerpt from Acts 1:8 focuses on the continental context of the Church in Africa, that is, its existence in the particular local churches across the continent of Africa. The Catholic Church is implanted, has roots in and has borne fruit on the African soil. Most churches in Africa have celebrated the centenary of their evangelization and Catholics in Africa are called to become authentic witnesses by assuming even greater responsibility in their local

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<sup>39</sup>R. STRONSTAD, *The Prophethood of All Believers*, pp. 15-16, writes: “*Inclusio* is the strategy which brackets a narrative with either similar episode or terminology. The opening episode or term is programmatic for what follows. The closing bracket is retrospective, reminding the reader about the theme, while at the same time cutting it off.” *Inclusio* can be used either on a small scale or large scale. It is quite common in *EIA* as we will see later in the thesis.

churches and by living truly as Catholics and Africans (*IiA* 11). This aspect of the identity of the African Church is developed further in paragraphs 18, 32, 56, and 86 where Acts 1:8 is repeated.

It is worth noticing the modifications made to Acts 1:8 in the first part of paragraph eight. The text is quoted verbatim but incompletely.<sup>40</sup> The first part which speaks about the promise of the Holy Spirit is omitted: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you." The last part of Acts 1:8 is also omitted: "In Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth." These are significant modifications of Acts 1:8.

The second quotation of Acts 1:8 is found in a longer form at the end of paragraph eight: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).<sup>41</sup> It projects a vision and mission of the Church on the world level and focuses on the Catholic identity of the African Church. The Church in Africa is part of the Catholic Church and as such, it has a universal mission as we shall see in paragraphs 128, 129.

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<sup>40</sup> *Lineamenta* paragraph 15, says that, "the text of the Acts of the Apostles: 'You shall be my witnesses' (Acts 1:8), which is included in the theme of the Special Assembly, must be seen as indicating a constitutive element of evangelization." *Instrumentum Laboris* paragraph 1 quotes the same text thus: "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you and you shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:8)" Among all the synodal documents, it is only here that the first part of Acts 1:8 is quoted verbatim and in full.

<sup>41</sup> The English text of *IiA* does not indicate any omission of Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria in Acts 1:8, but the Latin and the French texts do by the means of brackets.

130, 133, 135, and 138. It is a mission Church which is becoming missionary in nature and thus it faces the prospects of a universal mission.

There are similar modifications made to Acts 1:8 as above. Moreover, "the end of the earth" (singular) has become "the ends of the earth" (plural) throughout *EiA*. This clearly shows that Acts 1:8 has been appropriated and configured in *EiA*. The reader of Acts has cleverly transformed and embedded Acts 1:8 within the literary fabric of *EiA*.

Paragraph eight gives the outline of the exhortation and presents Acts 1:8 as an integral part of its theme. The language of witness permeates the whole paragraph, so that the main themes of evangelization, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and the means of communication have become types of witnessing. The way Acts 1:8 is used sets a tone not only for paragraph eight but for the whole document. Being a dominant quotation, Acts 1:8 guides the text, theme and literary framework of the whole exhortation. It weaves and moulds together the whole exhortation as we shall see in the next chapters of *EiA*.

The use of Acts 1:8 in this paragraph is reminiscent of its use in Acts where it is the key-note text for the understanding of missionary witness. Paragraph eight puts strong emphasis on witnesses by using the word "witnesses" (plural) three times within the same paragraph. Appearing at the beginning and at the end of the paragraph, Acts 1:8 has thematic, elocutionary and rhetorical functions. It announces the theme of the paragraph and makes an earnest and urgent appeal to African Catholics to become

witnesses. Moreover, Acts 1:8 concludes by enlarging the missionary horizons of the African Church to the ends of the earth.

## (2) Literary Genre

Paragraph eight is not explicit about the literary genre of Acts 1:8. However, in paragraphs 86, 105, 128 of *EIA* Acts 1:8 is consistently described as a mandate addressed to the members of the Catholic Church in Africa, whereas in Acts it is both a promise and a command addressed to the Eleven. The significance of the use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph implies that the command of the Risen Christ to the Eleven is still pertinent even for African Catholics today. The mandatory function of Acts 1:8 holds true even for the present Church in Africa. It is the promise of the Holy Spirit which is lost in *EIA*. However, the role of the Holy Spirit will be discussed later in chapter five in the section on allusions to Acts.

## (3) Agents of Witness

The act of being witness presupposes that there are people who are witnesses. "Without witnesses there can be no witness, just as without missionaries there can be no missionary activity"<sup>42</sup> The word "you" within the quotation of Acts 1:8, in paragraph eight, refers to all Christ's witnesses in Africa who are members of the Catholic Church as listed in paragraph seven: "Bishops, priests, deacons, seminarians, members of

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<sup>42</sup>JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 61.

Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, catechists, and all those who make service of their brothers and sisters the ideal of their life” (paragraph 7).<sup>45</sup> They are to carry out the evangelizing mission of Christ in Africa and elsewhere and to contribute to the building up of God’s Kingdom.

While in Acts the idea of witness is broadened to include others besides the apostles, only the apostles are present in Acts 1:8 and this very text is used in *EIA* such that the “you” of Acts 1:8 is applied directly to the African Church and spoken directly by Christ. Evidently, the agents of witness in paragraph eight are different from those in Acts. A shift has taken place from the original text. Even though it is novel to take Acts 1:8 as referring to the Catholics in Africa, it is, however, in keeping with the significance in Acts where there is a gradual progression in the idea of witness. The apostles were not the only witnesses of Jesus’ resurrection. There were other people as well. With the addition of African Catholics *EIA* has therefore extended the dimension of meaning of the agents of witness. According to Iser, a text that is read comes to life and its potential meaning is actualized.

#### (4) Criteria to be Witness

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<sup>45</sup>On page one of *EIA*, it is clear who the addressees are. It reads thus: “Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Ecclesia in Africa* of the Holy Father John Paul II to the Bishops, priests and deacons, men and women religious and all the lay Faithful on the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission towards the year 2000.”

Whereas in Acts 1:22 the criteria for becoming a witness are clearly stipulated (one chosen by God, having an experience of the earthly and the Risen Christ), *EiA* paragraph eight speaks more generally about “Christ’s witnesses” in Africa who are members of the Catholic Church. *EiA* calls every African Catholic a witness of Christ. This is a new element added by *EiA*. Present-day African Catholics become witnesses of Christ by committing themselves to the cause of the Kingdom of God.

#### (5) Content of Witness

Paragraph eight of *EiA* presents “being witnesses” as an essential part of the “evangelizing mission” of the Church in Africa, a phrase that appears twice in the paragraph: “The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission” and “It will then examine the various aspects of the evangelizing mission.”<sup>44</sup> The evangelizing mission of the Church in Africa is announced in paragraph eight under the five aspects of evangelization, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace, and the means of social communication.<sup>45</sup> This is something new brought on by *EiA*, for only evangelization is developed in Acts. As in the case in Acts, *EiA* maintains that the content of witness is

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<sup>44</sup> *Ineamenta*, paragraph 46, which is entitled: “Testimony, Preaching and Martyrdom”, says: “Evangelization and witness are indissolubly bound together.”

<sup>45</sup> John Paul II, “African Synod,” *Omnis Terra* 249 (1994) pp. 277-278. “The first two weeks enabled us to listen to the Churches of Africa through the interventions of the Synod Fathers around the central theme, “The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission towards the year 2000: ‘You shall be my witnesses’ (Acts 1:8)”, under the five subheadings: Proclamation, Inculturation, Dialogue, Justice and Peace, and Means of Social Communication.”

Christ and identifies witness with evangelization, but adds four other aspects mentioned above.

#### (6) Type of Witnessing

Whereas Acts is quite clear and specific about the type of witnessing (preaching), paragraph eight of *EiA* speaks in a general way about making "a more effective contribution to the building up of God's Kingdom." Such a contribution might well consist of getting involved in human development, social justice and peace as we will see later in *EiA*. Paragraph 8 remains quite vague on this matter.

#### (7) Sphere of Witness

While the sphere of witness in paragraph 8 remains vague, it will be further specified in other parts of the exhortation.

To sum up, the double quotation of Acts 1:8 in paragraph eight in *EiA* has an illocutionary and rhetorical force. It arrests the reader's attention and establishes an irrefutable link between Acts and *EiA*. Acts 1:8 is a hermeneutical guideline for the whole of *EiA*. In fact, it is only the second part which is cited, since Acts 1:8 is split right in the middle omitting the first part. Whereas the first quotation has a thematic function since it introduces the topic of the exhortation, the second quotation acts like a conclusion. Such a use of Acts 1:8 forms an *inclusio* which indicates that the whole document is to be read and interpreted in the light of Acts 1:8 which is identified with evangelization. *EiA* 8 reads the African Church into Acts, importing the world of the



African Church into Acts. In turn, Acts helps name, reshape and re-interpret the identity of the African Church by bringing its world of understanding to the African Church's experience. Witness, which is taken from Acts 1:8, is the new way of evangelizing for the Church in Africa. Although unchanging in its content which is Christ, evangelization in the context of the African Church must also include inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace, and social communication. *LHA* 8 has extended the world of Acts 1:8 so as to embrace different aspects of evangelization for the African Church. Witness permeates all of the four items mentioned above which have become ways of witnessing for the African Church in modern times. Evangelization can no longer be restricted to proclamation alone but must encompass many other components. Paragraph eight gives a general outline of the whole document without developing each item in detail. Further development of each item will be found in later paragraphs.

### 2.2.2. Chapter One, Paragraph 18

In chapter one of *LHA*, Acts 1:8 is found in paragraph 18, which reads thus:

The theme assigned to the Special Assembly – “The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission towards the Year 2000: ‘**You shall be my witnesses (Acts 1:8)**’ – expresses my desire that this Church should live the time leading up to the Great Jubilee as ‘a new Advent’, a time of expectation and preparation. In fact I consider preparations for the Year 2000 as one of the keys for interpreting my Pontificate. The series of Synodal Assemblies which have taken place in the course of nearly thirty years – General Assemblies and Special Assemblies on a continental, regional or national level – are all part of preparing for the Great Jubilee. The fact that evangelization is the theme of all these Synodal Assemblies is meant to indicate how alive today is the Church's awareness of the salvific mission which she has received from Christ. This awareness is especially evident in the Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations devoted to evangelization, catechesis, the family, reconciliation and penance in the

**life of the Church and of all humanity, the vocation and mission of the lay faithful and the formation of priests.**

The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph eighteen is similar to its use in paragraph eight regarding the points of literary genre and sphere of witness, but differs from it on many other points as we will see below. Out of the seven points on the check-list of the evaluation I will deal only with the ones that are pertinent to the analysis of paragraph 18, namely, (1) context, (2) content, (3) agents of witness, and (4) type of witness. Criteria to become witness and sphere of witness are not relevant to paragraph 18.

#### **(1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 18**

Before evaluating the use of Acts 1:8, paragraph 18 needs to be put in the context of chapter one. Chapter one of *EA* highlights the significance of the special assembly for Africa of the synod of bishops as a “historic moment of grace” and a “synod of resurrection and hope” whose purpose was to foster affective and effective collegiality. Paragraph 18 is situated in the middle of chapter one. Acts 1:8 appears at the very outset of paragraph eighteen and is part of the theme assigned to the special assembly. The Pope says the theme of the synod expressed his desire for the preparation of the Great Jubilee, which was an important mark of his pontificate. This is one of the many places where the Pope speaks in the first person and expresses a personal desire. He reiterates this later in the conclusion of *EA* in paragraph 141 when he states that “the Synod was convoked in order to enable the Church in Africa to assume its evangelizing mission as effectively as possible in preparation for the Third Millennium, with the present

Exhortation I invite God's people in Africa." It would appear as if the main objective of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa was to celebrate the Millennium Jubilee.<sup>46</sup>

The context in which Acts 1:8 is used in paragraph 18 is quite different from its original context in Acts. It is used here to express the desire of the Pope whereas in Acts it conveys the message of the Risen Christ. Acts 1:8 is already appropriated within paragraph eighteen. The Pope makes Christ's mandate his own.

## (2) Content of Witness

The content of witness in paragraph 18 is basically the same as in paragraph eight in that it identifies witness with evangelization, equating "the evangelizing mission" with "you shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8). Acts 1:8 defines being witnesses (persons) and bearing witness (activity) to the Gospel. A similar point was made in paragraph eight. Just as in paragraph eight, Acts 1:8 is quoted in a shorter form since the last part of the quotation has been omitted: "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria and to the ends of the earth."

Paragraph 18 reiterates the theme already announced in paragraph eight: "The Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission towards the year 2000. 'You shall be my

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<sup>46</sup> F. KABASELE, "Les cultures africaines et le Christianisme: Peuvent-elles s'enrichir mutuellement? Si oui, à quelles conditions?" in *Coopération et développement*, n. 147, 1999, p. 1. writes: "Il est regrettable qu'une rencontre si capitale pour la vie des églises d'Afrique soit mise dans la corbeille des préparatifs de l'an 2000."

witnesses' (Acts 1:8)." Acts 1:8 appears at the beginning of the paragraph indicating its thematic function by establishing the main idea of the paragraph. Unlike in paragraph eight, paragraph 18 bears only one mention of Acts 1:8. The word "witness" corresponds to the word "mission" which is found three times in paragraph 18: "evangelizing mission," "salvific mission," and "mission of the lay faithful." According to this paragraph, the Church is well aware of its salvific mission which it has received from Christ.

Acts speaks about the salvific mission of Christ and the evangelizing mission of the Church which are linked to salvation through the name of Jesus (Acts 4:12). "God has exalted him at his right hand as leader and saviour, to give repentance and forgiveness of sins" (Acts 5:31; see also 13:23). This is the message which the Church proclaims in Acts 2:36 and continues to proclaim according to *EvA*. The Church in Africa is called upon to continue the mission of Christ.

### (3) Agents of Witness

Unlike in paragraph eight of *EvA*, in paragraph 18 the agents of witness are singled out as a group. The "you" in Acts 1:8 here refers to the bishops of Africa as heads of particular churches and as prime witnesses of Christ on earth. This is shown in the preceding context: "Bishops should always realize that they are linked together one to the other, and should show concern for all the Churches" (paragraph 17). Paragraph 18 alludes to "a series of synodal assemblies" "general assemblies and special assemblies" and other "post-synodal exhortations devoted to evangelization, catechesis, the family,

reconciliation and penance" where bishops are the main participants in such gatherings. The biblical injunction "You shall be my witnesses," which was originally addressed to the apostles in Acts 1:8, is now addressed to the bishops in their capacity as the "lawful successors of the apostles and as members of the Episcopal College" (*EIA* 17). Bishops of the Church in Africa are considered responsible for the spreading of the gospel and are called to be witnesses in communion (*koinonia*) with other bishops of the universal Church. The emphasis is on "ecclesial communion which transcends all boundaries of time and space" as the following paragraph explicates (*EIA* 19).

In Acts, the apostles are the first ones sent to be witnesses; they are the eye-witnesses. By first calling bishops to witness, *EIA* is in keeping with the traditional Christian interpretation of Acts. The text of Acts does not say as such that bishops are the successors of the apostles, but Catholic tradition does teach this.<sup>47</sup> Bishops are the official representatives of their respective local churches as the apostles were representatives of the Church in Jerusalem. The original meaning of the text of Acts is therefore expanded to include bishops.

#### (4) Type of Witness

Paragraph 18 specifies the type of witnessing that is expected of the African bishops. The acute challenge facing the Church in Africa is the witness of life, a theme of

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<sup>47</sup> The Documents of Vatican II, *Christus Dominus*, 2.

witness of life is further developed in paragraphs 21 and 22 under the title "A Relevant and Credible Message." "The witness of life has become more than ever an essential condition for real effectiveness in preaching" (quoted from *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, 76) and "today more than ever, the Church is aware that her social doctrine will gain credibility more immediately from witness of action than as a result of its internal logic and consistency" (quoted from the encyclical *Centesimus Annus*, 57). In paragraph 21, witness of life becomes witness of action in the area of social doctrine, developing a totally new element compared to the understanding of evangelical witness in Acts. The great task of evangelization is to bear witness to the Gospel in order that the message of the Church be relevant and credible, and the credibility of the message of the Church inevitably entails the "very credibility of the proclaimers of this message" (*EiA* 21). The same idea is continued in paragraph 22: "Assembly had declared that the credibility of the Church in Africa depended upon Bishops and priests who followed Christ's example and could give witness of an exemplary life." In paragraph 22, the word "witness" again appears twice: "witness of an exemplary life," and "authentic witnesses by their way of living the evangelical counsels."

Whereas the main mission of the Church in Acts is to bear witness to the Risen Christ, in *EiA* the evangelizing mission of the Church consists of being committed through faith in Christ. It consists of the Church speaking out against injustice and oppression. "Thus she cannot remain silent, at the risk of failing her mission, except in cases where silence itself would be a way of speaking and bearing witness" (*EiA* 71).

In Acts, witness occurs mostly by the proclamation of the Word. The emphasis is on the primacy of the Word which gradually advances towards new horizons as it increases, multiplies and gains strength (Acts 2:41; 6:7; 12:24; 19:20). The missionary discourses in Acts are an eloquent example of witnessing by words.<sup>48</sup> Although there are references to 'signs and wonders,' the outstanding mode of witness is by preaching. In Acts, witnessing to Christ by words is a result of a personal experience of Him. "The phrase 'you shall be witnesses for me' must often be shifted to a verbal expression, for example, 'tell people what you know about me'. The focus in 'witness' is speaking from personal experience"<sup>49</sup>

*EIA* puts a special emphasis on 'witness of life' or 'witness of action' which has become an 'essential condition for real effectiveness in preaching' (paragraph 21). Witness of life means leading a coherent and sincere life, living what one preaches. This theme is developed further in paragraph 55 where it is stated that witness of life or Christian testimony may lead to martyrdom. Witness becomes credible only when it is supported by a certain quality of life. True witness impacts upon other people by the quality of one's life and the witness of action. This new emphasis on witness accompanied by quality of life reflects the teaching of Acts. The early Church (Acts 2:44-47) gave witness by the quality of its life and thereby attracted outsiders. "And the

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<sup>48</sup> SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts*. Acts gives priority to the primacy of the Word. The apostles are mainly the ministers of the Word (Acts 6:4).

<sup>49</sup> B. M. NEWMAN and E. A. NIDA, *A Translator's Handbook on the Acts of the Apostles*. London: United Bible Societies, 1972, p. 18.

Lord added to their number daily those who were being saved” (Acts 2:47). By the very quality of its life the early Christian community was a witness. “With great power the apostles continued to testify to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and much grace was with them all” (Acts 4:33).<sup>50</sup>

In summary, the use of Acts 1: 8 in paragraph 18 is similar to its use in paragraph eight only in equating witness with evangelization. It differs from it in many other aspects. Firstly, the agents of witness in paragraph 18 are African bishops as heads of local churches. They are the ones responsible for the overall missionary activity of the Church. Their credibility as leaders of local Catholic Churches affects the relevance of the message of the Church in Africa. *EiA* puts much emphasis on the hierarchy of the Church which is not present in Acts. Secondly, the type of witness required of the leadership of the church is twofold. Needed are the witness of exemplary life and the witness of action in matters of social justice and peace. Acts 1:8 calls for a leadership that is accountable and credible. The deplorable situation of the African continent demands a strong leadership that can help rectify the evils of corruption and social injustice. A sign of a mature Church is its accountable and dependable leadership. Paragraph 18 has developed the type of witnessing more than paragraph 8. However, the focus is only on bishops as agents of witness. This is the first place in *EiA* where bishops

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<sup>50</sup>DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission*, p. 44, makes this interesting comment on the above quotation of Acts (4:33): “Les apôtres témoignaient donc du Seigneur ressuscité non seulement par la parole mais aussi par la qualité de leur vie communautaire.”



are singled out as prime witnesses. They are also referred to in other paragraphs of *L'A* and we shall see this later on in this chapter.

### 2.2.3. Chapter Two, paragraph 38

Paragraph 38 of *L'A* has a slightly different version of Acts 1:8 from paragraphs eight and eighteen. This is how it reads:

The fact that in the course of almost two centuries the number of African Catholics has grown quickly is an outstanding achievement by any standard. In particular, the building up of the Church on the Continent is confirmed by facts such as the noteworthy and rapid increase in the number of ecclesiastical circumscriptions, the growth of a native clergy, of seminarians and candidates for Institutes of Consecrated Life, and the steady increase in the network of catechists, whose contribution to the spread of the Gospel among the African peoples is well known. Finally, of fundamental importance is the high percentage of indigenous Bishops who now make up the Hierarchy on the Continent. The Synod Fathers identified many very significant accomplishments of the Church in Africa in the areas of inculturation and ecumenical dialogue. The outstanding and meritorious achievements in the field of education are universally acknowledged. Although Catholics constitute only fourteen percent of the population of Africa, Catholic health facilities make up seventeen percent of the health-care institutions of the entire Continent. The initiatives boldly undertaken by the young Churches of Africa in order to bring the Gospel "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) are certainly worthy of note. The missionary Institutes founded in Africa have grown in number, and have begun to supply missionaries not only for the countries of the Continent but also for other areas of the world. A slowly increasing number of African diocesan priests are beginning to make themselves available, for limited periods, as *fidei donum* priests in other needy dioceses – in their own countries and abroad. The African provinces of Religious Institutes of pontifical right, both of men and women, have also recorded a growth in membership. In this way the Church offers her ministry to the peoples of Africa; but she also accepts involvement in the "exchange of gifts" with other particular Churches which make up the People of God. All this manifests, in a tangible way the maturity which the

**Church in Africa has attained: this is what made possible the celebration of the Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops.**

The use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph will be examined in the same way as in the previous paragraphs already studied. Out of the seven points already mentioned, in the above paragraph, Acts 1:8 will be evaluated under the three points relevant to this analysis, namely, (1) context; (2) sphere; and (3) agents of witness.

#### **(1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 38**

Paragraph 38 is quite long and informative. It consists of a number of elements concerning the Church in Africa and presents other aspects of the missionary identity of the African Church. It is situated in the first part of chapter two of *LIIA*, which deals with the historical development of the Church in Africa and outlines the three phases of the history of the evangelization of the continent. The first phase was marked by the flourishing churches of North Africa which were completely wiped out of existence in the 5th century by the Arab Muslim invasion, with the exception of the Coptic Church. The second phase concerned the Churches of the Congo, Central and West Africa which had disappeared completely by the beginning of the 19th century. The third phase, eloquently described in paragraph 38, includes the present time which is characterized by mass conversions to Catholicism and the boom of vocations to priestly and religious life. Acts 1:8 is found under the sub-title: "Deeper roots and growth of the Church" and is placed in the middle of paragraph 38. Only the last part of Acts 1:8 is quoted, "to the ends of the earth" which the Pope uses to describe a new mission of the African Church.

Such a quotation of Acts 1:8 echoes the second quotation of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 8 of *EIA* which reads thus: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth."

A similar use of Acts 1:8 is found in paragraphs 129, 130, 133, 135, and 138 of *EIA* wherein only the last part of Acts 1:8 is quoted. It becomes quite obvious to the reader of *EIA* how well distributed Acts 1:8 is in the whole document. The usual quotation: "You shall be my witnesses" is omitted in paragraph 38, but it is implied. Chapter two of *EIA* gives evidence of the witnessing by deed of the Church in Africa by pointing out some laudable achievements of the Church's witness.

## (2) Sphere of Witness

The quotation of Acts 1:8: "to the end of the earth" is a shortened version of Acts 1:8 which presupposes that a reader or interpreter is knowledgeable about the first part of the quotation. The quotation is slightly modified: "to the end (ἑσχατοῦ)" has become "to the ends." Acts 1:8 "to the end of the earth" refers to the limitless parameters of the Church's missionary activity. The Church in Africa is encouraged to become truly missionary by supplying personnel to other places on the continent as well as to other continents. "The missionary institutes founded in Africa have grown in number, and have begun to supply missionaries not only for the other countries of the continent but also for other areas of the world" (*EIA* 38). This interpretation emphasizes a new mapping for the Church in Africa in that it has come of age as shown by this missionary endeavour.

An analogous situation is found in Acts 13:1-3 where Antioch becomes a new base from which missionaries are sent out to other places, even to the ends of the earth. In Acts the expression "to the end of the earth" means both the geographical and cultural expansion of the Church. The important difference is that the starting point, in *EiA*, is Africa reaching out to the rest of the world, whereas in Acts it starts from Jerusalem to the ends of the earth.

### (3) Agents of Witness

The Church in Africa is making its contribution in the evangelizing mission of the universal Church through locally founded missionary institutes which supply "missionaries for other African countries and for other areas of the world." It is the Church that is blessed with personnel for missionary activity. Many sons and daughters of Africa who are members of the missionary Congregations or new Institutes founded on African soil, are "taking into their own hands the torch of total consecration to the service of God and the Gospel," as noted in the previous paragraph (paragraph 37). Tremendous growth is the outstanding feature of the new identity of the Church in Africa as described in paragraph 38 and, as mentioned in this paragraph, will be better understood against the background of the promulgation of the encyclical *Fidei Domum* by Pope Pius XII.<sup>51</sup> Paragraph 38 describes the Catholic Church in Africa as the most

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<sup>51</sup>Pope Pius XII, *Fidei Domum* (Rome: Vatican City, 1957) paragraph 63, says: "The Church in Africa, as well as in other parts of the mission field, needs missionaries." According to *EiA* the Church in Africa is urged to be missionary. There are already commendable initiatives taken by the Church in Africa in this regard. "A slowly increasing number of African diocesan priests are

rapidly growing Church which is a sign of its maturity and vitality.<sup>52</sup> It has its own indigenous hierarchy and is already supplying other areas with missionaries. There is a growing number of local bishops and priests, of seminarians and of candidates for institutes of consecrated life. Some diocesan priests avail themselves as *fidei donum*. This marks the strength of the Church in Africa as a mission Church which is becoming missionary. The growth of the Church in Africa is to be seen as the fulfilment of Acts 1:8 which means that there are more witnesses to Christ in Africa.

In an analogous way to the growth of the Church in paragraph 38, Acts records the growth and vitality of the early Church in a number of places (Acts 2: 41, 47; 5: 14; 6:1; 9: 31; 11: 21, 24; 16: 5 ) Acts also mentions the growth of the Word (Acts 6: 7; 12: 24; 19: 20) which is something about which *EIA* does not speak. It is to be noted

beginning to make themselves available, for limited periods, as *fidei donum* priests in other dioceses – in their own countries or abroad.” ( *EIA* 38).

<sup>52</sup> However, this growth and vitality are far from being perfect: they need to be accompanied by appropriate witness. JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio*, paragraph 37, writes: “The growth of the Church in the new Churches in recent times should not deceive us. Within these territories entrusted to these Churches – particularly in Asia, but also in Africa, Latin America and Oceania – there remain vast regions to be evangelized.” D. McCAIN, “The Church in Africa in the 21st Century,” *African Journal of Evangelical Theology* 19 (2000) p. 117, writes: “The problem is numerical growth without a corresponding spiritual, intellectual and moral growth. [...] There is much numerical growth. [...] However, in spite of all these positive features, Christianity has failed to halt the growing corruption in Africa.” A. SHORTER, *Christianity and African Imagination*, (Nairobi, Paulines Publications Africa, 1996), p. 15, writes: “The question asked at the African Synod was: ‘Why was faith so fragile in Rwanda when it came to test?’” J. H. KANE, *The Christian World Mission Today and Tomorrow*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1981) page 87, says: “This large influx into the Church is good and bad at the same time. It is good that these Africans have had the courage, in the words of Scripture, to turn from darkness to light (Acts 26:18) to serve the living and the true God (1 Thess 1:9). It is bad, on the other hand, in that the new converts are so numerous that it is impossible to give them the kind of instruction they need to make them strong Christians. As a result many of them bring their old practices with them into the Church.”

that growth is an important feature of the Church in Acts, both in Jerusalem and in Antioch.<sup>53</sup> The young Church in Antioch is described as undergoing the same rapid growth as the mother Church in Jerusalem and the believers enjoy a similar quality of life. They share things in common and thus give a powerful witness. *EiA* presents the Church in Africa in a similar way as in Acts. It is enjoying rapid growth and an increase in the number of African Catholics; as such it has begun supplying missionaries across the continent and to other parts of the world. By so doing, the Church of Africa manifests its maturity and missionary vocation.

The agents of witness in Acts 1:8 are the apostles, whereas in paragraph 38, they are bishops, diocesan priests, seminarians and candidates for Institutes of Consecrated Life, and catechists. They have become the apostles of our time.

In summary, the use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 38 is illustrative in depicting the present situation of the African Church. The focus is on the growth, dynamism and expansion of the African Church which enable it to carry out its evangelizing mission in Africa and around the world. Whereas the growth of the Church is mentioned in many places in Acts, it is not directly linked to Acts 1:8. The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 38

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<sup>53</sup> GAVENTA, "You Will be My Witnesses," p. 424, writes "Much is being said these days about the necessity of church growth at the national and international level. One danger is that too much stress will be placed on numbers alone, so that the health of a community is understood to be quantifiable. At the other extreme, however, is the danger of complacency. A church that never grows may be a church that has decided, perhaps unconsciously, that things are quite nice just as they are." The church's growth does not necessarily exclude the quality of witness. On the contrary, the quality of witness might attract a quantity of believers.

focuses mainly on the sphere of witness which is within and outside of Africa. It makes the African Church aware of the magnitude of its missionary task which is to bring the gospel not only to the countries on the continent but also to other parts of the globe. Faced with such a great task, the African Church can use its human resources to develop necessary strategies in order to carry out the mission effectively. The increasing numbers of vocations should be an encouraging sign. The use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph makes the Church in Africa a sending and also a receiving Church. It makes the distinction between a sending and a receiving Church less important. The emphasis is on the mutuality in mission or exchange of energies.

#### **2.2.4. Chapter Three, paragraph 56**

The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 56 reinforces and enhances the central message of *FIA*. Paragraph 56 reads thus:

**To bear witness to the Gospel in word and deed: this is the task which the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops received and which it now passes on to the Church of the Continent. "You shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8): this is the challenge. In Africa these should be the fruits of the Synod in every area of people's lives. Born of the preaching of the valiant missionary Bishops and priests, effectively assisted by the ranks of men and women catechists, to whom missionary work among the nations owes very much," the Church in Africa, having become 'a new homeland for Christ,' is now responsible for the evangelization of the Continent and the world. As my predecessor Pope Paul VI said in Kampala: "Africans, you are now your own missionaries." Because the vast majority of Africans have not yet heard the Good News of salvation, the Synod recommends that missionary vocations should be encouraged and asks that prayer, sacrifice and effective solidarity for the Church's work be favoured and actively supported.**

The same procedure of evaluation will be followed as in other preceding paragraphs. In the above mentioned paragraph, the use of Acts 1:8 will be evaluated under these relevant points: (1) context; (2) type of witness; (3) agents of witness and (4) sphere of witness.

#### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 56

Acts 1:8 is an authoritative quotation which is used to describe the task of the special assembly for Africa. Appearing in the beginning of paragraph 56, Acts 1:8 has a character of thematic line or topic sentence which is developed throughout the paragraph. Acts 1:8 refers the call to witness to Africans. The time has come for the African Church to assume its missionary responsibility vis-à-vis the African continent. Paragraph 56, found in chapter three, expresses the central message of the exhortation and is devoted entirely to evangelization and inculturation which are two of the five main themes of the exhortation (1:7-1:8). In fact, evangelization is an all-embracing theme of the exhortation and inculturation is subsumed under it. Inculturation leads to full evangelization. Paragraph 56 is to be interpreted in relation to paragraphs 55 and 57 since they stress the need for proclamation coupled with witness of life. In the context of paragraph 55 and 57, paragraph 56 emphasizes the idea of bearing witness "in word and deed" which is the challenge facing the Church in Africa.

Acts 1:8 helps to reinforce the importance of bearing witness for the Church in Africa which was "born of the preaching of valiant missionary Bishops and priests, effectively assisted by the ranks of men and women catechists" (paragraph 56).



## (2) Type of Witness

Paragraph 56 immediately names the overriding concern of the synod fathers which is "to bear witness to the Gospel in word and deed." This is the "task," the "challenge," and the hoped for "fruits" of the synod. It is central to the message of the document. Paragraph 56 highlights the type of witness required, that is, witness of word and action. The task which the African Church has received is not to proclaim the Gospel by word alone but also by authentic witness of life, even by martyrdom if necessary (paragraph 55). We have seen the issue about the witness of life in *EiA* in paragraphs 21 and 22 which emphasized witness of action or authentic witness of life. It is this type of witness which gives credibility to the message of the Gospel and to the agents of witness. Such a type of witness is needed especially in the field of justice and peace which is an important ministry for the Church in Africa today (*EiA* 21). There are many situations in Africa today that cry out for this type of witness, particularly in the field of justice and peace (*EiA* 114).

The question of martyrdom as a type of witness is found in Acts with the death of Stephen. However, there is no concern for justice and peace in Acts as we have today. The Church in Africa is called to bear witness "in word and deed." Witness by words alone, even with an internally consistent logic, lacks credibility and authenticity. We have

seen, in paragraph 21, that *LiA* stresses witness by word accompanied by deeds which is in keeping with the teaching of Acts.<sup>54</sup>

The missionary speeches in Acts are not empty words but are supported by witness of life. Paragraph 56 is quite consistent with Acts in terms of the emphasis on witness by word and deed, but *LiA* puts more emphasis on witness of life than does the Acts of the Apostles. This is an example of *LiA* giving new meaning to the text of Acts. This is not to say that Acts does not emphasize deeds, but simply that *LiA* focuses more on deeds. The present context of the African Church calls for witness of action. As the adage says, actions speak louder than words. Acts focuses more on the primacy and the growth of the word<sup>55</sup> and often presents the testimony of the word accompanied by the witness of life: Stephen was martyred for his profession of faith in Christ (7:58-60); Peter was imprisoned for the cause of the Gospel (12:1-3); and Paul was arrested and imprisoned for exactly the same cause (21:33). The apostolic witness through preaching was effective because it was accompanied by powerful witness of life, whereas today preaching often lacks the support of the witness of action from the ecclesial community. It is quite striking that the countries in Africa with a high percentage of Christians,

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<sup>54</sup>M. AMALADOSS, "Jésus, le seul sauveur, et la mission" *Spiritus* 159 (2000) p. 157, dit: "La tâche vraiment urgente de l'église, c'est-à-dire de nous tous, c'est de devenir témoins crédibles de Jésus et du Royaume qu'il a proclamé."

<sup>55</sup>DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission*, p. 45, "Les Actes des Apôtres n'offrent pas un tableau complet de la mission dans l'Eglise primitive. L'auteur a choisi de privilégier spécialement l'annonce de la Parole, en présentant les discours d'évangélisation des deux grandes figures missionnaires que sont Pierre et Paul."

especially Catholics, are amongst the most politically unstable and have a high record of human rights violations, e.g. Rwanda, Burundi, Uganda, Democratic Republic of Congo, Angola.

### (3) Agents of Witness

There is a chain of witnesses. The special assembly of bishops received witness born of Christian missionary bishops and priests and now it is handed down "to the Church of the continent." The word "you" in the quotation of Acts 1:8 is applied to African Catholics, members of the particular Churches in Africa. They are urged to assume responsibility for the evangelization of "the continent of Africa and the world." African Catholics are called to be missionaries to themselves first and then to the rest of the world. The word "witness," appearing twice in the paragraph 56, has a sense of being missionary which is described as a challenge for the African Church. Moreover, in *EIA* 56 the Church in Africa is defined as "born of the preaching of valiant missionary Bishops and priests, effectively assisted by 'the ranks of men and women catechists.'"

We see in Acts that bearing witness is not a monopoly of a few individuals or even a particular group. The witnessing was therefore passed on to others who, in turn, also became witnesses. The twelve apostles were the first ones to pass it on and were succeeded by many others.

Paragraph 56 highlights the responsibility of the Church in Africa for the evangelization of the continent.<sup>56</sup> African Catholics are called upon to assume full responsibility for their local Churches. This is quite a challenge for the young Churches of Africa, most of which in recent decades have celebrated the first centenary of the beginning of their evangelization. They are faced with many daunting challenges that affect their evangelizing mission in the light of the third Christian Millennium.

#### (4) Sphere of Witness

The sphere of witness is described the same way as in *LtA* 38 where the focus is on the countries of Africa and the other areas of the world. Paragraph 56 confirms the same sphere of witness which is Africa and the whole world. Acts gives different accounts of people who were evangelized: (Jews and Gentiles): Samaritans (8:5); Ethiopian (8: 35); and Cornelius (10: 48)

In conclusion, the use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 56 focuses on the main task of the special assembly for Africa of the synod of bishops which was expected to bear fruit in the lives of the people. It reinforces the responsibility of the Church in Africa to evangelize the African continent and the world. This responsibility to evangelize is extended to all the members of the Church in Africa and the sphere of witness becomes

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<sup>56</sup>PAUL VI, "*Africae Terrarum*" *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 61(1969), p. 575, writes: "Africans, you are now your own missionaries." This prophetic phrase of Paul VI has been quoted three times in *LtA* (35, 56, 129) and has been given a new significance by John Paul II in paragraph 129 to include the whole world not only Africa.

the whole world. The Church in Africa is made aware of its missionary duty. *EiA* has therefore reiterated the extension of the world of Acts 1:8 to include Africa and the whole world as in paragraph 38.

### **2.2.5. Chapter Five, Paragraph 86**

The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 86 further reveals the development in the understanding of the act of witness in *EiA*. The paragraph reads thus:

**The challenges mentioned show how opportune the Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops was: the Church's task in Africa is immense: in order to face it everyone's co-operation is necessary. Witness is an essential element of this co-operation. Christ challenges his disciples in Africa and gives them the mandate which he gave to the Apostles on the day of his Ascension: "You shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8) in Africa.**

The use of Acts 1:8 in the paragraph above will be evaluated under the five following points as suggested by the quotation: (1) context; (2) literary genre; (3) agents of witness; (4) type of witness; and (5) sphere of witness. The other categories do not apply here.

#### **(1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 86**

Acts 1:8 is found at the end of paragraph 86 which is the very first paragraph of chapter five whose title includes a quotation of Acts 1:8: "'You shall be my witnesses' in Africa." It is quite significant that Acts 1:8 is found in the title of the chapter due to the fact that it announces the theme of the chapter and sets the tone for the rest of it. The use of Acts 1:8 links the opening paragraph to the title of chapter five and reiterates the

words of the title: “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8) in Africa.” Acts 1:8 is an authoritative quotation which is recontextualized in Africa.

The word “witness” appears twice in this same paragraph: “witness is an essential element of this cooperation”, and “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8). Acts 1:8 is introduced by a quotation formula: “the mandate which he gave to the Apostles on the day of his Ascension.” This is the only time in *IiA* that Acts 1:8 is found with a quotation formula. That formula is used as an explicit recognition of the authority of Acts 1:8. It is presented as though it were Christ himself speaking to the Church in Africa and forms a large inclusion with paragraph eight which introduces the theme of *IiA*. This confirms the fact that Acts 1:8 is indeed the thematic framework of the document. Paragraph 8 concludes with “You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth” (Acts 1:8).” Paragraph 86 ends with: “You shall be my witnesses in Africa,” (Acts 1:8).” The rest of chapter five follows the theme announced in the heading: “You shall be my witnesses” in Africa.”

## (2) Literary Genre

The mandate of Christ in Acts 1:8, which was given originally to the Eleven, is now directly addressed to His disciples in Africa and this gives a greater significance to Acts 1:8. We have seen the same explanation of witness as a challenge in *IiA* 56: “You shall be my witnesses” (Acts 1:8): this is the challenge.” The identity and mission of the African Church are shaped by the words of Christ in Acts 1:8. It is Christ Himself who gives a mandate to the Church and His words are paraphrased and applied to the

disciples in Africa as though it were Christ Himself speaking. *EiA* 56 therefore upholds Acts as the Word of God which is addressed to all Christians and now reconfigured and re-actualized for the Church in Africa today. The initial mandate of Christ which was given to his apostles is actualized within the Church in Africa.

This is therefore an expansion of the text of Acts, but in keeping with the meaning of Acts. Such an interpretation resonates in Acts, but of course the agents of witness are different.

### (3) Agents of Witness

The word "you" of Acts 1:8 refers to all Catholic believers in Africa. African Catholics are called to be witnesses in Africa: "You shall be my witnesses" (Acts 1:8) in Africa." The agents of witness are Christ's "disciples in Africa." There is no group of people that is singled out in this particular paragraph, but a list of the agents of evangelization is given from paragraph 88 to 98, namely, vital Christian communities, laity, catechists, the family, young people, consecrated men and women, deacons, priests and bishops. They are to be witnesses on the continent of Africa. Each one is called and empowered by the Holy Spirit. It is necessary that they cooperate in order to give a collective witness. The question of collective witness through cooperation is mentioned here for the first time. It is a progression from the designation of the agents of witness in the preceding paragraphs. In previous paragraphs the agents of witness are mentioned as separate groups, whereas in paragraph 86 the focus is on cooperation among these groups. A similar call to cooperation will be found in paragraph 130.

The book of Acts identifies the apostles as the eye-witnesses of the Resurrected Christ. They are the privileged ones to whom Acts 1:8 was originally addressed. However, they are not the only witnesses in Acts and the call to become witness extends beyond the literary framework of the book of Acts. The above-mentioned list given here of Christ's disciples in Africa is an extension of the significance of Acts created by enlarging the circle of witnesses. As such, every Christian in Africa is called by Christ to become his witness.

#### (4) Type of Witnessing

This same paragraph identifies the type of witnessing as cooperation: "everyone's cooperation is necessary." The emphasis here is on cooperation among individual witnesses. The word "cooperation" is mentioned twice in paragraph 86. In Acts witnessing to Christ is both a personal and an ecclesial activity. In the first twelve chapters of the book of Acts, the apostles, Peter in particular, are witnesses par excellence of the Risen Christ. Peter, the spokesperson of the apostles, bases his missionary preaching on the fact that the apostles are the eye-witnesses of the resurrection of Christ (Acts 2: 32; 3: 15; 5: 32; 10: 39, 41). He plays an essential role in Acts and his pre-eminence among the apostles is not one of authority but of witness. He acts together with them, he speaks in their name in Acts 2:14. He gives common witness with the apostles in Acts 5:29; he gives testimony together with John in Acts 4:13, 19; he is accompanied by six brothers of the circumcision party in Acts 10: 45 and they become his witnesses before the Church in Jerusalem (Acts 11:12).



From Acts 13 onwards, it is Paul and Barnabas who assume the responsibility of witnesses. Paul, like Peter, assumes a leadership role and becomes a witness of Christ to the end of the earth (Rome). Paul bears witness to Christ in cooperation with others, Barnabas, Timothy and Silas. The apostles also worked in conjunction with the elders (Acts 15:22). So, in Acts, we find examples of people who work together for the cause of the gospel. A similar idea resonates in paragraph 86 where Acts 1:8 has been actualized and re-contextualized in the situation of the Church in Africa so that the words of the Risen Christ are applied directly to the Christians in Africa, who have to cooperate together in order to fulfil the task of witnessing.

#### (5) Sphere of Witness

Finally, in paragraph 86, the sphere of witness is confined to Africa, whereas in Acts the sphere of witness extends to the ends of the earth. The sphere of witness is restricted here but will be enlarged in chapter seven of *EvA* as we shall see below, as it was enlarged previously in *EvA* 8, 38, 56. The focus of chapter five of *EvA* is on the Church which is truly local (African), that is, a Church deeply rooted on the continent and sharing the genuine aspirations of the people of the continent, above all their anxieties, sufferings, poverty and marginalization. However, it is not a Church which is closed to the rest of the world as we see in other paragraphs of the exhortation.

In conclusion, Acts 1:8 is introduced for the first time in *EvA* with a quotation formula which indicates its authoritative power and origin. It is recognized as conveying the very words of the Risen Christ, from Scripture, to the African Church today. This is

the most significant use of Acts 1:8 in *EIA* since it is actualized and recontextualized. According to Ricoeur's hermeneutics, the African church receives an enlarged self by reading Acts 1:8. For the very reason, according to the reader-response theory of Iser, a text comes to life by being read. So Acts 1:8, read in *EIA* 86, has received a new dimension of meaning. It makes Acts contemporaneous with *EIA* so that Christ speaks directly to His disciples in Africa today. Acts 1:8 is clearly appropriated in paragraph 86 and makes Christ's disciples in Africa like the apostles who received Christ's mandate to be witnesses. As we have seen above, the use of Acts 1:8 in this paragraph of *EIA* differs from Acts on the points of agents of witness, type of witnessing, and sphere of witness. The mapping of paragraph 86 is from Africa to Africa which is a major difference from Acts. This is a restrictive application of Acts 1:8. The use of Acts 1:8 in *EIA* 86 has helped overcome the hermeneutical distance between Acts and *EIA* by appropriating the words of the Risen Christ to African Christians of today. A similar usage is found below but with a qualificative which embraces the whole world.

#### 2.2.6. Chapter 7. Paragraph 128

The Church in Africa is not called to bear witness to Christ only on the Continent; for to it the Risen Lord also says: **'You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth'** (Acts 1:8). For the very reason during their discussions of the Synod's theme, the Fathers carefully avoided every tendency to isolationism by the Church in Africa. At all times the Special Assembly kept in view the missionary mandate which the Church received from Christ: to bear witness to him in the whole world. The Synod Fathers acknowledged God's call to Africa to play its full part, at the world level, in his plan of the salvation of the human race (cf. 1 Tim 2:4).

The use and function of Acts 1:8, in the above paragraph, will be evaluated according to the following points: (1) context; (2) literary genre; (3) agents of witness; and (4) sphere of witness. The other categories, mentioned above, are not pertinent here.

#### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 128

Acts 1:8 appears at the very outset of paragraph 128. Paragraphs 128, 129 along with 130, 133, 135, 138, encourage the openness of the Church in Africa to the universal mission as indicated in the subtitle "Open to Mission." This is an important shift in emphasis on the identity of the African Church from the local Churches on the continent to the universal Church. Acts 1:8 in paragraph 128 of *EiA* advances and reinforces the contribution of the African Church to the universal mission of evangelization. It establishes the link between the title of chapter seven and paragraph 128 since they both have the same quotation. As the title of chapter seven, Acts 1:8 is quite significant for the meaning given to the whole chapter. As the title of the chapter, it influences the use of Acts 1:8 in the entire chapter. All other quotations of Acts 1:8 within the chapter are linked directly to the title.

*EiA* 128 is the second paragraph of chapter seven whose title is "You Shall be My Witnesses to the Ends of Earth" (Acts 1:8). Paragraph 128, therefore, is to be read in the light of the title of chapter seven which echoes the introduction (paragraph eight). A similar usage of Acts 1:8 is found in the title of chapter five and in paragraph 86 of *EiA*.

The titles of chapters five and seven, therefore, form an inclusion on a large scale, encompassing a movement in the document from being witnesses in Africa to being

witnesses to the ends of the earth. Since the title of chapter seven announces the theme and sets the tone for the rest of the chapter, it is to be read together with the paragraphs that follow it. The theme unfolds and evolves throughout the rest of the chapter. These are the only three places in the whole of *EiA* where Acts 1:8 is quoted in the same way, that is, almost in full, except for the omission of the names of places (Jerusalem, Judea, and Samaria).

## (2) Literary Genre of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* 128

In paragraphs 128 and 86, Acts 1:8 is described as a “call” and “the missionary mandate which the Church received from Christ.” In both paragraphs, Acts 1:8 is applied directly by Christ to the Church in Africa: “For to it the Risen Lord also says: ‘You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth’ (Acts 1:8).” This is quite a significant use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA*. It is used twice in *EiA* in relation to the Church in Africa. Acts 1:8 makes a direct and explicit intertextual link between Acts and the Church in Africa.

The fact that the mandate of Christ is again addressed directly to the Church in Africa and not to the apostles gives more strength to the mandate of implementing the mission to witness to the whole world. This gives the new identity to the African Church: it becomes, by mandate of Christ, a missionary Church to the whole world.

Paragraph 128 enlarges the concept of bearing witness beyond the confines of the African continent. Acts 1:8 is also twice described as a call and the word “witness” is found three times: “the Church is not called to bear witness to Christ only on the Continent,” “you shall be my witnesses” and “at all the time the Special Assembly kept in

view the missionary mandate which the Church had received from Christ: to bear witness to Him in the whole world.”

Paragraph 128 of *IiA* shows a shift in emphasis concerning the identity of the African Church and its evangelizing mission, from being a mission Church to being a missionary Church, from being a Church operating across the continent of Africa to being a Church which operates world-wide, from a Church that is truly African in character to a Church which is also catholic, that is, universal. The use of Acts 1:8 in chapter seven enhances the universal mission of the Church in Africa. As a member of the Catholic Church, it is not called to bear witness only in Africa but in the whole world. The Church in Africa is made to look at itself as being the subject rather than the object of mission and the world becomes the object of her mission. Acts 1:8 highlights the universal mission of the Church in Africa which is a significant shift in emphasis from chapter five of *IiA*.

Therefore this is an extension of the text of Acts, but still in keeping with the original meaning of Acts. Such an interpretation resonates with Acts. But of course the agents of witnesses are different. They are no longer the apostles but the Church in Africa as a whole.

Although Acts does not make use of the word “call” as such to describe becoming a witness of Christ, it nonetheless establishes conditions and criteria of becoming an evangelical witness. If the word “call” hereby means doing the will of God and being

directed by His Spirit. to be a witness is a call from God. Paul is a classical example of someone who was indeed called to be a witness of the Risen Christ ( Acts 9:15; 22:15).

### (3) Agents of Witness

The agents of witness are the particular Churches of Africa. The "you" refers specifically to the members of these particular Churches in Africa who were first mentioned in paragraph seven of *EiA*

### (4) Sphere of Witness

In paragraph 128, Acts 1:8 emphasizes the duty of the Church in Africa "to bear witness to him (Christ) in the whole world." It echoes the end of paragraph 8: "It will thus be possible at the end to describe the responsibilities of the Church in Africa as a missionary Church: a Church of mission which itself becomes missionary: 'You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8)." The universal scope of evangelization that was announced clearly in the introduction of *EiA* is taken up in chapter seven. In contrast to paragraph 86 of chapter five of *EiA*, whose title is "'you shall be my witnesses' in Africa." paragraph 128 opens up the new horizons of the mission of the Church in Africa. Chapter five focuses mainly on bearing witness in Africa, while chapter seven emphasizes the universal dimension of bearing witness. The Church in Africa is part of the universal Church and therefore its mission cannot be limited or confined to the continent only. It is in collaboration with other local churches that it can carry out its mission.

Paragraph 128 describes the sphere of witness as universal: It is not only confined to the Continent of Africa but it concerns the whole world. The use of Acts 1:8 is in keeping with the meaning in Acts but has extended the scope of witness. The mandate of Christ to be witnesses reaches beyond the scope of Acts. The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 128 resembles Acts except for the omission of geographical places (Jerusalem, Judea and Samaria). According to Acts, being witness starts in Jerusalem and Samaria and spreads out to the whole world. Paragraph 128 starts from Africa and extends to the ends of the earth. Without the universal dimension, the Church would be deprived of its essential meaning and activity. This aspect of the Church in Africa is developed further in the following paragraphs: 129, 130, 133, 135, and 138.

#### **2.2.7. Chapter 7. Paragraph 129**

It is on account of this commitment to the Church's catholicity that the *Lineamenta* of the Special Assembly for Africa declared: "No particular Church, not even the poorest, can ever be dispensed from the obligation of sharing its personnel as well as its spiritual and temporal resources with other particular Churches and with the universal Church (cf. Acts 2:44-45)." For its part, the Special Assembly strongly stressed Africa's responsibility for mission "to the ends of the earth" in the following words: "The prophetic phrase of Paul IV, 'you Africans are missionaries to yourselves', is to be understood as 'missionaries to the whole world' ... An appeal is launched to the particular Churches of Africa for mission outside the confines of their own dioceses."

The use and function of Acts 1:8 in the above mentioned paragraph will be evaluated under the following points: (1) context; (2) agents of witness; and (3) sphere of witness. The rest of the points are not pertinent in this context.

### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 129

Paragraph 129 is the continuation of the actualization and re-interpretation of Acts 1:8, which has been done in the first two paragraphs of chapter seven of *EiA*. These preceding paragraphs link paragraph 129 to the title of chapter seven, through their comments and re-interpretation of Acts 1:8. Paragraph 129 is the first one of the series of paragraphs (130, 133, 135, 138) in which Acts 1:8 is quoted in the same manner and focuses on the Catholic identity of the African Church. African Church is a living community of the Catholic Church and therefore has an obligation to contribute to the whole Church. In virtue of its catholicity, the African Church is called upon to share its special gifts with other particular Churches, "its personnel as well as its spiritual and temporal resources"

### (2) Agents of Witness

The agents of witness and the sphere of witness are clearly identified in paragraph 129. The agents of witness are African Catholics who are to bear witness to one another and to the world. This specific designation of African Catholics as agents of witness recalls the use of Acts 1:8 in paragraphs 86 and 128 where it is applied directly to the African Catholics.

In Acts the evangelizing mission of the Church is carried out by the apostles and others. In *EiA* it is continued by African Catholics to the ends of the earth.



### (3) Sphere of Witness

Paragraph 129 quotes Paul VI's prophetic words concerning the sphere of witness and reinterprets them: "'You Africans are missionaries to yourselves' is to be understood as 'missionaries to the whole world.'" Only the last part of Acts 1:8 is quoted, "to the ends of the earth." In the context of chapter seven, it is obvious to the reader that the quotation "to the ends of the earth" is a modification of Acts 1:8. An explicit reference to Acts in this paragraph is unnecessary in the context of a chapter whose heading is Acts 1:8. The shorter version of Acts 1:8, "to the ends of the earth," qualifies "mission" in this paragraph 129: "For its part, the Special Assembly strongly stressed Africa's responsibility for mission 'to the ends of the earth,'" referring to the universal mission of the Church. The word "mission" is found twice in paragraph 129: "the Special Assembly strongly stressed Africa's responsibility for mission;" and "the appeal is launched to the particular Churches of Africa for mission outside the confines of their own Dioceses." The focus of the quotation above is clearly on *missio ad gentes*. There is an appeal for universal mission which transcends all juridical boundaries.

Acts is replete with such examples. Those who were scattered by persecutions went about preaching the word (Acts 8:4). Philip took the Gospel to Samaria (Acts 8:5-6). Peter preached to the Gentiles in Caesarea, in the house of Cornelius (Acts 10: 34-43). Paul is the one who took the Gospel on to Rome (Acts 13-28).

Paragraph 129 places an even greater emphasis on the new missionary identity of the African Church. It is becoming truly catholic by sharing its resources with other

Churches. The idea of the African Church's responsibility for the universal mission of the Church flows from paragraph 129 into paragraph 130 as we shall now see. The African Church is called upon to look at itself as a subject of evangelization and no longer as an object. It is expected to share whatever it has with the universal Church. The use of Acts 1:8 enlarges the self-understanding of the African Church vis-à-vis others.

### 2.2.8. Chapter 7. Paragraph 130

In gladly and gratefully endorsing this declaration of the Special Assembly, I wish to repeat to all my brother Bishops in Africa what I said a few years ago: 'The Church in Africa's obligation to be missionary to itself and to evangelize the Continent entails co-operation, among the particular Churches in the context of each African country, among the various nations of the Continent and also of other continents. In this way Africa will be fully integrated in missionary activity.' In an earlier appeal addressed to all the particular Churches, both young and old, I already said that 'the world is steadily growing more united, and the Gospel spirit must lead us to overcome cultural and nationalistic barriers, avoiding all isolationism.' The bold determination manifested by the Special Assembly to engage the young Churches of Africa in mission **'to the ends of the earth'** reflects the desire to implement, as generously as possible, one of the important directives of the Second Vatican Council: 'In order that this missionary zeal may flourish among the native members, it is fitting that the young Churches should participate as soon as possible in the universal missionary work of the Church. Let them send their own missionaries to proclaim the Gospel all over the world, even though they are suffering from a shortage of clergy. For their communion with the universal Church reaches a certain measure of perfection when they themselves take an active part in missionary zeal towards other nations.'

The use and function of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 130 will be evaluated under the following points: (1) context; (2) literary genre; (3) sphere of witness; (4) type of witness; and (5) agents of witness. Other points do not apply here.

### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 130

Paragraph 130 is closely linked to the preceding paragraphs (127, 128, 129) since it focuses on the contribution of the African Church to the universal mission of evangelization. It is therefore to be interpreted in the light of these other paragraphs, especially paragraph 129. Paragraphs 129 and 130 use the term mission rather than witness. Paragraph 129 says: "For its part, the Special Assembly strongly stressed the Church in Africa's responsibility for mission 'to the ends of the earth.'" A similar usage is found in paragraph 130: "The bold determination manifested by the Special Assembly to engage young Churches of Africa in mission 'to the ends of the earth' reflects the desire to implement [...] one of the important directives of the Second Vatican Council." This is the only place where the word "mission" is found in paragraph 130. The cognate term with "mission," that is "missionaries," is found five times in the paragraph: "the Church of Africa's obligation to be missionary to itself," "in this way Africa will be fully integrated in missionary activity," "missionary zeal may flourish among native members," "the universal missionary work of the Church," and "missionary zeal towards other nations."

### (2) Literary Genre

Paragraph 130 advocates a zealous carrying out of universal missionary activity. The Pope, speaking in the first person singular "I," urges "his brother bishops" to do so. The missionary obligation of the Church is not a request that comes from the Pope and

synod fathers only but it is an injunction from the directives of the Second Vatican Council (*Ad Gentes*, 20).

### (3) Sphere of Witness

The quotation "to the ends of the earth," echoes the last part of the heading of Chapter Seven: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth." It is a continuation of the theme of universal mission of the Church in Africa which was announced at the beginning of Chapter Seven and discussed throughout the first three paragraphs: 127, 128 and 129. This quotation "to the ends of the earth" continues to refer to "the various nations of the Continent and also of other continents." Therefore it has ethnic, cultural, national and geographical connotations. The Church in Africa must engage in a wider outreach geographically, ethnically and culturally which is the significance of the quotation "end of the earth" (Acts 1:8)

In Acts, the manifestation of missionary zeal is shown especially by the Church in Antioch in Acts 13:1-4. Even before it was even well established, it was already sending out missionaries to other places where there was a need. The Church in Africa is encouraged to do the same, that is, to send its own missionaries to proclaim the gospel all over the world even when there is shortage of missionaries. Acts 13:1-4, in particular, is a fitting and inspiring model for the young Churches of Africa which are gradually becoming missionaries to themselves and to the world of the world.

#### (4) Type of Witness

An emphasis is made on co-operation among the particular Churches: missionary activity entails “co-operation among the particular Churches in the context of each African country, among various nations of the Continent and also of other continents.” This echoes the teaching of Acts since it stresses communion and unity among the nascent local churches of Samaria and Antioch with the Church in Jerusalem. Having heard that Samaria has accepted the Word of God, the apostles who were in Jerusalem sent Peter and John to Samaria (Acts 8:14). They also sent Barnabas to Antioch after hearing the news that “a great number became believers and turned to the Lord” (Acts 11:21-22). The Church in Jerusalem showed a great interest in the birth of the Church in Antioch, which would later play an important role in missionary expansion (Acts 13:1-3). *EiA* 86 stresses cooperation between individual witnesses, which we have already seen to correspond to the model of Acts. Paul was called to go to Macedonia and he went to preach the gospel to them (Acts 16:9-10). The call for cooperation between the particular churches in *EiA* is similar to Acts where mission is carried out in solidarity. This means that the text of Acts is really interpreted and actualized for the Church in Africa.

#### (5) Agents of Witness

The dominant voice in paragraphs 130, 131 and 132 is that of the Pope addressing his brother bishops concerning the missionary activity of the Church. It is therefore the bishops again who are agents of witness. The text of *EiA* moves from the bishops in

paragraphs 18 and 56 to all disciples in paragraphs 86 and 128, and back again to all bishops in paragraph 130

In summary, the use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 130 forges a new missionary identity for the Church in Africa. The quotation from Acts has an illocutionary force on the African Church. The Church in Africa is described as having an obligation to be missionary to itself and to evangelize the whole continent. But such a missionary activity requires cooperation among individual churches on and outside the Continent. The use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph encourages mutual support and cooperation rather than competition between mission-sending Churches and mission-receiving Churches. Mission is no longer to be seen as a function of members of missionary institutes alone but is tied to baptism and, a fortiori, to the ministry of priesthood.

### 2.2.9. Chapter 7. Paragraph 133

The Special Assembly also rightly pointed out that, in order to achieve an overall pastoral solidarity in Africa, it is necessary to promote the renewal of priestly formation. The words of the Second Vatican Council can never be pondered enough: "The spiritual gift which priests received at their Ordination prepares them not for any limited and narrow mission but for the widest scope of the universal mission **'even to the very ends of the earth'** (Acts 1:8)." That is why I have urged priests 'to make themselves readily available to the Holy Spirit and the Bishop, to be sent to preach the Gospel beyond the borders of their own country. This will demand of them not only maturity in their vocation, but also an uncommon readiness to detach themselves from their own homeland, culture and family, and a special ability to adapt to other cultures, with understanding and respect for them.' I am deeply grateful to God to learn that a growing number of African priests have been responding to the call to bear witness **"to the ends of the earth."** It is my ardent hope that this trend will be encouraged and strengthened in all the particular Churches of Africa.

### a) Significance in *EiA*

The use and function of Acts 1:8 in the paragraph above will be evaluated under the following four points: (1) context; (2) literary genre; (3) agents of witness; and (4) sphere of witness

#### (1) Context of Paragraph 133 in *EiA*

Paragraph 133 is a further continuation of the preceding paragraphs 128, 129, 130 which quote Acts 1:8. It is the third of these paragraphs which quote only the last part of Acts 1:8 (129, 130). Paragraph 133 quotes the last part of Acts 1:8 only, as in paragraph 38: "The initiatives boldly taken by the young Churches of Africa in order to bring the Gospel 'to the ends of the earth.'" There is a double quotation of Acts 1:8 within paragraph 133 which creates an inclusio. Acts 1:8 appears in the beginning and at the end of the paragraph. It is clear therefore that the first quotation of Acts 1:8 refers to the universal mission. The word "mission" is used twice: "the spiritual gift [...] prepares future priests not only for any limited and narrow mission but for the widest scope of the universal mission." The second quotation brings back the idea of witness and so it echoes the title of Chapter Seven: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth." This is the only time that the word "witness" is used in paragraph 133. The title is echoed throughout the rest of Chapter Seven by the repetition of "to the ends of the earth" in paragraphs 127, 128, 129, 130, 133, 135, and 138.

#### (2) Literary Genre

The double quotation of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 133 highlights its mandatory form. The first quotation of Acts 1:8 is taken from a Vatican II document: the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, 10. It is a quotation within a quotation. This highlights the fact that the renewal of priestly formation in view of the universal mission is not only the concern of the synod fathers and the Pope but it is a

concern of the whole Church.<sup>57</sup> The Pope makes this quotation his own by again quoting Acts 1:8 at the end of the paragraph. The authority of Vatican II reinforces the new universal missionary identity of the African Church.

### (3) Agents of Witness

The focus of the first quotation of Acts 1:8 is on the future priests as agents of mission. In the second quotation the Pope makes an appeal to African priests to avail themselves for mission, praising those who have taken the initiative to do so.

Paragraph 133 reiterates and develops further the theme of formation of future priests which was first mentioned in paragraph 95. "The Synod Fathers affirmed that "today more than ever there is need to form future priests in the true cultural values of their country, in a sense of honesty, responsibility and integrity." Paragraph 133 speaks specifically about the renewal of priestly formation. The implied addressees in paragraph 133 are therefore future priests, who are to bear witness to the ends of the earth, that is, "to preach the gospel beyond the borders of their own countries." There are certain requirements for those called to bear witness, namely, "maturity in their vocation"; "readiness to detach themselves from their own homeland, culture and family"; and "ability to adapt to other cultures." Such much concern and emphasis on priestly formation are not found in Acts since there are no priests in Acts.

Paragraph 133 should be read together with paragraph 134, which continues the idea of formation of candidates of missionary institutes. Paragraph 133 speaks about young priests as agents of mission, while paragraph 134 speaks about missionary institutes. "It is a source of great comfort to know that the Missionary Institutes which

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<sup>57</sup> JOHN PAUL II, "Message of the Synod," in BROWNE, *The African Synod*, p. 84, paragraph 60, writes: "Seminarians and candidates for the consecrated life. The theme of the Synod 'You shall be my witnesses...toward the year 2000' concerns you very specially. The Church counts on you to make your own and live in depth the riches of this Synod."



have been present in Africa for a long time are now 'receiving more and more candidates from the young Churches which they founded, thus enabling these same Churches to take part in the missionary activity of the universal Church.'" The formation of both priests and candidates of missionary institutes is in pursuit of the universal mission. The use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph makes an organic bonding between priesthood and mission. All priests, including diocesan priests, are called to be missionaries and the priestly formation program should be geared to preparing future priests for the universal mission of the Church.

### (3) Sphere of Witness

The quotation "to the ends of the earth" is used twice in paragraph 133. It is found both at the beginning and towards the end of the paragraph. The first quotation taken from Vatican II reads: "The spiritual gift which priests received at their ordination prepares them not for any limited and narrow mission but for the widest scope of the universal mission 'even to the ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8)." The second reads: "I am deeply grateful to God to learn that a growing number of African priests have been responding to the call to bear witness 'to the ends of the earth.'" The universal mission of the Church should encourage the promotion of priestly formation in view of the pastoral solidarity in Africa and elsewhere expressed by "'even to the very ends of the earth' (Acts 1:8)". There are three modifications to Acts 1:8: the addition of "even," "very," and "ends" instead of "end." This is obviously an expansion of the text of Acts. The words "even" and "very" stress the universality of mission which is an important teaching of Acts: God's salvation is for all (Acts 28: 28). That candidates to the priesthood should be imbued with the catholic spirit that makes them transcend cultural, ethnic and even territorial barriers.

In conclusion, the use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 133 forges the new missionary identity which demands the renewal of priestly formation in view of the universal mission of the Church, since there is an organic bonding between priesthood and mission. The future priests are not to be formed as functionaries of the Church but as true

missionaries. The issue of the formation of future priests is not found in Acts but the sphere of witness resonates in Acts. The new context of mission demands the renewal of priestly formation in order to answer to the needs of the Church's mission today.

### 2.2.10. Chapter 7, Paragraph 135

In a special way I would like to endorse the specific recommendation of the synod Fathers that the four Pontifical Mission Aid Societies be established in every particular Church and in every country as a means of achieving an *organic pastoral solidarity* in favour of the mission **'to the ends of the earth'**. These Societies, because they are under the auspices of the Pope and the Episcopal College, rightly have the first place 'since they are the means of imbuing Catholics from their very infancy with a genuinely universal and missionary outlook. They are the means for undertaking an effective collection of funds to subsidize all missions, each according to its needs.' A significant result of their activity 'is the fostering of lifelong vocations *ad gentes*, in both the older and younger Churches. I earnestly recommend that their promotional work be increasingly directed to this goal.'

#### a) Significance in *EiA*

The use of Acts 1:8 in paragraph 135 will be evaluated under the following three points: (1) context; (2) sphere of witness; and (3) type of witness. Other points are not pertinent in this case.

#### (1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 135

Paragraph 135 follows a series of paragraphs which quote only the last part of Acts 1:8. It is, therefore, to be read and interpreted in the context of these preceding paragraphs (129, 130, 133) and the one that follows it, namely, paragraph 138. The Pope endorses the issue of pastoral solidarity and the means to achieve it as we shall see below. Acts 1:8 appears in the beginning of the paragraph and as such serves a thematic function.

## (2) Sphere of Witness

Acts 1:8 refers to the universal mission of the Church. The word "mission" is found three times in the same paragraph 135: (1) "that four Pontifical Mission Aid Societies be established in every particular Church"; (2) "and in every country as a means of achieving an organic solidarity in favour of the mission 'to the ends of the earth'"; and (3) "they are the means for undertaking an effective collection of funds to subsidize all the missions, each according to its needs." Organic pastoral solidarity is thus encouraged in view of mission "to the ends of the earth." Such a collaboration among every particular Church and in every country would ensure missionary expansion and missionary outlook. Acts gives examples of autonomous local Churches which are, at the same time, in solidarity with one another (see Acts 11:20-21). They are also in solidarity and unity with the Church in Jerusalem

There is of course a need for financial assistance in order to reach this goal. It is therefore suggested that four Pontifical Mission Aid Societies be established "in every particular Church and in every country as a means of achieving an organic pastoral solidarity in favour of the mission." The important thing is to ensure that the missionary outreach continues.

Paragraph 135 focuses mainly on how to ensure that the universal mission of the Church in Africa continues, since the church is by its nature missionary. Acts 1:8 once again widens up the horizons of the mission of the Church in Africa.

## (3) Type of Witness

Organic pastoral solidarity is presented as an important type of witness for the African Church. This entails cooperation among the particular churches as we have seen in paragraph 130. Such a solidarity needs financial support in order for the Church to carry out its universal mission as expressed in Acts 1:8. This is a major challenge for the African Church which is still struggling for financial autonomy and depends a great deal upon foreign aid, especially from Rome. A church becomes truly mature when it has

achieved a certain level of self-reliance in order to finance its own projects. The promotion of collections to subsidize all the missions is suggested.

The notion of support among Churches is present in Acts: Acts 11:28-30 shows a close collaboration between the Churches in Antioch and Jerusalem: Barnabas and Paul carry relief from Antioch to the Church in Jerusalem. Acts 24:17 shows the support among all the Pauline Churches in Acts towards the Church in Jerusalem. *EIA* 135 is an explication of Acts since the question of collection for the poor in Jerusalem is talked about discreetly in Acts. *EIA* advocates for financial autonomy of local Churches while remaining in solidarity amongst themselves.

To sum up, paragraph 135 ends the section in chapter seven on the need for organic pastoral solidarity which starts in paragraph 131. The need for organic pastoral solidarity is mentioned many times within the exhortation as the main reason for the convocation of the synod of bishops for Africa (*EIA* 16, 72, 131). The Church in Africa is urged to show solidarity with the entire continent of Africa as well as with the whole Church. The use of Acts 1:8 "ends of the earth" has an illocutionary force urging the African Church to have a universal and missionary outlook as indicated in many paragraphs in chapter seven of *EIA* 129, 130, 133, 138. The universal significance of the sphere of witness of Acts 1:8 is maintained in *EIA*.

### 2.2.11 Chapter Seven, Paragraph 138

In bearing witness to Christ "to the ends of the earth," the Church in Africa will no doubt be assisted by the conviction of the "positive and moral value of the growing awareness of interdependence among individuals and nations. The fact that all men and women in various parts of the world feel personally affected by the injustices and violations of human rights committed in distant countries, countries which perhaps they will never visit, is a further sign of a reality transformed into awareness, thus acquiring moral connotation." It is my desire that Christians in Africa will become ever more aware of this interdependence among individuals and nations, and will be ready to respond to it by practising the virtue of *solidarity*. The fruit of solidarity is peace, and inestimable good for peoples and nations in every part of the world. For it is precisely by means of

**fostering and strengthening solidarity that the Church can make a specific and decisive contribution to a true culture of peace.**

The use of Acts 1:8 in the above paragraph will be evaluated under the following five points which are pertinent here: (1) context; (2) sphere of witness; (3) type of witness; (4) content; and (5) agents of witness.

### **(1) Context of Acts 1:8 in Paragraph 138**

*EIA* 138 is the penultimate paragraph in chapter seven and is the last paragraph in the document that quotes Acts 1:8. The quotation links it to the heading of chapter seven: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth." It is to be read and interpreted in the context of the paragraphs that precede it and the last one following it. Paragraph 139, the last before the conclusion, specifies the solidarity talked about in paragraph 138 which is specifically Christian. Acts 1:8 appears at the outset of the paragraph and hence has a thematic function.

### **(2) Sphere of Witness**

The first words of the first sentence of this paragraph together with the quotation "to the ends of the earth" are taken from Acts 1:8. Instead of giving a full quotation of Acts 1:8, this time *EIA* has paraphrased the first part on being witnesses. *EIA* says: "bearing witness to Christ" instead of Acts 1:8 "You shall be my witnesses [...] to the ends of the earth." Acts 1:8 has a similar significance here as in the preceding paragraphs of chapter seven.

### **(3) Type of Witness**

Bearing witness to Christ is done in interdependence and solidarity, both mentioned twice. The need for organic pastoral solidarity recurs many times within the exhortation as one of the main reasons for the convocation of the synod of bishops for Africa (16, 72, 131, 134). This is not found in Acts.

#### (4) Content of Witness

Bearing witness to Christ means commitment to the values of interdependence, solidarity, human rights, justice and peace which are shared by many people: individuals and nations, men and women alike. The issue of justice and peace was first mentioned in paragraph 22 as "witness of action" and is mentioned again in paragraph 65 as a means to ecumenical dialogue: "Such dialogue can be conducted through initiatives such as ecumenical translations of the Bible, theological study of various dimensions of the Christian faith, or by bearing common witness to justice, peace and respect for human dignity." The same idea is taken up and developed in chapter five, paragraphs 105, 106, and 108. The Church in Africa is urged to play an important role in the field of justice and peace since "the proclamation of justice and peace is an integral part of the task of evangelization" (paragraph 107). The Church in Africa must commit itself to be the voice of the poor, the marginalized and the voiceless (paragraph 106).

These values mentioned above are not found in Acts, for they were not the main preoccupations of its author. There is a wide distance between Acts and *EiA*. So, in today's context of the African Church, there is a new appropriation of the text of Acts. There are new demands for the mission of the Church in Africa today.

#### (5) Agents of Witness

The agents of witness are the "Christians in Africa," especially African Catholics as indicated at the beginning of *EiA* in paragraph seven. They are encouraged to work in solidarity with the many men and women who are affected by injustices and violations of human rights and want to improve the world.<sup>58</sup> *EiA* introduces other people who have

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<sup>58</sup> At the beginning of *EiA*, paragraph seven, I indicated that the question of the addressees of *EiA* is ambiguous. Besides Catholics and other Christian denominations, *EiA* is addressed to "those who profess the great monotheistic religions, in particular the followers of African traditional religion, and to all people of good will who in one way or another have at heart Africa's spiritual

similar concerns and share similar values with the members of the Church, but who are not considered part of the evangelizing mission of the Church. These men and women of good will are highly regarded for their solidarity with the Church on issues such as justice and peace. They also share in their own way in establishing the Kingdom of God.

There are no such individuals and nations mentioned anywhere in Acts. It simply mentions men and women who are disciples of Christ. Of course, Acts simply does not address today's concern for dialogue and cooperation between different religions. So, there is a new appropriation of Acts in today's context. The text of Acts is transformed.

### Summary of the Study of the Use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA*

This summary shows the main results of the above analysis and evaluation of the intertextual use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA*. The schema below highlights repetitions, variations and progression in the use of Acts 1:8.

	<i>EiA</i> 8	<i>EiA</i> 18	<i>EiA</i> 38	<i>EiA</i> 56
1. Distribution	Introduction (inclusio)	Middle of Chapter 1. Beginning of the paragraph	First part of Chapter 2. Middle of the paragraph	Beginning of Chapter 3. Beginning of the paragraph
2. Quantity	"You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8). "You Shall Be My Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth." (Acts 1:8).	"You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8).	"To the Ends of the Earth." (Acts 1:8).	"You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8).
3. Function in <i>EiA</i>	Thematic	Thematic	Illustrative	Thematic
4. Type of Quotation	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
5. Literary Genre	Not specified	Not relevant	Not specified	Not relevant

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and material development." These are the people who share some values with Christians thus making their contribution in matters of justice and peace as it is indicated in paragraph 138.

6. Agents	All members of the Church	Bishops	African members of missionary institutes. Diocesan priests (Fidei donum)	Church of the continent (bishops. priests. catechists)
7. Content	evangelization. Inculturation. Justice and Peace. Means of Social Communications	Evangelizing mission	Not specified	Not specified
8. Type	Not specified	Witness of life	Not specified	Word and deed
9. Sphere	Not specified	Not specified	Other countries of the continent, and areas of the world	The continent and the world

	<i>EIA 86</i>	<i>EIA 128</i>	<i>EIA 129</i>	<i>EIA 130</i>
1. Distribution	The title of Chapter 5. End of the paragraph	The title of Chapter 7. Beginning of the paragraph	Beginning of Chapter 7. Middle of the paragraph	Beginning of Chapter 7. Middle of the paragraph
2. Quantity	"You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8). "You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8).	"You Shall be My Witnesses to the Ends of the Earth." "You Shall Be My Witnesses." (Acts 1:8).	"To the Ends of the Earth."	"To the Ends of the Earth."
2. Function in <i>EIA</i>	Thematic	Thematic	Illustrative	Illustrative
3. Type of Quotation	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
4. Literary Genre	Mandate by Christ to the African Church	Missionary mandate by Christ to the African Church. No promise of	Not specified	Not specified



		the Spirit		
5. Agents	All members of the African Church	The Church in Africa as whole	Particular Churches of Africa	Bishops
6. Content	Not relevant	Not relevant	Not specified	Not relevant
7. Type	Cooperation	Not relevant	Sharing personnel as well as spiritual and temporal resources	Cooperation
8. Sphere	In Africa	The whole world	The whole world	Nations of the continent and of other continents

	<i>EIA 133</i>	<i>EIA 135</i>	<i>EIA 138</i>
1. Distribution	Middle of Chapter 7. (inclusio)	Middle of Chapter 7. Beginning of the paragraph	End of Chapter 7. Beginning of the paragraph
2. Quantity	"Even to the very Ends of the Earth" (Acts 1:8) "To the Ends of the Earth"	"To the Ends of the Earth."	"To the Ends of the Earth."
2. Function in <i>EIA</i>	Thematic	Thematic	Thematic
3. Type of Quotation	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
4. Literary Genre	Not explicit	Not explicit	Not explicit
5. Agents	Seminarians and priests	Not relevant	Members of the African Church
6. Content	Not explicit	Not relevant	values of solidarity, human rights and peace
7. Type	Not relevant	Organic pastoral solidarity	Fostering solidarity with other people
8. Sphere	The ends of the earth	Particular Churches in Africa	Not specified

The schema above shows that Acts 1:8 is the keynote text and a hermeneutical guideline that the Pope uses explicitly as an authoritative warrant in order to give weight to his exhortation. Acts 1:8 exerts command and demands obedience from the African Church. Moreover, it has been interwoven and embedded in the literary fabric of *EIA*. Its distribution determines its function in *EIA*, and its frequent use irresistibly draws the reader's attention to the theme of the exhortation. Whereas the distribution makes it clear that Acts 1:8 permeates the whole exhortation, quantity highlights its modifications. In fact, it is only the second part of Acts 1:8 which is cited in *EIA*. *EIA* reads the African Church into Acts thereby establishing a biblical basis for the identity and the mission of the African Church. In turn, Acts helps to articulate, name and shape the identity of the African Church. At the same time the original meaning of Acts 1:8 has been extended to be able to embrace the new understanding of witness for the African Church. There is, therefore, a dialectical interaction between the world of *EIA* and the world of Acts. Acts 1:8 is used as an intertextual device which engages Acts and *EIA* in a dialogue in order to create a new missionary identity for the African Church and its evangelizing mission. Acts 1:8 arrests the attention of the reader of *EIA* by its frequency, distribution and quality of appropriateness. It helps overcome the distance between the time of Acts and the contemporary African Church. In each paragraph where it is found it projects a certain image of the Church in Africa and creates a certain vision of being Church and doing mission. It promotes reflection on the self-understanding and self-definition of the Church in Africa as it prepared itself for the third millennium of the Christian faith.

The analysis and evaluations of the use of Acts 1:8 in *EIA* have demonstrated beyond any doubt that Acts 1:8 and *EIA* are mutually interpretative and illuminating. Intertextual reading is a two-way process. According to the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, there is a fusion of two world horizons into one in *EIA*. The world of Acts has broken into the world of *EIA* and vice versa. *EIA* has appropriated the meaning of witness, a major theme of Acts 1:8, into its world thereby helping in the new self-understanding of the Church in Africa. In this process of appropriation, *EIA* has enlightened and

transformed the meaning of Acts 1:8. So, Acts 1:8 provides new identity for the Church in Africa and at the same time it receives new meaning from its use in *EiA*.

#### A. How Acts 1:8 Helps to Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* has been evaluated under seven points, namely, (1) context; (2) literary genre; (3) agents of witness; (4) criteria to be witness; (5) content of witness; (6) type of witnessing; and (7) sphere of witness.

##### (1) Context

From the viewpoint of life context, Acts and *EiA* are centuries apart and address different issues. However, the use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* has made an intertextual dialogue between Acts and *EiA* possible which has resulted in a new self-identity for the Church in Africa, that is, a Church of mission becoming missionary and which is truly inculturated. Acts 1:8 is the commanding biblical text in *EiA* as it is a keynote text in Acts. It is found in the introduction, in the titles of chapters five and seven, and in eleven paragraphs spread throughout the text of *EiA*. Its significance goes far beyond the context of the paragraphs which have been analyzed and evaluated above. It permeates the whole document. It is used consistently and constantly, not for an aesthetic effect, but for its inherent authority and continuing validity and contemporary appropriateness. It marks the continuity between the Church of Acts and the contemporary Church in Africa. Since it is appropriated in a new Church context, it calls for a Church that is truly inculturated in its own milieu.

##### (2) Literary Genre

From the viewpoint of literary genre, Acts 1:8 is a promise and command in Acts which defines the identity and the mission of the apostles. Being a witness provides the main thrust of Acts and is also the main preoccupation in *EiA*. The aspect of promise of the Spirit is missing in *EiA*, whereas the aspect of command is maintained. Twice in *EiA* (paragraphs 86 and 128) it is presented as a mandate given directly by Christ to the

Church in Africa. So the universal missionary identity of the Church in Africa is given by Christ Himself. Its mission to be witness to the whole world is a mandate that the African Church receives directly from Christ.

### **(3) Agents of Witness**

Witness demands witnesses. Since Acts 1:8 is used as a constitutive element of evangelization, *EiA*, therefore, presents a list of various agents of evangelization as witnesses. In two paragraphs (*EiA* 18, 130) Acts 1:8 is applied explicitly to bishops in a way that fits well with the meaning of Acts 1:8 since the bishops are seen in the Catholic tradition as the lawful successors of the apostles (*EiA* 17). They are to bear witness in their capacity as heads of local Churches. However, in most paragraphs (*EiA* 8, 56, 86, 128, 135, 138), Acts 1:8 is applied to all the members of the Church in Africa. In paragraph 38 it is applied to the African members of missionary institutes and African diocesan priests (*fidei donum*). In paragraph 133 it is applied to seminarians and priests.

These agents of witness in *EiA* are a world apart from Acts. Acts 1:8 was originally addressed to the eleven apostles just before the Ascension of the Lord in Jerusalem. However, these same words of the Risen Christ have been appropriated in *EiA* and are now addressed to all members of the Catholic Church in Africa today. *EiA* upholds the validity of Acts 1:8 as the normative Word of God, that is, Scripture. The Risen Lord speaks to the whole African Church even today. All the persons mentioned above (that is, all the members of the Church) could be rightly called the "apostles" of today.

### **(4) Criteria for Becoming Witness**

The criteria for becoming a witness of Christ in Acts consist of having experienced His public life, death and resurrection whereas in *EiA* it requires that one is a baptized member of the Catholic Church. This is an expansion of the call to witness to all the members of the Catholic Church. Not only the African Church as a whole but

each of its individual members is being given this identity of being witness, which at the beginning of Acts had been restricted to the eleven companions of Jesus.

#### (5) Content of Witness

From the viewpoint of content of witness, there is a world of difference between Acts and *EiA*. In Acts, the emphasis is on the death and resurrection of Jesus. A true witness of Christ testifies mainly to His death and resurrection. In *EiA*, the content of witness comprises a number of other issues not found in Acts, like inculturation, promotion of justice and peace, interreligious dialogue, and social communication. These items mentioned above, are to be seen as a way in which the death and resurrection of Christ are experienced in Africa today. They are the means of witnessing to Christ's death and resurrection.

#### (6) Type of Witness

Together with the issue of the content of witness, abides the question of describing the type of witness, which states how to bear witness. The dominant type of witness in Acts is preaching. It is expressed through missionary speeches and is accompanied by witness of life. In *EiA* the emphasis is on the witness of life or witness of action which is a new way of witnessing to the death and resurrection of Christ for the contemporary Church in Africa. The extension of the meaning "witness of life" in *EiA* goes far beyond the paragraphs which have been analyzed and evaluated above. There are many different ways of witnessing to Christ according to *EiA*. Witness of life or action means leading an exemplary life for bishops and priests, a life of commitment to one's promises of baptism for the laity and fidelity to evangelical counsels for religious (*EiA* 22). Witness of life is meant to lead to witness of action by getting involved in different missionary activities, especially in the field of justice and peace (*EiA* 21). It means being committed to the spread of the Gospel through inculturation, ecumenical dialogue and health-institution (*EiA* 38) In paragraphs 86 and 130, bearing witness "entails cooperation among particular Churches in the context of each African country, among the various

nations of the Continent and also of other continents." In paragraphs 129, 135 and 138 the focus is on sharing resources and solidarity as types of witness.

### (7) Sphere of Witness

Finally, Acts 1:8 defines the sphere or scope of witness. In Acts, aimed at both the Jews and the Gentiles, it is described as starting from Jerusalem, and moving through the whole of Judea, Samaria and to the ends of the earth. When the Risen Christ speaks these words to the Eleven, the horizon is limitless, and thus Africa is implicitly included. On the other hand, by quoting these very words and applying them to the entire African Church today, *EiA* places the African Church right there with Christ as He speaks, looking with the Eleven towards the limitless future. Thus the Church in Africa is present in two ways when Christ speaks these words to the Eleven, both as the object of mission (part of "the ends of the earth") and as the subject (that is, the source, originator) of mission in being part of "you" of Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 emphasizes witness as the new paradigm for the evangelizing mission of the Church in Africa. Witness marks a shift in the identity of mission of the Church: from mission as an activity, to the Church that is essentially missionary. Witness is theologically sound since it is founded in Jesus Christ, the Absolute Witness. The language of witness resonates throughout *EiA* with terms such as testimony, martyrs and martyrdom. The word "witness" is an operative and a key-word, appearing fifty-four times throughout *EiA* in the singular and sixteen times in the plural "witnesses." Of the fifty-four occurrences, it is found fourteen times as "to bear witness," twice as "to give witness," and once as "to show witness." Witness is qualified in many different ways: twice as "evangelical," once each as "Christian," "genuine," "effective and credible," "energetic," "living" and "authentic." Witness is an encompassing term in *EiA*; it covers many things.

Acts 1:8 marks a shift in emphasis from *plantatio ecclesiae* and sacramentalization through baptism to witness of life, from a young Church to a maturing one, from a

Church that was a mission territory to a missionary Church, from a Church that was the object of evangelization to an evangelizing Church, from the Church that was recipient of missionaries from other areas of the world to a Church that is now sending out its own missionaries to other areas of the globe. This new missionary paradigm proposed by Acts 1:8 has several implications. It encourages communion which is the New Testament understanding of Church. It also favours dialogue with other Christian Churches and with other religions in our pluralistic society. Acts 1:8 encourages a mature and an inculturated Church. It seeks to avoid the pitfalls of paternalism and colonialism but encourages generosity, sincerity and authenticity. It promotes partnership and respect among local churches so that each local Church is expected to contribute to the universal Church. No local Church is dispensed from this duty, not even the poorest Church. The word "witness" has become synonymous with the word "missionary" which is in keeping with the meaning of mission in Acts. According to *EiA* the only way to be a true missionary is to be a witness in word and deed.

Acts 1:8 is an exhortation for the Church in Africa to assume its proper role within the universal Church and "to make its voice heard in the Church throughout the world" (*EiA* 4). It calls for a Church which is authentically African and truly catholic transcending any ethnic, cultural, national, social or other divisions. Acts 1:8 has an elocutionary force and engenders a new understanding of mission in *EiA*. The traditional concept of mission as a one-way street is giving way to the concept of mission as a mutual exchange of spiritual and human resources. The new context of mission is that every local community becomes a sending and receiving Church.

#### **B. How the Appropriation of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 1:8.**

The analysis and evaluation of Acts 1:8 in the paragraphs of *EiA* mentioned above have demonstrated that intertextual hermeneutics is a two-way process. It is not only the identity and the mission of the Church which have been shaped by the use of Acts 1:8,

but *EIA* has also given new dimensions of meaning to Acts 1:8. The following points are pertinent in this case: (1) literary genre; (2) agents of witness; (3) content; (4) type of witness; (5) criteria for being witness; and (6) sphere of witness.

### (1) Literary Genre

Whereas Acts presents Acts 1:8 as a promise and a mandate, *EIA* presents it as mandate only. Acts 1:8 is constantly and consistently called the mandate which the Risen Christ gave his disciples (*EIA* 86; 128). Acts 1:8 becomes more a mandate than a promise and is therefore limited in its use. The promise to receive the Spirit in order to carry out the mandate has been omitted in all the quotations of Acts 1:8 which are appropriated in *EIA*. Hence, *EIA* restricts Acts 1:8, or at least uses it selectively. The mention of the Holy Spirit appears under allusions to Acts in *EIA*, as we shall see in chapter five.

### (2) Agents of Witness

The number of the agents of witness according to Acts 1:8 is greatly increased in *EIA* since the meaning of the agents of witness in *EIA* is extended to include all those baptized. In the first chapter of Acts, the agents of witness are the apostles. Progressively in Acts, the term is applied to Paul and Barnabas, but is not extended to all those who became Christians. In *EIA* the baptized are like the apostles since they are called to the same mission of witnessing as the apostles were. The world of Acts 1:8 is very much enlarged to include all the baptized. Hence, *EIA* expands Acts 1:8 by appropriating it in a new context. This appropriation of Acts 1:8 transforms the



interpretation of Acts. It cannot be read with the same naïveté or narrow interpretation of witness as before.

### (3) Content

The death and resurrection of Christ takes on a new meaning. In Acts, the death and resurrection were the content of apostolic witnessing. In *LiA* witnessing to the death and resurrection of Christ means being committed to a number of good causes for humanity, namely, justice and peace, development and human rights. The text of Acts has therefore been transformed and the contours of Acts 1:8 have been expanded.

### (4) Type of Witness

In Acts the apostles bear witness to the Risen Christ, mostly through preaching, but also through good deeds ("signs and wonders" Acts 5:12). In *LiA* the emphasis is on the witness of action or witness of life which involves inculturation, promotion of justice and peace, interreligious dialogue, and means of social communications. All these challenges facing the Church in Africa are ways in which the Church lives the experience of the death and resurrection of Christ in modern times. This is a new appropriation of Acts 1:8, an expansion of its meaning which goes far beyond the paragraphs which have been analyzed and evaluated above.

### (5) Criteria for Becoming Witness

Whereas in Acts 1:22 the criteria are clear, in *EiA* all the baptized are called to be witnesses. The criteria for becoming a witness have changed because of the new ecclesial context. In the beginning of Acts, one deals with the first and founding witnesses of the Church. That is why clear criteria were needed in order to validate the witnesses to Christ and his resurrection: the founding witnesses must have experienced the living presence of the Resurrected Christ as well as continuity between the earthly Jesus and the Resurrected Christ. Today the whole Church is concerned with giving testimony to what it teaches is based on the faith in the Risen Christ and rooted in the founding witnesses. The text of Acts has therefore been transformed and the criteria for being witness are now reduced to baptism within the Catholic Church.

### (6) Sphere of Witness

Whereas in Acts bearing witness starts in Jerusalem and goes on to the ends of the earth (Africa included), in *EiA* bearing witness starts in Africa and spreads all over the continent to the ends of the earth. Whereas Africa is implied as the end of the earth in Acts, in *EiA* it is both the starting point for the African Church as the subject of mission and in a way the end of the earth for the African Church as object of mission, especially the parts of the continent which have not yet been evangelized. This is a new appropriation of Acts 1:8

The use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* has established an irrefutable intertextual relationship between *EiA* and Acts. There is continuity in the significance of witness in *EiA*. *EiA*

takes up the message of witnessing where the promise of Acts 1:8 has left off at the end of the book of Acts. *EiA* continues and expands upon the significance of Acts 1:8. Acts 1:8, on the other hand, clarifies and illumines *EiA* by configuring the situation of the African Church according to the patterns, the foundational paradigm, of Acts. The message of Acts 1:8 becomes truly universal, with the Gospel being carried to the ends of the earth. *EiA* is a prolongation of Acts 1:8. In Acts, the missionary trajectory starts from Jerusalem and ends in Rome. In *EiA*, Acts 1:8 starts from Africa: "You shall be my witnesses in Africa" (chapter five) and ends with the world-wide mission: "You shall be my witnesses to the ends of the earth" (chapter seven). In *EiA*, Acts 1:8 has a back and forth significance, referring to the mission of the Church both inside and outside of Africa.

Witness provides a living metaphor for the Church in Africa. In Africa life and death usually stand side by side. There is mixture of great joy and deep sorrow; true witness and counter-witness. On one hand, the Church is hailed for its rapid growth in membership, its laudable achievements in the areas of inculturation and ecumenical dialogue, and its bold initiatives in supplying missionaries to other countries of the world (*EiA* 38). On the other hand, the same Church experiences all kinds of evils, corruption, oppression, racism, and exploitation which it does not seem to overcome. Hence the appeal for witness of life and witness of action in order to deal with these evils. True evangelical witness is not a matter of words alone, but of action and life commitment. The use of the metaphor of witness evokes the link between witness and martyr (martyrdom) which is the supreme form of testimony. Martyrs have been very much part of the life of the Church in Africa. So many men and women have become victims of violence for the sake of the Gospel in Africa. The call to be witness is quite pertinent and urgent for the contemporary Church in Africa for two main historical reasons. Firstly, the disappearance

of the flourishing churches of North Africa and West Africa has left a sad reminder of what could happen to the Church in Africa today. Secondly, the Rwandan genocide of 1994 hung like a cloud of darkness over the African Synod. It revealed the horrific realities of the African Church in quite a traumatic way. The Rwandan crisis became a warning to the Churches in Africa of what could happen to any established local Church on the continent. It seems logical therefore that the African bishops would become concerned with bearing witness in word and deed rather than with the further expansion of the Church. More than ever the Church in Africa needs committed witnesses to the cause of the Gospel on the continent and abroad. Only true witness in word and deed will help the African Church deal with its own problems and make the message of the Church both relevant and credible. *EIA* makes the African Church credible by urging it to see itself through the eyes of Acts, and to see Acts in the light of the African Church. The use of Acts in *EIA* is a way of creating a new identity. The current situation of the African Church is seen through the foundational moments in Acts and subsequent witness of life in the social life of Africa is seen through the witness to the death and resurrection of Christ.

## CHAPTER FOUR: QUOTATIONS OF ACTS IN *EiA*

The present chapter continues the critical evaluation of the use of quotations from Acts in *EiA* begun in the previous chapter. The inquiry proceeds to all quotations from Acts and not just Acts 1:8. The analysis of the quotations will follow the same procedure as in chapter three. As before, the criteria used for the evaluation are the philosophical and literary criteria based on the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, together with the tools of literary analysis and reader-response criticism developed by Iser. This chapter is a crucial part of the intertextual inquiry into the use of Acts in *EiA* since it is devoted entirely to the study of quotations as intertextual devices. Together with chapter three, it is the core of this study since quotations, as we have seen in chapter three, are the most conspicuous intertextual manifestations of Acts in *EiA*. All of the observations about quotations in chapter three will come to bear on this chapter. The process for examining each quotation begins with a literary analysis of each quotation in its original context in Acts. This will be followed by an analysis and evaluation of its significance in *EiA*. The use of each quotation of Acts in *EiA* will be analyzed and evaluated under three aspects: (1) the context in *EiA* since the context gives meaning; (2) how *EiA* illumines and transforms each quotation of Acts; and (3) how each quotation helps shape a new identity for the Church in Africa. This way of proceeding is in keeping with the proposed hypothesis of this research that intertextuality is a two-way process: the mutual illumination and transformation of Acts and *EiA*.

We have identified quotations of Acts 1:8 in the preceding chapter. The following list of the other quotations from Acts will be dealt with in this chapter as they appear in *EiA*: (1) Acts 8: 27-39 (paragraph 6); (2) Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47 (paragraph 28); (3) Acts 2:11 (paragraphs 32, 76); (4) Acts 4:12 (paragraph 74); (5) Acts 20:28 (paragraph 98); (6) Acts 2:42 (paragraph 100); and (7) Acts 2:44-45 (paragraph 129). Each quotation will be analyzed and evaluated according to the way it is presented in *EiA*, that is, only the verses of Acts that are indicated.

## 1. Acts 8:27-39 in *EiA* 6

A quotation is always embedded in two contexts, the genotext and the phenotext. It establishes intertextual links between the world of the genotext and the world of the phenotext. There are then three important elements inherent in any structure of a quotation which must be considered when analyzing and evaluating its use: genotext (Acts), phenotext (*EiA*), and the quotation itself (from Acts). Acts 8:27-39 is the first reference to Acts found in *EiA*, in paragraph six of the introduction. It is a small segment of a larger narrative of Acts and presupposes that the reader of *EiA* has read the whole narrative of Acts and can fill in the gaps left by *EiA*. Acts 8:27-39 will be examined below in its original context in Acts and then in its new context within *EiA*.<sup>1</sup>

### 1.1. Significance in Acts:

The significance of each quotation of Acts within its original context will be analyzed and evaluated under three points: (a) literary genre, (b) context, and (c) function.

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<sup>1</sup> J NIEUVIARTS, *L'entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem* (Mt 21:1-17), pp. 23-24, writes: "Il est important de prendre la mesure du véritable coup de force que constitue, dans un discours ou un récit, l'acte de citation. Un texte est arraché à un contexte, par choix délibéré. De ce contexte, il conserve quelques traits, qui se laisseront lire, au gré de la connaissance qu'en a ou peut en avoir le lecteur: entré dans son nouveau contexte, il garde la trace de son appartenance au premier."

## (a) Literary Genre of Acts 8:27-39 in Acts

Having no quotation marks or formula, Acts 8:27-39 is an indirect quotation or reference in *Lit.A.* It refers to a well-known passage in Acts about the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. Acts does not specify his ethnic and cultural background and this has been a bone of contention among biblical scholars.<sup>2</sup> This passage has similar characteristics to a number of other conversion stories in Acts, namely, the conversion of Paul (Acts 9) and the conversion of Cornelius (Acts 10-11): (1) It is an individual conversion story (cf. Acts 9); (2) it is ordered by God (angel) and carried out through the mediation of another person (cf. Acts 9:10-11; 10:19-20); and (3) it results in baptism (cf. 9:18b; 10:48a).<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Biblical scholars are divided on the issue. Some think he was a Jew and most scholars admit that he was an African, an Ethiopian, a gentile interested in Judaism. I agree with the second hypothesis that the Ethiopian was an African (gentile). Otherwise Luke would probably have specified if he were a Jew.

<sup>3</sup> B. R. GAVENTA, "What God Has Cleansed": Conversion in Luke-Acts (Part 2)" *From Darkness to Light* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1995) pp. 98-107; B. R. GAVENTA, "Conversion in the Bible" in H. N. MALONY and S. SOUTHARD, *Handbook of Religious Conversion* (Alabama: Birmingham, Religious Education Press, 1992) p. 50; S. G. WILSON, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts* (Great Britain: Cambridge University Press, 1975) pp. 171-172; H. CONZELMANN, *Acts of the Apostles* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987) p. 67, says: "The story was apparently told in Hellenistic circles as the first conversion of a Gentile." E. HAENCHEN, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Commentary* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1971) p. 314, says: "At first sight, the eunuch himself seems presented as a Gentile: the conversion of a Jew (be he Jewish by birth or by full acceptance of the law) would be of no special consequence for the progress of the mission." B. WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Michigan Grand Rapids: The Paternoster Press, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998) p. 293, says: "A special stress is placed throughout this narrative on God's engineering of this conversion." R. D. WITHERUP, *Conversion in the New Testament* (Minnesota: Colledgeville, The Liturgical Press, 1994) p. 64, says: "The first story of individual conversion in Acts concerns a foreigner, clearly a gentile, who is probably a 'Godfearer.'"

### (b) The Context of Acts 8:27-39 in Acts

Acts 8:27-39 is presented in Acts as a partial fulfilment of Acts 1:8.<sup>4</sup> It is situated between the mass conversion of the Samaritans (Acts 8:4-25) and the individual conversion of Paul (Acts 9:1-19), providing an example of gospel outreach from Jerusalem to the end of the earth. It demonstrates “how the Word of God has spread even to an influential individual of different background, from a far-off country.”<sup>5</sup>

### (c) The Function of Acts 8:27-39 in Acts

Acts 8:27-39 links Acts to the Gospel of Luke with deliberate echoes of the Emmaus road story (Luke 24:13-35). There are striking intertextual links between the two episodes,<sup>6</sup> including six main elements held in common. (1) The locale: the

<sup>4</sup> J. D. G. DUNN, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Pennsylvania: Valley Forge, Trinity Press International, 1996) p. 115, says: “So the Ethiopian here may be represented as a precursor of the gospel preaching to the ‘end (last) of the earth’ (Acts 1:8).” L. T. JOHNSON, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minnesota: Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1992) p. 160, says: “In terms of its place and function within the narrative, we shall see how the programmatic prophecy of Jesus in Acts 1:8 continues to be fulfilled.” BRAWLEY, *Centering on God*, p. 95, writes: “The persecution results in the extension of the proclamation (8:5-17, 26-40), an extension that is also a part of the performance of the witness towards the end of the earth (1:8).”

<sup>5</sup> FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 411. BRAWLEY, *Centering on God*, p. 55, writes: “Now the reader understands the reference to Samaria in Acts 1:8 not merely geographically but also ethnically. On the other hand, the baptism of an Ethiopian eunuch presents some enigma (8:26-38). His ethnic and religious status are indeterminate, but not his inclusion.”

<sup>6</sup> Many commentators are unanimous that Acts 8:27-39 is to be read together with Luke 24:13-35 because of the intertextual relationship between them. For instance: Dupont, “Les pèlerins d’Emmaüs (Lc 24,13-35)” pp. 349-374. SPENCER, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts*, pp. 141-142. C. GRAPPE, “Au croisement des lectures et aux origines du repas communautaire: Le récit des pèlerins d’Emmaüs (Luc 24/13-35),” *Etudes Théologiques & Religieuses* 4 (1998) pp. 491-501. T. ROSICA, “Two Journeys of Faith,” *The Bible Today* 31(1993) pp. 177-180. T. ROSICA,



encounter happens on the way (ὁδός). Jesus joins the two disciples of Emmaus on their way from Jerusalem (Luke 24:13-16,32). Philip meets the Ethiopian eunuch on his way from Jerusalem (Acts 8:29-30). (2) The mode of encounter: they engage in a conversation. It is a genuine dialogue with questions and answers. In the Gospel, Jesus provokes the conversation by posing a question (Luke 24:17). Jesus' question is answered by another question (verse 18). In Acts, Philip interrogates the Ethiopian (Acts 8:30) who responds with a question (verse 31). (3) The subject of discussion: "explanation" (significance). In the Emmaus story, it is about the significance of the death and the resurrection of Jesus (Luke 24:18-27). Jesus explains the scriptures to them (verse 27). In Acts, it is the Ethiopian who asks Philip for the meaning of a passage from Isaiah. Philip's response is to preach Jesus to him from the scriptures (Acts 8:35). (4) The climax. They culminate in sacred acts. The Emmaus story culminates in the

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"The road to Emmaus and the road to Gaza: Luke 24:13-35 and Acts 8:26-40." *Worship* 68 (1994) pp. 117-131. B. P. ROBINSON. "The Place of the Emmaus Story in Luke-Acts." *New Testament Studies* 30 (1984) pp. 481-497. J. M. GIBBS. "Luke 24:13-35 and Acts 8:26-39: The Emmaus Incident and the Eunuch's Baptism as Parallel Stories." *Bangalore Theological Forum* 7 (1975) pp. 17-30. E. CHARPENTIER. "L'Officier Ethiopien (Ac 8, 26-40) et les disciples d'Emmaüs (Luc 24,13-35)." *La Pâque du Christ: Mystere du salut. Mélanges. F.-X. Durwell, Lectio Divina* 112 (Paris: Editions du Cerf, 1982) pp. 197-201. BOUSSUYT et RADERMAKERS. *Temoins de la Grâce*, p. 118, say: "Si le schéma est analogue, la portée des deux textes est cependant différente. Le récit d'Emmaüs est une 'anamnese.' L'épisode de Philippe constitue une 'exégèse.'" POUCOUTA. *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique*, pp. 83-86, says: "La rencontre de Philippe avec le chancelier rappelle un autre épisode que rapporte le troisième évangile, celui des disciples d'Emmaüs (Lc 24, 13-35)." The Navarre Bible. *Acts of the Apostles* (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 1998) pp. 101- 102, reads: "The baptism of the Ethiopian official marks an important step in the spread of Christianity. St Luke's account underlines the importance of Sacred Scripture, and its correct interpretation, in the work of evangelization, this episode encapsules the various stages in apostolate: Christ's disciple is moved by the Spirit (v.29) and readily obeys his instruction: he bases his preaching on Sacred Scripture – as Jesus did in the case of the disciples of Emmaus – and then administers baptism."

breaking of the bread with Jesus (Luke 24:28-30). In Acts, the Ethiopian asks for baptism (8:36-39). (5) The end: Jesus suddenly vanishes from the scene (Luke 24:31) and reappears in verses 36-43 continuing his ministry. Philip too disappears from the sight of the Ethiopian (Acts 8:39) and reappears preaching in Azotus (verse 40). (6) The effects: the disciples of Emmaus recall their hearts burning within them (Luke 24:32) while the Ethiopian went away rejoicing (Acts 8:39).<sup>7</sup>

Acts 8:27-39 is of paramount importance in the story of Luke-Acts. It echoes a number of Lucan theological motifs found elsewhere in Luke-Acts (witness, joy, baptism),<sup>8</sup> anticipates the missionary outreach to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8), and paves the way for the formal admission of the Gentiles into the Church (Acts 10:1-11:18).<sup>9</sup> It is a basic text in the Lucan theology on the Holy Spirit, underscoring its role in Acts.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 292.

<sup>8</sup>C. J. MARTIN, "A Chamberlain's Journey and the Challenge of Interpretation for Liberation," *Semeia* 47 (1989) pp. 106-107.

<sup>9</sup>BOSSUYT et RADERMAKERS, *Témoins de la Parole de la Grâce*, p. 284 draw a parallelism between Acts 8:26-40 and Acts 10:1-23. WILSON, *The Gentiles and the Gentile Mission in Luke-Acts*, p. 171, says: "Before discussing the Cornelius incident, we must first consider the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40)." Indeed the two narratives are related in Acts.

<sup>10</sup>A. CASALEGNO, "O Espírito disse a Filipe": Reflexões sobre o Espírito nos atos dos Apóstolos a partir de 8:26-40" *Perspectiva Teológica* 30 (1998) pp. 37-56. DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission*, p. 98, says: "deuxième intervention extraordinaire de l'Esprit: l'événement de la conversion et du baptême de l'eunuque éthiopien. Cet événement résulte clairement de l'initiative de l'Esprit."

After the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized (Acts 8: 38), he went away rejoicing (Acts 8:39). Commenting on Acts 8:39, Fitzmyer says that “Luke introduces once again ‘joy’ at Christian conversion.”<sup>11</sup> Joy is a favourite term in Acts (5:14;11:23; 12:14; 13:48,52; 15:31).<sup>12</sup> It is a characteristic Christian expression of contentment. In conclusion, Acts 8: 27-39 is an important individual conversion narrative in Acts whose interest is the expansion of the gospel to the end of the earth including Africa as represented by Ethiopia.

## 1.2. Significance of Acts 8:27-39 in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 8:27-39 is used as an excerpt rather than as a verbatim quotation. It has a few select words from Acts. It is the first reference to Acts used in *EiA*<sup>13</sup> and is found in paragraph six of the introduction which reads thus:

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<sup>11</sup>FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 415. See also Ben WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles. A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary*, p. 300.

<sup>12</sup>NAVONE, *Themes of St Luke* (Rome: Gregorian University Press, 1970) p. 71.

<sup>13</sup>Acts 8:27-39 is found once in the *Lincaementa*, paragraph 26 and it is interpreted thus: “This account illustrates not simply the initial goal of evangelization—salvation—but the necessity that this message be communicated to others.” Y SAOUT, *Cette activité libératrice* (Paris: Nouvelles Editions Mame, 1984) p. 98, says: “Ce texte intéresse spécialement l’Afrique et ceux qui évangélisent en Afrique. Il nous montrera aussi, sous un angle nouveau, comment les Actes peuvent concerner l’homme du Tiers-Monde. [L’éthiopien] c’est le seul converti, dans le livre des Actes, qui soit indépendant de l’impérialisme romain.” P. de MEESTER, *Dialogue entre foi et culture: cinq épisodes des Apôtres* (Zaire: Kinshasa, Editions St Paul Afrique, 1992) p. 49, says: “Luc laisse le haut fonctionnaire éthiopien poursuivre sa route plein de joie et dans un char égyptien galopant vers l’Afrique, bien avant de lâcher l’apôtre Paul par voile ou à pied sur les voies impériales d’Asie et d’Europe. Et ainsi il permet à l’homme noir de recevoir le baptême avant le Romain et à l’Afrique de reconnaître le Christ et d’entendre la Bonne Nouvelle bien avant l’Europe.” Philippe BOUSSUYT et Jean RADERMAKERS, *Témoins de la Grâce: Lecture des Actes des Apôtres*, Bruxelles, éd. de l’institut d’Etudes Théologiques, 1995, p. 297 say: “C’est un Africain, un noir, personnage important de la cour

The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops was *an historic moment of grace*: the Lord visited his people in Africa. Indeed, this Continent is today experiencing what we can call a *sign of the times*, an *acceptable time*, a *day of salvation*. It seems that the 'hour of Africa' has come, a favourable time which urgently invites Christ's messengers to launch out into the deep and to cast their nets for a catch (cf. Lk. 5:4). Just as at the beginning of Christianity the minister of Candace, Queen of

d'Ethiopie: plus précisément sans doute, un Nubien." C. L'EPLATTENIER, *Le Livre des Actes* (Paris: Centurion, 1994) p. 94, says: "Cet homme est un étranger, un Africain qui retourne dans son lointain pays, l'Ethiopie." F. S. SPENCER, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts: A Study of Relations and Relations* (England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992) p. 129, writes: "In the case of the Ethiopian eunuch, his African heritage tips off his indispensable Gentile identity." W. H. WILLIMON, *Acts: Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1971) p. 71, says: "In the Greco-Roman world the term "Ethiopian" was often applied to black people." C. H. FELDER, *The Original African Heritage: Study Bible*, (King James Version, The James C. Winston Publishing Co., 1993) p.1587, says, "This is the longest passage in the New Testament that explicitly and unambiguously deals with black Africa in relation to the Holy Land in the New Testament." Pope Paul II, "African Synod: His Holiness John Paul II's Homily," *Omnis Terra* 249 (1994) p. 267, says: "Africa is in a certain sense Jesus' second homeland. As a small child, it was there that he sought refuge from Herod's cruelty. Then came apostolic times. The Church returned once more to Africa through Philip the deacon who baptized one of the Queen of Ethiopia's officials. This is how the Church emerged in that ancient, venerated part of the African continent." The Pope goes on to say: "We wish to give thanks, because this "eternal beginning" became in due time the historical beginning of evangelization of Africa, of your countries and of your peoples. This happened for the first time when the deacon Philip baptized an official of the Queen of Ethiopia." *Omnis Terra*, p. 272. J. TOMKO, "Seventh General Congregation," in *L'Osservatore Romano* n.17 (1338), 27 April 1994, p.17, says: "It is true that the evangelization of Africa had its beginnings at the very period of birth of the Church: witness of this is the baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch of Queen Candace, narrated in the Acts of the Apostles." Acts 8:27-40 is also referred to in J. PAUL II, "Homily at the presidential palace in Yaoundé": *L'Osservatore Romano* n.38 (1408), 20 September 1995, p. 1, says: "The Lord's missionary commandment has been applied on the African continent ever since the first generation of Christ's disciples. Indeed, the Acts of the Apostles speak of the baptism conferred on a man of the court of the queen of Ethiopia, by the deacon Philip (cf. Acts 8:27-40)." C. J. MARTIN, "A Chamberlain's Journey and the Challenge of Interpretation for Liberation," in N. K. GOTTWALD and R. A. HORSLEY, *The Bible and Liberation: Political and Social Hermeneutics* (N.Y. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1993) pp. 485, says: "Interpreters find abundant theological significance in the conversion of the Ethiopian in Acts 8, but fail to comment on the ethnographic and world-wide significance. In ancient Hellenistic-Roman world, an Ethiopian was clearly an African." The above literature shows the importance that is attached to Acts 8:27-39 in relation to the evangelization of Africa due to the African heritage of the Ethiopian. It is therefore fitting that it is found right at the beginning of the exhortation which is addressed to African Catholics. Acts 8:27-39 forms an interesting preamble for the use of other quotations of Acts in *EiA* as we shall see later within the chapter.

**Ethiopia, rejoiced at having received the faith through baptism and went on his way bearing witness to Christ (cf. Acts 8:27-39), so today the Church in Africa, joyful and grateful for having received the faith, must pursue its evangelizing mission, in order to bring the peoples of the Continent to the Lord, teaching them to observe all that he has commanded them (Mt 28:20). From the opening Solemn Eucharistic Liturgy which on 10 April 1994 I celebrated in St Peter's Basilica with thirty-five Cardinals, one Patriarch, thirty-nine Archbishops, one hundred forty-six Bishops and ninety priests, the Church which is the family of God and the community of the believers, gathered about the tomb of Peter, Africa was present there, in its various rites, with the entire People of God: it rejoiced, expressing its faith in life to the sound of drums and other African musical instruments. On that occasion Africa felt that it was, in the words of Pope Paul VI, "a new homeland for Christ," a land loved by the Eternal Father. That is why I myself greeted that moment of grace in the words of the Psalmist: "This is the day which the Lord has made: let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118:24)."**

In keeping with the procedure used in the previous chapter, the use of Acts 8:27-39 in the above mentioned paragraph will be analyzed and evaluated under the following points: (1) the context of Acts 8:27-39; (2) how *EiA* illumines and transforms Acts 8:27-39 and (3) how Acts 8:27-39 helps to shape the identity of the African Church.

(a) The Context of Acts 8:27-39 in *EiA*

Acts 8:27-39 is the first reference to Acts in *EiA*. It is found in the middle of paragraph six, which is situated towards the end of the introduction to *EiA*. Regarding its position within *EiA*, Acts 8:27-39 has a character of an illustration in that it best illustrates the link between the African Church and Acts. The preceding paragraph describes the last special assembly for Africa of the synod of bishops as "an historic moment of grace", "sign of the times," "acceptable time," "day of salvation," "the Lord 'visited' his people". All these expressions above are italicized in *EiA* in order to

underline their importance in the text. Other expressions that are used are: “‘the hour of Africa’ has come,” and “a favourable time.” It is worthwhile to note the wording and the tone of the paragraph. The first part of the paragraph is replete with the type of language that resonates in Luke-Acts. A similar language is found in paragraph 9 of chapter one, where a number of similar expressions are reiterated, namely, “an historic moment of grace,” “kairos, a moment of grace,” and “salvation.” Intertextually speaking, Acts 8:27-39 is a genotext while *EiA* is phenotext. Acts 8:27-39, therefore, forms an intertextual link between Acts and *EiA*. The intertextual inquiry focuses on how the appropriation of Acts 8:27-39 in *EiA* illumines and transforms it while, at the same time, Acts 8:27-39 helps to shape a new identity for the Church in Africa. According to Ricoeur, hermeneutics is mainly about world–disclosure yielded by texts: the world of Acts discloses itself to the world of *EiA* and vice versa as we will see below. The genotext, Act 8:27-39, projects a world which interacts with the world of the phenotext, *EiA*.

#### (b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 8:27-39

Since a quotation is a linking device between the genotext (Acts) and the phenotext (*EiA*), Acts 8:27-39 links Acts with *EiA*. Since Acts 8:27-39 has become part of the literary fabric of *EiA*, it is important to see how it has been received and shaped by *EiA*. It is not a verbatim quotation but is incomplete since it has omitted many important constitutive elements of the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts, namely, divine intervention through an angel and the Spirit, the role of Philip as a messenger of God, the

conversation between Philip and the Ethiopian, and the Scriptural passage from which the Ethiopian was reading. Paragraph six focuses on the ethnographic and geographic provenance of the Ethiopian minister. First of all, being an Ethiopian, he is African. But Acts is silent on whether he is a native African or a Jew who lives in Africa. Secondly, paragraph six also highlights his social status and religious fervour: (1) He is a minister, a royal dignitary. (2) He received faith through baptism. (3) He rejoiced. (4) He went away bearing witness to Christ. These four points will be analyzed and evaluated against the text of Acts, namely, (1) verse 27; (2) verse 38; and (3) verse 39.

Firstly, the phrase, “the minister of Candace, queen of Ethiopia.” (δυναστής Κανδακῆς βασιλισσῆς Αἰθιοπῶν),” is a segment of verse 27. The full wording of verse 27b reads: “καὶ ἴδου ἄνθρωπος Αἰθίοψ εὐνοῦχος δυναστής Κανδακῆς βασιλισσῆς Αἰθιοπῶν ὃς ἐληλύθει προσκυνῆσων εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ” (“And behold, an Ethiopian, a eunuch, a powerful man of Candace, the queen of Ethiopia, in charge of all her treasure, had come to Jerusalem to worship.”). As an official (δυναστής) the Ethiopian “was a leading man, a man of power, in his own country. He had power as an agent of the Κανδακῆς βασιλισσῆς Αἰθιοπῶν.”<sup>14</sup> The word “eunuch” is omitted in paragraph six of *LIA*. The Ethiopian is presented as a man of high social standing, a royal dignitary or a minister.

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<sup>14</sup>BARRETT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on The Acts of the Apostles*, Edinburgh, 1994, p. 425. FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 412, says: “Luke describes the eunuch as *dynastes*, ‘a powerful man,’ a term often employed of rulers, chamberlains, or court officials.”

Secondly, the other expression, "he rejoiced" (χαίρων) is found in verse 39. Paragraph six speaks about the joy of receiving the faith, while Acts simply says that "the Ethiopian went on his way rejoicing" without mentioning the cause for his joy.<sup>15</sup> *EiA* refers only to the last part of Acts 8:39: ἐπορεύετο γὰρ τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ χαίρων. In Acts "the subject of this verse is the eunuch. (ὁ εὐνοῦχος) since Philip's whereabouts and subsequent actions are reported in v.40."<sup>16</sup>

Thirdly, another expression, "he received baptism," refers to verse 38. Indeed the Ethiopian was baptized by Philip whose name does not appear at all in paragraph six. *EiA* says that the Ethiopian received faith through baptism but Acts does not say this explicitly.<sup>17</sup> The fact that the Ethiopian received baptism means that he believed in Christ.

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<sup>15</sup>J. HEIMERDINGER, "La foi de l'eunuque Ethiopien." *Études Théologiques et Religieuses* 63 (1983) p. 526, says: "A la fin de notre récit, l'eunuque s'en va "joyeux" (v.39). Vue dans son rapport avec le thème de l'homélie et Es 56/7, cette joie prend une valeur symbolique, elle est le signe manifeste de l'entrée de l'eunuque dans l'ère messianique qui commence."

<sup>16</sup>BARRETT, *Acts*, p. 434.

<sup>17</sup>SAOÛT, *Cette activité libératrice*, p. 107, says: "on peut dire qu'il y a eu échanges de dons entre deux hommes: Philippe a aidé l'Ethiopien à naître à la foi en Jésus et à recevoir l'Esprit, tandis que l'évangélisation particulière de l'Ethiopien libère à nouveau en Philippe le goût d'évangéliser les foules (v.40)." Again he says: "il alla sa route tout joyeux" non seulement vers Méroë, mais en disciple de Jésus guidé par l'Esprit, sans besoin d'un homme désormais pour lui montrer la route." p. 108. G. LUDEMANN, *Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984) p. 104 says that, "It should be noted that he (Luke) does not report that the Spirit was bestowed on the eunuch. In this way Luke has remained faithful to his principle which became evident in the first story about Philip (8.5-25), not to connect the bestowing of the Spirit with the Hellenists preaching and to suppress reports to this effect." G. R. BEASLEY, *Baptism in the New Testament* (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd, St Martin's Press, 1962) p. 118, says: "Moreover, there is much to be said for the common belief that his description of the Eunuch's going on his way 'rejoicing' (χαίρων, 8:39) indicates the convert's possession of the Spirit: yet Luke speaks of a similar 'rejoicing' of the Samaritans on their conversion (πολλή χαρά, 8:8)! Can it be, therefore, that he regarded these Christians as not without the Spirit but without the spiritual gifts that characterized the common life of the Christian communities? There is no doubt that Luke was particularly interested in the charismatic



He was baptized after he had been instructed by Philip, so it therefore makes sense to say that he received faith through baptism.

Finally, the phrase stating that he went on his way (“ἐπορεύετο γὰρ τὴν ὁδὸν αὐτοῦ”) is part of verse 39. As we can see, none of the verses from Acts are quoted verbatim and completely. No further details are given about the Ethiopian in Acts. *EJA* states that the Ethiopian “went on his way bearing witness to Christ,” a statement that is not found in Acts. The word “witness,” is not even part of the original text. It is rather Philip who could be described as going away “witnessing,” although the Greek word used is εὐηγγελίζετο (“preach the Gospel” v.40). But in *EJA* the Ethiopian is associated with the beginning of Christianity in Ethiopia since he is depicted as “bearing witness to Christ.”<sup>18</sup>

Paragraph six has, therefore, expanded the significance of Acts 8:39 by adding the two elements of “receiving the faith” and “bearing witness to Christ.”<sup>19</sup> The words, “faith” and “witness,” are not at all part of the vocabulary of the episode in Acts 8:27-39. An explanation for this additional information to the story can be found in the words of Gaventa: “While the text itself says nothing about the eunuch becoming an evangelist, it

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phenomena connected with the gift of the Spirit.” POUCCOUTA, *La Bible en Terres d’Afrique*, p. 71, says: “Tous deux (Philippe et l’Ethiopien) sont devenus missionnaires. Luc ne dit pas explicitement que l’Ethiopien devient un missionnaire à la manière de Philippe ou de Paul.” Navarre Bible, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 106, reads: “He (Ethiopian) had received a gift of faith, and with the help of divine grace he was ready to live the demands of that faith, even in adverse circumstances: quite probably he would be the only Christian in all Ethiopia.”

<sup>18</sup>In spite of FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 411, who says that “the beginnings of Christianity in Nubia and Ethiopia cannot be traced back earlier than the fourth century A.D.”

<sup>19</sup>There are some textual critics of verse 37 who think that Philip must have asked the Ethiopian whether he believed in Jesus before he was baptized. And the Ethiopian confessed his faith. J. HEIMERDINGER, “La foi de l’eunuque Ethiopien: le Problème,” *Etudes Théologiques et Religieuses* 63 (1988) pp. 521-528. R. J. PORTER, “What did Philip say to the Eunuch,” *The Expository Times* 100 (1988) pp. 54-55.

is easy to understand why readers would draw such a conclusion. The story of the highly placed Ethiopian who suddenly appears, responds, and goes on his way, elicits the enthusiastic – perhaps even imaginative – response of an audience.”<sup>20</sup> The African reader is made to imagine that the Ethiopian minister became an evangelist.

Moreover, since the main concern of the Church in Africa is “bearing witness” (*EiA* 56, 127), it is not surprising that paragraph six has attributed the quality of witness to the Ethiopian not found in Acts but which is in keeping with the general notion of witness in Acts. This turns the Ethiopian into an evangelist to his own people, since according to paragraph six he “went his way bearing witness to Christ.”<sup>21</sup> The phrase

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<sup>20</sup>GAVENTA, “What God has Cleansed: Conversion in Luke-Acts (Part 2)” *From Darkness to Light* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1995) p. 99 FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 411 too says that “presumably he continues on his journey, returns home, and spreads the good news there about Jesus the Christ.” L. MITCHELL, “1st Sunday after Easter,” *Concordia Theological Quarterly* 46 (1982) p. 330, says: “The Ethiopian had no idea that he was to receive such a marvellous message as he began to return home. His encounter with Philip changed his life. Now he had received the Gospel message in faith and he was ready to communicate that message to others.”

<sup>21</sup>Such an interpretation of Acts 8:39 is found in patristic interpretation which grants an evangelizing role to the Ethiopian. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haer.* 4.23.2, “adds that the man became a preacher in Ethiopia of the coming of Christ.” quoted in James M SCOTT, “Luke’s Geographical Horizon,” in D. W. J. GILL and C. GEM PF, *The Book of Acts in its Graeco-Roman Setting* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, The Paternoster Press, 1994) p. 536. Also F. F. BRUCE, “Philip and the Ethiopian,” *Journal of Semitic Studies* 34 (1989) p. 385, quotes Irenaeus as saying that the Ethiopian “was sent to the regions of Ethiopia to proclaim the message which he had believed” (*Against Heresies* 3.12.10). W. BARCLAY, *The Acts of the Apostles*, (Toronto: G. R. Welch Co. Ltd) 1976, p.69, says that “Tradition has it that this eunuch went home and evangelized Ethiopia. We can at least be sure that he who went on his way rejoicing would not be able to keep his new found joy to himself.” W. H. WILLIMON, *Acts: Interpretation* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1971) pp. 72-73, quotes Eusebius saying that “the Ethiopian whom Philip baptized returned home and became an evangelist.” While our text says nothing of this, we can understand how this lively story of an Ethiopian who appears from nowhere, responds to the gospel, and joyfully goes his way elicited an imaginative response from the Church, for in his story we see what the good news can do.” T. ROSICA, “The road to Emmaus and the road to Gaza: Luke 24:13-35 and Acts 8:26-40,” *Worship* 68 (1994) p. 124, says: “Once the Ethiopian departs from the narrative, we are left free to presume that when he arrived in his homeland at the edge of the world, he spread the good news there. One reader in the early Church who assumed this was Irenaeus: the Ethiopian, he says, ‘was sent to the regions of Ethiopia to proclaim the message which he had believed.’”

“bearing witness” is found four times in *LiiA* of which this is the first (See also, paragraphs 65, 71, 138).

### **(c) How Acts 8:27-39 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church**

Since a quotation could serve many functions within a given context, it is important to spell out the specific function of Acts 8:27-39 in the context of the African Church described in *LiiA*. After identifying the quotation within its new context, it has to be analyzed and evaluated. Of the four points mentioned above concerning the Ethiopian minister, three are immediately applied to the Church in Africa, namely, that (1) the Church received faith; (2) it is, therefore, joyful and grateful; and (3) it must pursue its evangelising mission of “bringing the Good News into all the strata of humanity, and through its influence transforming humanity from within and making it new” (paragraph 54). The phrase “evangelizing mission” is found fifteen times in *LiiA* and is used here for the first time (see also, paragraphs 8 [twice], 18, 21, 40, 46, 47, 55, 72, 76, 140, 141, 144). It defines the identity and vocation proper to the Church. The Church exists for mission and mission is the activity of the Church.

Acts 8:27-39 has an affective rhetorical effect on the African reader of *LiiA* in that it invites the reader to identify personally with the Ethiopian minister and thus be more receptive to the message of the Gospel. The Ethiopian hears the Word of God explained to him by Philip, asks for baptism and goes away joyfully witnessing to Christ. Although the story is two thousand years old, it resonates in the African religious imagination. It is culturally affirming and spiritually empowering for an African reader since the Ethiopian minister is presented as a representative of the African Church and the epitome of the joy

of the Church in Africa for having received the faith.<sup>22</sup> The word "rejoice" appears three times in paragraph six: The Ethiopian "rejoiced at having received the faith." The Church in Africa "rejoiced, expressing its faith in life to the sound of drums." The Pope greeted the opening of the African Synod with the words: "This is the day which the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it" (Ps 118:24).

According to reader-response criticism by Iser, a text that is not being read is more or less dead. Only a text that is being read comes to life; and only then does its meaning come to life for the reader. Meaning is therefore developed during the act of reading. Acts 8:27-39, read in *EiA*, has received a new dimension of meaning and has given the African Church a new missionary identity. Intertextuality has made the Ethiopian a witness of Christ, like the disciples of Emmaus (Luke 24:13-35). This expansion of Acts 8:39 in *EiA* is in keeping with the meaning of witness according to Acts where every disciple of Christ is called to be a witness. The Ethiopian minister is an outsider who becomes an insider in the faith. He has become a prototype of the conversion of the African people.<sup>23</sup> The resultant meaning is that African people are called to conversion, that is, to adhere to Christ and His Gospel through faith, like the Ethiopian, as well as to become missionaries like the Ethiopian. Conversion means embracing the Gospel in its radical newness which "involves certain breaks from the customs and culture of whatever culture, because the

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<sup>22</sup>The Ethiopian minister is not to be understood in the modern sense, as an inhabitant of modern Ethiopia. He is to be understood in the classical sense of a representative of someone from an exotic, far-away country in Africa.

<sup>23</sup>The story of the conversion of the Ethiopian in Acts 8:27-39 marks the second time that the text of Acts refers to Africa/Africans: The first reference is Egypt and Libya (Acts 2:10); another reference is Simeon called Niger and Lucius of Cyrene (Acts 13:1). The story of Acts becomes quite pertinent for the African readers and those interested in the evangelization of Africa. Conversion is a central theme in Acts. It is linked with evangelization and witness. Unfortunately, it is not one of the main themes in *EiA* even though it is suggested by quotations, like Acts 8:27-39 and 10:34-35, 45-46, 47. Conversion will be treated again in the next quotation.

gospel is never an internal product of a particular country, but always comes 'from outside,' from on high" (*EiA* 74). African cultural values must be permeated by the gospel; at the same time the faith needs to be inculturated because "faith that does not become culture is not fully accepted, not entirely thought out, not faithfully lived." (*EiA* 78, quoting John Paul II's address to the Italian national congress of the Ecclesial Movement for Cultural Commitment [January 16, 1982], 2: *Insegnamenti* V/1 [1982] 131).

*EiA* configures the meaning of Acts 8:27-39 in the context of the Church in Africa and thus links conversion with witness and evangelization. The Church that is called to evangelize must begin by being evangelized "by constant conversion and renewal, in order to evangelize the world with credibility" (*EiA* 47). In other words, the Church in Africa faces the challenges inherent in the need to be constantly renewed in order to give a relevant and credible witness (*EiA* 21). This is in keeping with Acts wherein deeper conversion is called upon even for the members of the believing community (Ananias, Paul and Peter). A similar configuration will be seen in the next quotation where conversion involves both the evangelizer and the evangelized.

## 2. Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47<sup>24</sup> in *EiA* 28

In *EiA* 28 we find quotations of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47.

### Greek /English Text of Acts 10: 34-35

Ἀνοίξας δὲ Πέτρος τὸ στόμα εἶπεν, Ἐπ'	"And Peter opened his mouth and said:
ἀληθείας καταλαμβάνωμαι ὅτι οὐκ	"Truly I perceive that God shows no

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<sup>24</sup>Paragraph 28 of *EiA* is almost a verbatim reproduction of part of the Pope's homily in John PAUL II, "Homily at Synod's Closing Mass," *L'Osservatore Romano* n.19 (1340), 11 May 1994, p. 2. IDEM, "La grande tâche d'annoncer l'évangile au continent africain," *La Documentation Catholique* 2095 (1994) p. 535. J. PAUL II, "Homily in Yaoundé, Cameroon," *L'Osservatore Romano* n. 38 (1408), 20 September 1995, p. 2, says: "In the first reading of the Acts of the Apostles, Peter confirmed what Christ himself said in the synagogue in Nazareth ( Acts 10: 34-43)."

ἐστὶν προσωπολήμπτης ὁ θεός, ἀλλ' ἐν παντὶ ἔθνει ὁ φοβούμενος αὐτὸν καὶ ἐργαζόμενος δικαιοσύνην δεκτὸς αὐτῷ ἐστίν.

partiality but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him.”

### Greek / English Text of Acts 10:45-46,47

καὶ ἐξεστήσαν οἱ ἐκ περιτομῆς πιστοὶ ὅσοι συνῆλθαν τῷ Πέτρῳ, ὅτι καὶ ἐπὶ τὰ ἔθνη ἡ δωρεὰ τοῦ ἁγίου πνεύματος ἐκκέχυται. ἠκούοντες γὰρ αὐτῶν λαλοῦντων γλώσσαις καὶ μεγαλυνόντων τὸν θεόν, τότε ἀπεκρίθη Πέτρος, Μητι τὸ ὕδωρ δύναται κωλύσαι τις τοῦ μὴ βαπτισθῆναι τουτούς, οἵτινες τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔλαβον ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς;

“The believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God. Then Peter spoke up: ‘Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit as just as we have?’”

## 2.1. Significance in Acts

The significance of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47 in Acts will be discussed under the pattern established above, namely, (a) context; (b) literary genre; and (c) function.

### (a) Context of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47.

The significance of the above quotation from Acts will be better understood and appreciated in its original context. Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47 is a crucial development within the narrative of Acts, giving an account of the spread of the Word and the legitimacy of the mission to the gentiles. Acts 10:34-35 is only a segment of the last great missionary discourse of Peter and forms an intrinsic part of the Cornelius episode in Acts 10:1-11:18.<sup>25</sup> It is in light of this literary context that this passage is to be

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<sup>25</sup> FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 459, says: “The discourse (10:34-43) is another missionary speech, which repeats a bit of the kerygma. It has, then, affinity with the missionary speeches already addressed by Peter to the Jews. Now, however, it is addressed to a Palestinian Gentile, a Jewish sympathizer and Godfearer.”

interpreted since it presupposes the verses that precede it as well as those which follow it. The preceding verses 1-33 speak about the visions of Cornelius and Peter respectively. The following verses in Acts 11:1-18 are an explanation of Acts 10. The story in Acts 10 is told from the viewpoint of Cornelius. It begins (vv.1-8) and ends (v.48) within his household. The fact that this episode is repeated three times (Acts 10: 11: 15) illustrates the weight of its importance to the rest of the story of Acts.

**(b) Literary Genre of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47**

Verse 34 is part of a missionary discourse (vv. 34-43), addressed to a godfearing gentile. This discourse starts with Peter's solemn confession of God's impartiality (v.34). The first words of v.34 "ἀνοιξας δὲ Πέτρος τὸ στόμα αὐτοῦ" echo Acts 8:35 and allude to Acts 18:14<sup>26</sup>. "Paul was about to open his mouth." God is not προσωποληπτης (v.34) He does not go by appearance. He looks at the heart. The theme of the impartiality of God is a well-known Old Testament theme (Dt 10:17; 2 Chr. 19:7; Sir. 35: 15). It is equally prevalent in the New Testament and is used to show that God discriminates against none (Rm 2:11; Eph. 6: 9; 3:25). God's salvation is open to all. "He calls both Jews and non-Jews to salvation through Jesus Christ, respecting all human beings, from any nation, who reverence the Deity and seek to conduct themselves with uprightness and righteousness"<sup>27</sup> Verses 45-47, although part of Acts 10:34-48, are presented as a theophany (pentecost), an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, as in Acts 2:4.

**(c) Function of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47**

The theme developed in Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47 gets its significance from the overall story of Acts 10:1-11:18. It is the second most important event of the missionary

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<sup>26</sup>SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts: Their Content, Context, and Concerns* (Louisville: Kentucky, Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1994) p. 72.

<sup>27</sup>FITZMYER, *The Acts*, p. 460.

expansion of the Church after Acts 8. The focus here is on Peter, who had strongly resisted eating anything common and unclean, is in focus here (v. 14).<sup>28</sup> He and the other apostles were not well-disposed to accept the gentiles within their ranks until severely warned by God not to call any person common or unclean (v. 28). He comes fully convinced of this in the house of Cornelius (a gentile). After baptizing Cornelius, Peter will have to justify his act before the assembly in Jerusalem (Acts 11:4-17). Here he insists that God's salvation knows no discrimination of either racial or ethnic in nature. Anyone who fears God and practices justice is pleasing to Him (v.35).

Verse 35 describes a person who is pleasing (δεκτός) to God: the one "who fears him and is just." The adjective δεκτός has a sacrificial connotation. According to the book of Leviticus, one becomes pleasing to God in offering a sacrifice of animals without fault (1:3; 19: 5; 22:18-18). That the word acquires a new significance in the New Testament is apparent in verse 35 (see also Phil. 4:18; Rm 15:16; 1P 2:5). The preceding passage clarifies this point. The centurion Cornelius qualifies as "pleasing" to God. He is a just and god-fearing man (10:22), a description that is applied to him right from the beginning of the story (10:2). He was generous in almsgiving and prayed continually to God. The expression godfearer is found in the first half of Acts (10:2, 22, 35; 13:16, 20), where Cornelius is recommended for his piety and justice. In his gospel, Luke uses the expression godfearers to designate pious Jews (Lk 1:50) but in Acts it is applied to pious gentiles as well (10:2, 22, 35). True godfearers are pious and practice justice (10:35). Cornelius is certainly a gentile. Peter makes it clear that he had done something contrary to Jewish law by visiting a foreigner (10:28). These verses depict Peter's journey as he opens up to the acceptance of the gentiles, the progression followed by the other apostles and the Church as a whole. Peter's greatest surprise is to realize that one does

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<sup>28</sup>DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission* pp. 73-74, says: "Quand il est question de donner aux païens de la maison de Corneille accès à l'Évangile, Pierre résiste (10.14) mais l'Esprit est plus fort."



not necessarily have to belong to Israel in order to be acceptable to God. God is not for the Jews alone but for the gentiles also (10:36. see Rm 3:29).

Immediately following Peter's discourse, verse 44 begins with the intervention of the Holy Spirit. As Peter is still speaking the Spirit falls upon the gentiles<sup>29</sup> The Spirit manifests himself through the "speaking in tongues" as in Acts 2. He descends upon the gentiles and they receive the gift of the Spirit even before they fully embrace the faith. This is the first time in Acts that it is said explicitly that the Spirit is given to gentiles. The preaching of the word and the outpouring of the Spirit happen at approximately the same time. The outpouring of the Spirit echoes back to the Pentecost event (Acts 2: 1-12; 11:15) as the Spirit is revealed in a similar manner. There are a number of lexical links between Acts 2 and 10 which explain why this episode is called "Pentecost of the Gentiles."<sup>30</sup> Peter himself makes the connection with the event of Pentecost: "As I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell on them as just as on us at the beginning" (Acts 11:15). Verses 45-47 describe different reactions to the outpouring of the Spirit. Verse 45 describes the reaction of the circumcised party. They were amazed (Acts 9:21; 12:16). Verse 46 describes the external manifestation of the outpouring of the Spirit which is

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<sup>29</sup>DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission*, p. 24, says: "Arrivé chez celui-ci, il constate avec surprise que, avant même de terminer l'annonce de la Bonne Nouvelle de Jésus Christ, l'Esprit envahit ses auditeurs païens, Corneille et les gens de sa maison."

<sup>30</sup>C. LUKASZ, *Evangelizzazione e conflitto*. Indagine sulla coerenza letteraria e tematica della pericope di Cornelio (Atti 10, 1-11, 18) (Europäische Hochschulschriften, Reihe XIII, Theologie, Frankfurt am Main, New York: P. Lang, 1993) pp. 162-163, 164. He shows the parallels between Acts 2 and 10. He says: "I riferimenti all'effusione di pentecoste, anche se numerosi, sono selettivi, soprattutto per quanto riguarda le idee teologiche. Questa maniera selettiva e limitata di riferirsi agli eventi di pentecoste indica che Luca non intende descrivere qui un'altra pentecoste, una specie di 'pentecoste dei pagani,' ma concentrarsi sulla parità del dono dello Spirito ai giudei e ai pagani cristiani." See P. de MEESTER, *Dialogue entre foi et cultures: Cinq épisodes des Actes des Apôtres*, Zaïre, Kinshasa, Editions Saint Paul Afrique, 1992, p. 59. FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 460. M. GOURGUES, "Mission et Communauté (Actes des Apôtres 1-12)" *Cahiers Evangile* 60 (1987) p. 31, speaks about "la Pentecôte des païens." F. H. CHASE et B. WIESS referred to in F. BOVON, "Tradition et rédaction en Actes 10,1-11,18," *Theologische Zeitschrift* 26 (1970) p. 24, say: "Luc conçoit cette aventure comme la Pentecôte des Gentils."

analogous to Pentecost. The same Spirit that fell upon the disciples of Christ at Pentecost descends on the Gentiles. It is truly a gift of God (2:1-13; 2:38; 8:14-17; 9:17; 19:1-6). The outpouring of the Spirit had a double effect on the Gentiles: they were able to speak in tongues and extol God.

Peter reacts with a rhetorical question (v.47). There is nothing that can prevent (κωλύσαι) them from being baptized (see Acts 11:17). His reaction echoes that of the Ethiopian (Acts 8:36). Peter is bound to acknowledge that the Gentiles have received the Spirit just as had he and the apostles (Acts 2; see also Acts 11:15).<sup>31</sup> The fact of baptism is specified and explicitated in verse 48a. he commanded that they be baptized in the name of Jesus (see Acts 2:38; 8:16; 19:5). Baptism marks the full integration of the newly baptized persons into a Christian community. However, this episode is *sui generis* in Acts. Nowhere else in Acts is a similar episode mentioned in which the gift of the Spirit precedes baptism. No doubt it has a profound theological bearing on the narrative of Acts.

## 2.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 10:34-35,45-46, 47 appears in paragraph 28 of Chapter One of *EiA*. It is by far the longest direct quotation from Acts in *EiA* and is introduced with a quotation formula. As was noted earlier, a quotation formula underscores the divine authority of the text. The paragraph reads thus

**The Liturgy of the Sixth Sunday of Easter in 1994, at the Solemn Eucharistic Celebration for the working session of the Special Assembly, provided me with occasion to develop a meditation upon God's salvific**

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<sup>31</sup>J. T. SQUIRES, "The Function of Acts 8:4-12,25," *New Testament Studies* 44 (1998) p. 612, explains different stages of the Church's mission to the Gentiles. He says that, "the turn to the Gentiles begins to be implemented in the third step, when Peter and Cornelius are drawn together."

plan for Africa: One of the Scriptural readings, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, recalled an event which can be understood as *the first step in the Church's mission "ad gentes"*: it is the account of the visit made by Peter, at the bidding of the Holy Spirit, to the home of a Gentile, the centurion Cornelius. Until that time the Gospel had been proclaimed mainly to the Jews. After considerable hesitation, Peter, enlightened by the Spirit, decided to go to the house of a Gentile. When he had arrived, he discovered to his joyful surprise that the centurion was awaiting Christ and baptism. The Acts of the Apostles says: **"the believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God"** (10:45-46). In the house of Cornelius the miracle of Pentecost was in a sense repeated. Peter then said: **"Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him [...] Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"** (Acts 10:34-35, 47). Thus began the Church's mission *ad gentes*, of which Paul of Tarsus would become the principal herald. The first missionaries who reached the heart of Africa undoubtedly felt an astonishment similar to that experienced by the Christians of the Apostolic age at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.<sup>52</sup>

(a) Context of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46,47 in *EiA*

Paragraph 28 is the penultimate paragraph of chapter one of *EiA* and appears under the subtitle "God Wills to Save Africa." It is thematically linked to paragraph 27 which speaks about God's redeeming love for humanity, and in particular for Africa. Paragraph 28 comments at length on Acts 10:34-35,45-46,47 which is the second and last quotation from Acts in chapter one of *EiA*. The indicated verses are quoted verbatim, and are interpreted as *"the first step in the Church's mission 'ad gentes'."* The last part of this phrase is italicized in the official text in order to show the emphasis. The phrase *mission "ad gentes"* is found at the beginning and the end of the paragraph

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<sup>52</sup>The French version of *EiA* ends with "sur les païens" (upon the Gentiles) whereas the English and Latin versions do not end the same way. I, therefore, follow the English version as it stands.

forming an inclusion which indicates its importance in this paragraph. The phrase *mission ad gentes* introduces the quotation from Acts and concludes it: "One of the Scriptural readings, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, recalled an event which can be understood as the first step in the Church's mission *ad gentes*." "Thus began the Church's mission *ad gentes*, of which Paul of Tarsus would become the principal herald." This underlines the fact that the passage (Acts 10) speaks about the first missionary outreach to non-Jews. Paragraph 28 specifies this even more by saying that, "until that time the Gospel had been proclaimed mainly to the Jews." In Acts the mission to the Gentiles starts officially with Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles.

The important actors mentioned in this paragraph are: the Holy Spirit, Peter and his companions, Cornelius, and Paul. The focus of the paragraph is on the Holy Spirit who is mentioned five times. He is the main figure in the passage. It is "at the bidding of the Holy Spirit" that Peter goes to the house of Cornelius. Peter is "enlightened by the Spirit" who gives the "power to speak in tongues." Such a manifestation of the presence of the Holy Spirit is described here as "the miracle of Pentecost" or "outpouring of the Holy Spirit." The Pope likens the miracle of the outpouring of the Spirit in Acts 10:45-46 to, although not equated with, the one in Acts 2. In the house of Cornelius it was like the repetition of the first Pentecost: "in the house of Cornelius the miracle of Pentecost was in a sense repeated."

Paul is mentioned once: "Paul of Tarsus would become the principal herald" of the Church's mission *ad gentes*. Cornelius is mentioned twice and Peter is mentioned four times. The passage from Acts is said to be about "the visit of Peter to the house of Cornelius." Peter goes on his visit, after "a considerable hesitation," "he discovered to his joyful surprise that the centurion was awaiting Christ and baptism." He pronounces his missionary discourse in the house of Cornelius. While speaking, he is surprised by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles. In relating this story to the Church in Africa, *EA* has indeed re-appropriated and re-configured Acts 10: 34-35, 45-46, 47.

(b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 10: 34-35, 45-46, 47.

According to reader-response criticism the text being read comes to life and generates a new dimension of meaning which might not have been originally intended by the author. Although the episode is normally called the conversion of Cornelius, paragraph 28 draws our attention to Peter's resistance to change (conversion). It says that Peter had a "considerable hesitation" about going to the house of Cornelius<sup>33</sup> and that his visit is prompted by the Holy Spirit. His reluctance to go may be extrapolated from the text of Acts 10:14, 11:8 which describes his dream of being offered food he considers unclean. Three times does he vehemently refuse to eat what is put before him (10:16; 11:10). Paragraph 28 of *EiA* seems to allude to what some commentators call the "conversion of Peter" that occurs through the conversion of Cornelius.<sup>34</sup> Gaventa goes

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<sup>33</sup>F. S. SPENCER, *The Portrait of Philip in Acts: A Study of Roles and Relations*, (Sheffield: Sheffield Academy Press, 1992) p. 158, says: "What a contrast this eager reaction poses to the initial hostility of Paul toward Christianity and the impulsive indignation of Peter at the thought of mingling with 'unclean' Gentiles. These resistant attitudes must be overcome before the Gentile mission can move forward."

<sup>34</sup>There are quite a number of commentators who hold this position. Some simply mention it in passing. I found the following works quite insightful on this matter: J.S. SPONG, *Rescuing the Bible from Fundamentalism: A Bishop Rethinks the Meaning of Scripture*, New York: Harper San Francisco, 1991, p. 174, says: "The story of Peter's conversion told in Acts (Acts 10:9ff) was a significant transition point in this conflict. It is interesting to me to note how much more familiar people are with the Book of Acts' version of Paul's conversion than they are with Acts' version of Peter's conversion." P.-G. MULLER, "Die Bekehrung des Petrus. Zur Interpretation von Apg 10, 1-11, 18," *Herder Korrespondenz* 28 (1974) [translated in the New Testament Abstracts 19 (2,1974) pp. 195-196.] It reads: "The narrative of Peter's "conversion" really begins with Acts 9:32. The story has been placed in the framework of a journey, as in Acts 9:2-27 (Paul's journey to Damascus) and Lk 9:51-18:14 (Jesus' journey to Jerusalem). On this journey Peter experiences his conversion to Paulinism, i.e. to the teaching of sola fide and sola gratia (cf. Acts 15:9)." We may question this interpretation of a Lucan text with Pauline terminology. GAVENTA, "Conversion in Luke-Acts (part 2)" *From Darkness to Light* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p.112, says: "Both Cornelius and Peter require conversion." She reiterates that in *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol.X, No.4 (1982) pp. 420-21: "Cornelius represents all the Gentiles. His conversion produces what we could call the conversion of Peter, who must open his eyes to see that 'God has no partiality.'" She becomes more affirmative in "Conversion in the Bible" in H. N. MALONY and S. SOUTHARD, *Handbook of Religious Conversion*, p. 51. She says, "In this important account both Cornelius and Peter are

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converted, since Peter must change his own perspective in order to see what God is doing in and through Cornelius." W. BEPLER, "Die ökumenische Bekehrung des Petrus (Apg 10,1-11, 18) *Ökumenische Rundschau* 34 (1985) p. 375, says: "Das Wort Bekehrung ist angebracht. Lukas erzählt unsere Geschichte im Anschluss an die Bekehrung des Paulus vor Damaskus (kap.9). Die erste Bekehrung des Petrus wird in Lk 5,1-11 erzählt. Diese zweite Bekehrung ist seine ökumenische Bekehrung." F. MUSSNER, *Theologie der Freiheit nach Paulus*, (Freiburg, Herder, 1976) p. 29, says: "Nach Apg 9,32-11,18 hat Petrus noch eine zweite "Bekehrung" erlebt, nämlich eine Bekehrung von einem streng judaistisch denkenden Judenchristen." Also: C. TASSIN, "Conversion de Corneille et de Pierre," *Christus* 141 (1995) pp. 465-475. DUNN, *The Acts*, p. 134, entitles this episode the "conversion of Peter." R. D. WITHERUP, "Cornelius Over and Over Again: 'Functional Redundancy' in the Acts of the Apostles," *Journal for the Study of the New Testament* 49 (1993) p. 49, says: "Peter needs a conversion of heart that will widen his vision of just how broad God's repentance and mercy apply." R. D. WITHERUP, *Conversion in the New Testament* (Minnesota, Collegeville, the Liturgical Press, 1994) p. 69, says: "This story is as much about Peter's conversion to the view that 'God shows no partiality' (10:34) as it is the conversion of a Godfearer and his household to Jesus." D. MARGUERAT, "Saul's Conversion (Acts 9,22,26) and the Multiplication of Narrative in Acts," in C. M. TUCKETT, *Luke's Literary Achievement: Collected Essays*, (Journal for the New Testament Supplement, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 1995) p.146, says: "God will have to break resistance in order to extend the benefit of salvation to non-Jews; yet this resistance will not come from Cornelius, it will come from Peter and from the Jerusalem Church." D. MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du Christianisme (Les Actes des Apôtres)* (Lectio Divina 108, Paris: Cerf, labor et fides, 1999) p. 159, says: "(Chapitres 10-11) et qu'on appellera plutôt la conversion de Pierre que celle de Corneille." J. PATHRAPANKAL, *Text and Context in Biblical Interpretation* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1993) p. 98, says: "God is so radically critical of the human resistance offered by Peter. Hence Peter had to be converted before he could convert Cornelius." He goes on to say: "Even as the Gentile Christians were being converted to accept Jesus Christ as their saviour the Jewish Christians themselves were being converted from their narrow-mindedness and myopia to see things from a more universal perspective" p. 99. The same view appears in A. MALICE, "How conservative Peter became the daring Innovator," in *Rediscovered Discipleship: Exploring Scriptural Sources* (Kansas City: Sheed & Ward, 1994). H. DOLLAR, "The Conversion of the Messenger," *Missiology* 21 (1993) p. 17, says: "It is the Jews who must drop their historic standards that separate them from Gentiles. It is Peter who is forced to go to the home of Cornelius and to remain there after Cornelius's conversion, not Cornelius who comes to Peter." W. H. FORD, *Sermons You Can Preach on Acts* (Michigan: Grand Rapids, Ministry Resources Library, 1987) p. 120, says "In the ninth chapter of Acts God changed Saul from a sinner to a saint, from a persecutor to a preacher. In the tenth chapter of Acts He changed Peter from a narrow, selfish, prejudiced Christian, who believed that Christianity was for the Jews only, into a man with world-wide vision, who came to know that Christ was the Saviour of all men who put their trust in Him."

even further in saying that “the conversion of the first Gentile required the conversion of the Church as well.”<sup>35</sup> The Church in Jerusalem had to accept the hard fact that it was right for Peter to enter the house of Cornelius and to eat with him (Acts 11:18). God has indeed granted the Gentiles μετανοιαν εις ζωην.

*EIA* also comments that “to Peter’s joyful surprise the centurion was awaiting Christ and baptism.” So the “joyful surprise” of Peter is an interpretation given by *EIA*, and is consistent with the whole story of the encounter of Peter and Cornelius. Acts does not explicitly say that Peter had a joyful surprise but such can be deduced by implication. (cf. Acts 8:39). When Peter entered the house of Cornelius, many other people had gathered inside awaiting him (v.27). Cornelius welcomes Peter with words of high appreciation: “σύ τε καλῶς ἐποίησας παραγενόμενος νῦν οὖν πάντες ἡμεῖς ἐνώπιον τοῦ θεοῦ παρεσμεν ακοῦσαι τὰ πάντα προσταγμένα σοι ὑπο τοῦ κυρίου” (v.33) It is after Cornelius’ speech that Peter expresses his surprise. In the context of the encounter between Peter and Cornelius it makes sense for *EIA* to say that: “When he arrived, he discovered to his joyful surprise that the centurion was awaiting Christ and baptism.” In keeping with Iser’s reader-response criticism the reader makes explicit what is otherwise potential and reveals a new dimension of meaning. The Pope adds something new to the original text of Acts but which is in tune with the meaning of the text of Acts. There are enough literary clues to confirm such a reading and the literary context of the story also warrants such an interpretation.

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<sup>35</sup>GAVENTA, *From Darkness to Light*, p. 109. There are three conversions, therefore: Cornelius, Peter and the Jerusalem Church. BOVON, “Tradition et rédaction en Actes 10,1-11,18,” *Theologische Zeitschrift* 26 (1970) p. 28, says: “Les chrétiens présents, Pierre le premier, doivent admettre la volonté de Dieu et son intervention: Corneille et les siens sont baptisés sans autre formalité, car ils ont été mis par Dieu sur le même plan, exactement, que les chrétiens d’origine juive.”

(c) How Acts 10:35-36, 45-46,47 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

As was stated earlier, a quotation acts as a linking device between the genotext and the phenotext. *EiA* goes on to say that "the first missionaries who reached the heart of Africa undoubtedly felt an astonishment similar to that experienced by the Christians of the Apostolic age at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit."<sup>36</sup> This is the new meaning brought by *EiA* to the text of Acts 10:1-11:18. Just as Peter and his companions were surprised to discover that the Spirit was already at work among the Gentiles, the first missionaries to Africa were also astonished to realize that the Spirit was already at work among Africans. In a way, it was the whole Church that was astonished by this experience. The Spirit works and manifests Himself in many different ways. He is present in every time and every space, permeating every culture and preparing for full maturity in Christ by ennobling positive cultural values.<sup>37</sup>

The appropriation of Acts 10:35-36, 45-46,47 in *EiA* points to the encounter between Christianity and African cultural values. The encounter between the first expatriate missionaries and the African people was not always a happy and respectful

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<sup>36</sup>DOLLAR, "The Conversion of a Messenger," *Missiology* 21 (1993) p. 17, says: "That the messenger of conversion must experience conversion can be shown throughout the history of the Church." F. J. MATERA, "Acts 10:34-43" *Interpretation* 41 (1987) p. 66, says: "Like Peter, the Church must be prepared to be surprised. It must learn again and again. "Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality." J. NTEDIKA KONDE, *Le Synode Africain (1994): Un Appel à Conversion et à l'Espérance*, (Eglise Africaine en Dialogue) Kinshasa, Facultés Catholiques de Kinshasa, 1995, p. 203, says, "On sait que les premiers missionnaires trouvèrent un accueil cordial en Afrique et que le souverain d'alors, Dom Alfonso Ier Mvemba-Nzinga, chercha à prendre contact avec le Siege de Pierre. Son fils, Dom Henrique, devint le premier évêque de ces populations récemment converties." In some countries in Africa missionaries were even solicited to come by the traditional chiefs, e.g. King Moshochoe of Lesotho invited missionaries to his country although he himself never converted to Christianity. L. THOMPSON, *The Survival in Two Worlds, Moshochoe of Lesotho 1786-1870* (Oxford University: Clarendon Press, 1975), says: "Moshochoe said that he too would like to have resident teachers (baruti) and he sent herdsmen after Krotz with 200 cattle so that he might get at least one missionary."

<sup>37</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 28.



one and often, being uncompromising, intolerant and aggressive.<sup>38</sup> Due to a lack of knowledge about inculturation, there was a constant conflict between African cultural values and Western culture used as the vehicle of Christianity. Conversion to Christianity was seen as a rejection of African cultural values. It was as if an African had to be European first in order to be Christian. The Western missionaries were amazed to discover that Africans had an acute sense of the sacred: "Africans have a profound religious sense of the sacred, of the existence of God the creator and of spiritual world" (*EIA* 42).

Western missionaries had disregarded and negated the African traditional religious experience for a long time.<sup>39</sup> It is only now that it is being gradually accepted by the Church authorities. African religiosity was first officially recognized and praised by Pope Paul VI in 1969 during his visit to Uganda. This was the first visit of a pope to Africa in modern times (*EIA* 3). In his letter to African Catholics, *Africae Terrarum* (1967), he expressed his appreciation for African traditional religion, making unprecedented

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<sup>38</sup> F. CHIROMBA, "The Life of the Church," in M. BROWNE, *African Synod*, p. 11, states: "For a long time Christianity has been equated with Western culture in such a way that by embracing one, one had to embrace the other. Most Africans have had to discard their culture and identity at the door when entering the Church, which they have erroneously understood as to be the white man's religion." This statement reflects the general attitudes of the pioneer missionaries into the heart of Africa, who either worked with colonisers or adopted their ways. Unfortunately this aspect of the history of the Church in Africa is missing in the exhortation. W. KOWALAK, "The Catholic Church in the face of the Expansion of Independent African Churches," *La Missione senza Confini*, p. 72, says: "The result of misunderstanding the second aspect of missionary activity—adaptation (accommodation)—was the identification of Christianization with Europeanization. This was a phenomenon especially characteristic of the post-Reformation period. The Church was identified with the foreign violence and with lack of loyalty as regards to the evangelized countries. The linkage of missionary activity with colonial politics dates already from the time of Constantine the Great."

<sup>39</sup> E. E. UZUKWU, "The Birth and Development of a Local Church: Difficulties and Signs of Hope," M. BROWNE, *African Synod*, p. 6, writes: "The vehicle of this ancestral experience is traditional African religion. A religion of structure, it introduces harmony and rhythm into everyday life." The official recognition of African religion is a recent thing within the Catholic Church.

expressed his appreciation for African traditional religion, making unprecedented statements about African religious expression: "Many customs and rites, once considered to be strange are seen today, in the light of ethnological science, as integral parts of various social systems, worthy of study and commanding respect. In this regard, we think it profitable to dwell on some general ideas which typify ancient African religious cultures because we think their moral and religious values deserving of attentive consideration."<sup>40</sup> He went as far as to correct the Western misinterpretation of African traditional religion as "animism." In his words: "Here we have more than the so-called 'animism' concept, in the sense given to this form in the history of religions at the end of the last century."<sup>41</sup> He challenged African Christians to have an African Christianity based on African human values and to be missionaries to themselves.<sup>42</sup>

It is during the pontificate of John Paul II that African religion was addressed directly. The Pope expressed a high appreciation of African cultural and religious heritage during his frequent pastoral visits to Africa. In *EiA* he calls for dialogue with African traditional religion.

With regard to African traditional religion, a serene and prudent dialogue will be able, on the one hand, to protect Catholics from negative influences which condition the way of

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<sup>40</sup>PAUL VI. "*Africae Terrarum*" in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 61 (1969), pp. 1077.

<sup>41</sup>PAUL VI. *ibid.*

<sup>42</sup>PAUL VI. "*Africae Terrarum*", in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 61(1969) p. 575, says: "By now, you Africans are missionaries to yourselves." Those prophetic words of Paul VI are quoted and commented upon three times by John Paul II in *EiA* (35, 56, 129). In paragraph 129 John Paul II gives a new significance to these words of Paul VI: "The prophetic phrase of Paul VI: 'You Africans are missionaries to yourselves', is to be understood as 'missionaries to the whole world.'"

life of many of them and, on the other hand, to foster the assimilation of positive values such as belief in a supreme Being who is Eternal, Creator, Provident and just Judge, values which are readily harmonized with the content of the faith. They can be seen as a preparation for the gospel, because they contain precious *semina verbi* (*EiA* 67).<sup>43</sup>

As noted earlier, the Spirit works and manifests himself in many different ways. He permeates every culture and prepares it for the full maturity in Christ by ennobling its positive cultural values.<sup>44</sup> The use of Acts in *EiA* has thus validated African culture by depicting it as already influenced by the Spirit even before the arrival of missionaries from the West.

In conclusion, the interaction between the genotext (Acts) and the phenotext (*EiA*) through the use of Acts 10:34-35, 44-45, 47 helps to define the new missionary identity of the Church in Africa towards other nations (*ad gentes*). In paragraph 28, *EiA* reads the experience of the African Church into Acts and imports the world of the African Church into Acts. In turn, Acts 10:34-35, 44-45, 47 helps name and shape the missionary identity of the African Church. The mission *ad gentes* is quite valuable for the African Church. The text is used to invite African Catholics to broaden their views and to be open to new calls by the Spirit, whether it be in finding new ways to witness to the Gospel in the context of Africa or in hearing new calls to witness to people elsewhere. Just as the first evangelizers of Africa had to undergo conversion in order to appreciate positive African religious values, so too the Church of Rome has to undergo a similar conversion. In the same way, African Catholics are called to conversion in order to witness to other people, as Peter was called to such a conversion at the beginning of the Church. These conversions are necessary for both Peter and African Catholics alike to

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<sup>43</sup> John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope*, London, Random House, p. 82. Concerning primitive religions, he says: "It seems that those who practice them are particularly close to Christianity, and among them, the Church's missionaries also find it easier to speak a common language [...] There is nothing strange, then, that the African and Asian animists would become believers in Christ more easily than followers of the great religions of the Far East."

<sup>44</sup> JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio*, 28.

understand and be able to fulfil the mission entrusted to them. The significance of the conversion of the apostle Peter has far reaching implications for the African Church as described in *EiA*. The African Church must also learn to be missionary to other continents. The African Catholics must learn to detach themselves from love of family and country, and they must also learn other peoples' languages and cultures if they are to fulfil their new missionary role

### 3. Acts 2:11 in *EiA* 32

The above quotation is found twice in *EiA*: (1) chapter two, paragraph 32; and (2) chapter four, paragraph 76

#### Greek / English Text of Acts 2:11

Ἰουδαῖοι τε καὶ προσηλύτοι, Κρήτες  
καὶ Ἄραβες, ἀκούομεν λαλοῦντων  
αὐτῶν ταῖς ἡμετέραις γλώσσαις τὰ  
μεγαλεῖα τοῦ θεοῦ.

"Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabs,  
we hear them speaking in our own  
languages the mighty deeds of God."

#### 3.1. Significance in Acts

The significance of Acts 2:11 will be examined under the following points: (1) literary context; and (2) function.

##### (1) Context of Acts 2:11

Acts 2:11 is to be understood in the context of Acts 2:1-13 which is the Pentecost narrative. This verse continues the list of names of nations given in verses 9-10. The list of peoples given in Acts 2:11 has a conventional character: it is meant to express the universality of those who received the message of the witnesses of Jesus by mixing up the names of nations (Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Romans) with those of places (Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya, Cyrene). It is clear that the list is not exhaustive, despite the fact that Acts 2:5, says: "now there were dwelling in Jerusalem, devout men from every nation under heaven,"

gives a contrary impression. Acts 2:11 shows the wide spectrum of countries from which the Diaspora Jews came to Jerusalem.<sup>45</sup>

## (2) Function of Acts 2:11 in Acts

Acts 2:11 reiterates Acts 2:8. "And how is it that we hear each of us in his own native language?" The Greek word (ακουομεν) is repeated in verse 11. The other Greek word (γλωσσαις) is echoed in verse eight (διαλεκτω) and it also resonates in verse six (διαλεκτω λαλούντων).

The nature of the phenomenon of Pentecost is debated among commentators. The question is whether we are dealing with glossolalia ("speaking in tongues") or xenologia ("speaking in foreign tongues"). Most commentators think that it is a question of glossolalia,<sup>46</sup> the existence of which is attested by Paul (1 Cor 12-14) and in Acts 10:45-46; 19:6. Acts 2:6 and 2:11 seem to speak therefore about glossolalia. This interpretation of Acts 2:11 is articulated by Dumais. "A l'écoute des apôtres, les gens sont 'perplexes'

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<sup>45</sup> FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 240, says: "This catalogue of nations is scarcely a list composed at random by Luke, since it is difficult to show why he would list these names and not others." J. A. BRINKMAN, "The Literary Background of the 'catalogue of the Nations,'" *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 25/3 (1963) p. 426 says: "The catalogue of the nations in Acts is not a random arrangement of names original with Luke. It is rather to be viewed as a formalized ordering of the nations of the earth in an approximate circle stemming from the well attested tradition of oriental geography."

<sup>46</sup> J. D. G. DUNN, *Jesus and the Spirit* (Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1975) pp. 148-152, gives a list of authors who support such a position. There are others, however, who think otherwise, such as FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 239, "Speaking in foreign languages is a miracle suited to the theological thrust of the episode, which is interested in the universality of salvation to which testimony is being made." P. BOSSUYT et J. RADERMAKERS, *Temoins de la Parole de la Grâce* Actes des Apôtres, p. 144 say "Dans le texte de Luc, le discours des apôtres est compréhensible: ils chantent les grandeurs de Dieu comme Marie en son magnificat (Lc 1, 46-49) ou Corneille devenu croyant (10,46)." WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 135, says: "Note that in Acts 2, unlike in 1 Corinthians 14, while there is need for explanation of what is happening and why the disciples are saying what they say, there is no need for translation by an interpreter. They spoke words recognizable in various languages. It appears, then, that we are dealing with a different phenomenon in Acts 2 and 1 Corinthians."

(2.12): il ne s'agit donc pas d'un discours intelligible en langues connues (xénoglossie) Ils s'esclaffent. 'Ils sont pleins de vin doux' (2. 13): il s'agit donc d'une sorte d'ennivrement collectif des apôtres, qui correspond bien à ce qu'on retrouve dans les prières extatiques de louange à Dieu."<sup>47</sup> Whatever position one takes on this matter, it is the effect that such a phenomenon had on the listeners that counts. The words of the apostles touched everyone who was present, and each one could understand them in their own language and culture. The list of peoples given in Acts 2:9-11 underlines the universality of the nations who were represented on Pentecost. Acts 2:11 is therefore central in emphasizing the universality of the Church which began on Pentecost.

### 3.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

#### A) Chapter Two, Paragraph 32

This is how Acts 2:11 reads in chapter two of *EiA*, paragraph 32.

In the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the exploration of the African coast by the Portuguese was soon accompanied by the evangelization of the regions of Sub-Saharan Africa. That endeavour included the regions of present-day Benin, São Tomé, Angola, Mozambique and Madagascar. On Pentecost Sunday, 7 June 1992, for the commemoration of the hundred years of the evangelization of Angola, I said in Luanda: 'The Acts of the Apostles indicate by name the inhabitants of the places who participated directly in the birth of the Church and the work of the breath of the Holy Spirit. They all said: **We hear them telling in our languages the mighty works of God**' (Acts 2:11). Five hundred years ago the people of Angola were added to this chorus of languages. In that moment, in your African homeland the Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed. Your ancestors heard the message of the Good News which is the language of the Spirit. Their hearts accepted this message for the first time, and they bowed their heads to the waters of the baptismal font in which, by the power of Holy Spirit, a person dies with Christ and is born again to new life in his resurrection...It was certainly the same Spirit who moved those men of faith, the first missionaries, who in 1491 sailed into the mouth of the

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<sup>47</sup> DUMAIS, *Communauté et mission*, p. 78

Zaire rivers, at Pinda, beginning a genuine missionary saga. It was the Holy Spirit, who works as he wills in people's hearts, who moved the great king of the Congo, Nzinga-a-Nkuwu, to ask for missionaries to proclaim the Gospel. It was the Holy Spirit who sustained the life of those four first Angolan Christians who, returning from Europe, testified to the Christian faith. After the first missionaries, many others came from Portugal and other European countries to continue, expand and strengthen the work that had been begun." A certain number of Episcopal Sees were erected during this period, and one of the first fruits of missionary endeavour was the consecration in Rome, by Pope Leo X in 1518, of Don Henrique, the son of Don Alfonso I, the king of Congo, as the titular Bishop of Utica. Don Henrique thus became the first native bishop of Black Africa. It was during this period, in 1622, that my predecessor Pope Gregory XV permanently erected the congregation de Propaganda Fide for the purpose of better organizing and expanding missions. Because of various difficulties, the second phase of the evangelization of Africa came to an end in the eighteenth century, with the disappearance of practically all the missions south of the Sahara.

The significance of Acts 2:11 in *EiA* will be analyzed and evaluated under the following points: (1) Context of Acts 2:11 in *EiA*; (2) how *EiA* illumines and transforms Acts 2:11; and (3) how Acts 2:11 helps to shape a new identity for the African Church.

#### (1) Context of Acts 2:11 in *EiA*

Acts 2:11 is found at the beginning of paragraph 32 as part of a long quotation of a message addressed by Pope John Paul II to the people of Angola, in Luanda, in 1992. Regarding its position, it is an authoritative quotation which introduces the theme of Pentecost in the paragraph. It is quoted verbatim, and is preceded by an introductory formula. "The Acts of the apostles indicate by name the inhabitants of places who participated in the birth of the Church and the work of the breath of the Holy Spirit." It is immediately applied to the Catholic Church in Angola: "The people of Angola were added to this chorus of languages. In that moment, in your African homeland the Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed." This is an actualization of Acts 2:11. It is a quotation within another quotation since it was first quoted in the Pope's homily at the

mass in Angola, Luanda, (7 June 1992).<sup>48</sup> during the celebration of five hundred years since the evangelization of Angola. Acts 2:11 is used to mark the existence of the Catholic Church in Africa within the universal Church. Christians of Angola were added to many other Christians who praise and extol the mighty works of God. The Church in Angola is given its identity as a Christian community. Catholics in Angola are now able to praise God in their own way. The text of paragraph 32 continues: "In your African homeland the Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed." The experience of evangelization of the people of Angola is likened to the Pentecost experience that took place in Jerusalem.

## (2) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:11

*EiA* has appropriated Acts 2:11 in the context of the African Church. It describes the phenomenon of Pentecost as a renewable process: "in that moment, in your African homeland the Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed." This is an expansion of the meaning of Pentecost which occurs in Acts itself. Pentecost is not merely an event of the past. The Spirit is at work in every Christian community and gives believers freedom of expression to extol God in their own way. Angola is implicitly contained in Acts 2:11 according to the Pope.

Paragraph 32 gives Angola as an example of an inculturated faith. The Catholics in Angola proclaim the Gospel in their own language and culture. They are able to extol God in their own way as the Spirit gives them power to do so. The whole African Church is called to do the same. There are many such extraordinary manifestations of the Spirit in Acts referred to as "Pentecost" experiences: the second "Pentecost" (4:31); the

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<sup>48</sup>*Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 85 (1993) pp. 511-512.



“Pentecost” of the Samaritans (8:14-17), the “Pentecost” of the Gentiles (10:44-48), and the “Pentecost” of the Ephesians (19:1-7).<sup>49</sup>

*EIA* actualizes the Pentecost event which has a typical meaning in the Acts of the Apostles. Every person baptized in Christ has received the Spirit of Pentecost. It is divine power that helps believers bear witness to Christ in the language of the people.

### (3) How Acts 2:11 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The whole African Church is called upon to have a similar experience to that of the Angolan Church. Chapter two of *EIA* is entitled, “The Church in Africa” since it speaks about the different phases of the history of the evangelization of the continent of Africa. It is therefore directly linked to the theme of *EIA* which is the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission. The Church in Africa is described in the context of its historical development. The use of Acts 2:11 helps to create a new identity and new self-understanding for the Church in Africa today. It forges the particularity of the Church in Africa as the Church that is moved by the Spirit and thus enabled to praise God in its own way: “Africa was present there [Rome], in its various rites, with the entire people of God: it rejoiced, expressing its faith in life to the sound of drums and other African musical instruments” (*EIA* 6). The different local Churches in Africa are now able to tell the mighty works of God in their own respective languages.

In paragraph 32, the African Church reads itself into the original Pentecost; the original Pentecost helps name the experience of the African Church and invites African Catholics to feel personally concerned. For instance, in many countries in Africa, the Spirit is now renewed and makes Catholics tell the mighty deeds of God in their own

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<sup>49</sup>POUCUTA, *La Bible en Terres d'Afrique*, pp. 88-89 says: “Le livre des Actes est ponctué de Pentecôtes.[...] En mentionnant plusieurs Pentecôtes, Luc signifie que la Pentecôte se poursuit tout au long de l'histoire de l'Eglise menée par l'Esprit.” MARGUERAT, *La première histoire du christianisme*, p.158, speaks about “Pentecôtes en chaîne” in Acts.

languages and expressions. They have even developed their own inculturated liturgical rite for the celebration of the Eucharist. In each country in Africa, the African Catholics are invited to conclude from the quotation of Acts 2:11 as used in *EIA* that in their countries the Pentecost of Jerusalem is renewed: the Spirit now makes them tell in their own languages the Gospel, that is, the mighty works of God. Proclaiming the mighty works of God in different languages and cultures involves the issue of "inculturation." Acts 2:11 is therefore an appropriate basis for inculturation of the Gospel which is one of the major themes in *EIA* (paragraphs 8, 16).<sup>50</sup> It advocates for the Church which is truly Catholic and African. Inculturation is one of the greatest challenges facing the African Church as it begins the 21st century.

#### **B) Chapter Four, Paragraph 76**

This is how Acts 2:11 reads in chapter four of *EIA*, paragraph 76:

The Church in Africa, in order to evangelize, must begin "by being evangelized herself...She needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love. She is the people of God immersed in the world, and often tempted by idols, and she always needs to hear the proclamation of the **mighty works of God.**" In Africa today "formation in the faith...too often stops at the elementary stage, and sects easily profit from this ignorance." A serious deepening of the faith is thus urgently needed, because the rapid evolution of society has given rise to new challenges linked to the phenomena notably of family uprooting, urbanization, unemployment, materialistic seductions of all kinds, a certain secularization and an intellectual upheaval caused by the avalanche of insufficiently critical ideas.

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<sup>50</sup>P. MONSENGWO, "L'inculturation dans le livre des Actes," *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 13 (1989) p. 32, says, "L'épisode de la Pentecôte – même message entendu et compris dans toutes les langues – nous semble fournir un autre fondement biblique de l'inculturation." J. DUPONT, *Nouvelles études sur les Actes des Apôtres*, pp. 197-198, says, "La leçon est claire: c'est à l'église qu'il revient d'assumer toutes les langues des hommes, toutes les cultures dont ces langues sont l'expression et le véhicule. Il ne s'agit pas pour elle d'amener les hommes à comprendre son langage à elle, mais de leur parler à eux. Sa vocation l'empêche de s'identifier avec aucune culture particulière."

### (1) Context of Acts 2:11 in *EiA*

Paragraph seventy-six is found in Chapter Four of *EiA* which addresses the present-day challenges facing the Church in Africa: firstly, the need for baptism (*EiA* 73); secondly, the urgency of evangelization (*EiA* 74); thirdly, the need for Christian formation (*EiA* 75-77), and finally, deepening the faith (paragraph 76).

Paragraph 76 describes briefly but precisely the situation of the Church in Africa from the viewpoint of the formation of faith. In Africa, in general, Christians become prey to sects because they have not received a deep formation in faith (cf. *EiA* 47). A serious formation of faith is urgently needed in order for the Church to continue its evangelizing mission amidst challenges of urbanization, family uprooting, unemployment and materialistic seductions. The Church in Africa is also “often tempted by idols.”

### (2) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:11

Acts 2:11 is a quotation within another quotation. It was first quoted in Paul VI's apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Nuntium*, article 15. It is used rhetorically in *EiA* to encourage and urge the Church to stand firm in what it believes, hopes and loves. The segment of Acts 2:11 which is quoted in paragraph 76 is “mighty works of God” and the last part of the sentence in which Acts 2:11 is found reads: “She always needs to hear the proclamation of the ‘mighty works of God.’” This aforementioned sentence is parallel to the first sentence of the paragraph which reads thus: “She needs to listen unceasingly to what she must believe, to her reasons for hoping, to the new commandment of love.” The mighty works of God in this paragraph refer to what the Church must believe, hope for and love. What the Church must believe is nothing else than the Gospel, the source of faith, hope and love. In opposition to what the Church believes there are idols of this world to which the people of God are exposed. The proper formation needed for the Church in Africa is spelled out in paragraph 77 which follows and reads thus: “Formation must aim to provide Christians not only with technical expertise in passing on more clearly the content of the faith but also with a profound personal conviction for them to

bear effective witness to it in daily life.” The use of Acts 2:11 is advocating for genuine witness for Christians in order to provide an authentic proclamation of faith. So the “mighty works of God” of Acts 2:11 become the core content of faith which the Africans must always hear and witness in their lives.

### (3) How Acts 2:11 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

Acts 2:11 has been appropriated in *EIA* and helps define the self-understanding of the Church in Africa and proposes options. It highlights the need for a deeply rooted faith for the members of the African Church which is exhorted to be evangelized before it can evangelize. The African Church is called to accept the Gospel before it can preach convincingly to others. It cannot give what it does not have. There are a number of factors which turn the people of God away from the Gospel, namely, corruption, power, and seductions of all kinds. Acts 2:11 suggests a new identity for the Church in Africa based on deeply rooted faith rather than on expansion and the numerical growth of the Church. Despite numerous setbacks in many countries of the continent, the Church in Africa bears witness to positive accomplishments.

On the other hand, *EIA* has reconfigured and re-interpreted Acts 2:11 which has become part of the new identity of the Church in Africa. *EIA* has given Acts 2:11 new dimensions of meaning. In Acts, this verse refers to the reaction of the crowd at Pentecost to the gift of tongues. *EIA* re-interprets Acts 2:11 as the Gospel to be proclaimed. The African Christians need to be well-formed in the faith in order to proclaim in their own way the mighty deeds of God.

#### 4. Acts 4:12 in *EiA* 74

The above quotation is situated in chapter four of *EiA*, paragraph 74.

#### Greek/ English Text of Acts 4:12

και ουκ εστιν εν αλλω ουδενι η σωτηρια, ουδε γαρ ονομα εστιν ετερον υπο τον ουρανον το δεδομενον εν ανθρωποις εν ω δει σωθηναι ημας.

“And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under the heaven given among men by which we must be saved.”

#### a) Significance in Acts

The significance of Acts 4:12 in Acts will be discussed under the following points: (1) context, and (2) function.

#### (1) Context in Acts

The above quotation of Acts needs to be interpreted in its original context of Acts 4:8–12, one of Peter’s bold speeches before the Sanhedrin. It demonstrates Peter’s courage in defending his faith in the face of harsh opposition from the Jewish authorities. This bold stance of Peter and John marvelled their opponents since they were seen only as illiterate and uneducated (Acts 4:13). Acts 4:8–12 is a dramatic story of boldness which the apostles received from the Holy Spirit and is echoed throughout Acts (2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27–28; 13:46; 14:3, 18; 26; 19:8, 26; 28:31). Being able to withstand opposition with firmness is a characteristic feature of the mission paradigm in Acts. According to Acts the mission of the Church thrives amidst opposition, persecution, adversity and suffering.

The speech of Acts 4:8–12 develops the theme of salvation in Jesus’ name in verse twelve which is a significant verse in chapter four and in some way in the rest of Acts.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>51</sup>TANNEHILL, *The Unity of Luke-Acts*, vol. 2, p. 61, calls it Peter’s climactic statement in Acts 4.

It announces an important theme in Acts, that of salvation (σωτηρία).<sup>52</sup> The term (σωτηρία) is used here for the first time in Acts. It appears again in latter chapters of Acts (7:25; 13:26, 47; 16:17; 27:43; 28:28),<sup>53</sup> referring either to healing (4:9) or salvation in the theological sense (2:47). "The primary meaning of salvation is detachment from the world of unbelieving and disobedience and attachment to the true people of God of the last days, the εκκλησία, the community which is constituted on the one hand by its loyalty to Jesus, on the other by his gift of the Spirit."<sup>54</sup> Acts 4:12 is the last verse of the Christological *kerygma* which comprises verses 10-12.<sup>55</sup>

## (2) The Function of Acts 4:12

Acts 4:12 focuses on the name (ὄνομα) of Jesus, as the unique saviour. Peter and John are asked by what power or name they have performed a miracle (v.7) and Peter answers that it is in the name of Jesus (v.10). "Peter claims an exclusive role for Jesus in questions of salvation with a reference to Scripture. The exclusive role assigned to Jesus'

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<sup>52</sup>C. K. BARRETT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, (vol. 1, Great Britain Edinburgh) p. 231. The word "sôtêria" occurs six times in Acts 4: 12; 7:25; 13: 26, 47; 16:17; 27: 34; See also, J. B. GREEN, "Salvation to the End of the Earth (Acts 13:47): God as Saviour in the Acts of the Apostles," in I. H. MARSHALL & D. PETERSON, *Witness to the Gospel: The theology of Acts* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1998) pp. 90-95. GREEN, says: "Salvation is the theme of Acts that unifies other textual elements within the narrative" (p. 83).

<sup>53</sup>FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 301. See also BARRETT, *The Acts of the Apostles*, pp. 230-231, says: "The word 'soteria' occurs six times in Acts, 'sozein' occurs thirteen times, 'soter' twice (5:31; 13:23) 'soterion' once in (28:28).

<sup>54</sup>BARRETT, *Acts*, vol. 1, p. 231

<sup>55</sup>SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts*, p. 46. K. O. SANDNES, "Beyond 'Love Language' A Critical Examination of Krister Stendahl's Exegesis of Acts 4:12," *Studia Theologica* 52 (1998) p. 47, says that Peter's "answer turns out to be a proclamation of the gospel."

name in relation to all people is Scripture-based."<sup>56</sup> The name of Jesus has power to save. "Jesus is the agent of salvation, the σωτήρ (5:31, 13:23)."<sup>57</sup> Acts 4:12 expresses the apostles' testimony to the power of salvation found in the Risen Christ. Empowered by the Spirit of Pentecost, the apostles boldly confess their faith in the Christ who saves both Jews and Gentiles, and even believers of other religions (Acts 5:31;13:23, 26; 10:36; 13:47, 26:23, 28:28, 11:14, 14:7,16:31) The new salvation brought by Christ is holistic; it includes physical healing. However, Acts reminds us that salvation that comes through Jesus Christ is ultimately from God. God's saving power and intervention are not limited to any person. The cases of Cornelius (Acts 10), Lycaonians (Acts 14), Athenians (Acts 17) are such evidence. There is no explicit mention of the name of Jesus in these episodes.

#### b) Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 4:12 is quoted in chapter four of *EiA*, paragraph 74 which reads:

**The name of Jesus Christ is the only one by which it has been decreed that we can be saved (cf. Acts 4:12). Because in Africa there are millions who are not yet evangelized, the Church is faced with the necessary and urgent task of *proclaiming the Good News to all, and leading those who hear it to baptism and Christian life.* "The urgency of missionary activity derives from the *radical newness of life* brought by Christ and lived by his followers. This new life is a gift from God, and people are asked to accept and develop it, if they wish to realize the fullness of their vocation in conformity to Christ" (*Redemptoris Missio*, 7). This new life in the radical newness of the Gospel also involves certain breaks from the customs and culture of whatever people in the world.**

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<sup>56</sup> SANDNESS, "Beyond 'Love Language': A Critical Examination of Krister Stendahl's Exegesis of Acts 4:12," *Studia Theologica* 52 (1998) pp. 43-56

<sup>57</sup> BARRETT, *Acts*, vol. 1, p. 233.

because the Gospel is never an internal product of a particular country but always comes "from outside," from on high. For the baptized the great challenge will always be that of leading a Christian life in conformity with the commitments of baptism, the sacrament which signifies death to sin and daily resurrection to new life (cf. Rom 6:4-5). Without this conformity, it will be difficult for Christ's disciples to be the "salt of the earth" and the "light of the world" (Mt 5: 13,14). If the Church in Africa makes a vigorous and unhesitating commitment to this path, the Cross can be planted in every part of the Continent for the salvation of peoples not afraid to open their doors to the redeemer.

(1) Context of Acts 4:12 in *EiA*

*EiA* 74 is the third paragraph of Chapter Four and is preceded by paragraph 73 which emphasizes the need for baptism. Paragraph 74 speaks about the need for evangelization in the context of Africa. The Church in Africa is faced with this daunting challenge and urgent task. Acts 4:12 appears right at the onset of the paragraph above and has thematic function. It is paraphrased and one finds most of the words from the text of Acts except for the following words and expressions: "under heaven," "given among men," "salvation." It changes the wording: "by which it has been decreed that..." *EiA* explains the urgency and necessity of evangelization in Africa. Despite mass conversions and vocation boom in some African countries, there are some parts of the continent where there is still an urgent need for the first proclamation of the Gospel. Such an urgency for proclaiming the Good News "derives from the radical newness of life brought by Christ" and "this new life demands a radical change in the life of Christians. It demands "the radical newness of the life brought by Christ and lived in his followers." Such a radical newness of the Gospel also "involves certain breaks from the customs and culture of whatever people in the world." The proclamation of the Gospel leads to the conversion of heart.

Paragraph 74 of *EiA* makes it abundantly clear that the Gospel is not linked to any particular culture "the Gospel is never an internal product of a particular country but always comes "from outside, from on high." The Gospel always brings something new to



any culture. The great challenge for the baptized is to live daily a coherent life in conformity with the baptismal commitment.

## (2) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 4:12

Acts 4:12 is a confessional statement of faith which describes Jesus as unique saviour. The emphasis in Acts is on the exclusive and unique role of Jesus as the universal saviour but in *EiA* two consequences are deduced to this verse, expressing both the necessity and the urgency to proclaim the Good News to all. This proclamation has become so urgent and necessary "because in Africa there are millions who are not yet evangelized."

*EiA* also encourages dialogue with other religions, including Islam: "Commitment to the dialogue must embrace all Muslims of good will." (*EiA* 66) and African traditional religion: "With regard to African traditional religion, serene and prudent dialogue will be able, on the one hand, to protect Catholics from negative influences which condition the way of life of many of them and, on the other hand, to foster the assimilation of positive values such as belief in a Supreme Being who is Eternal, Creator, Provident and Just Judge, values which are readily harmonized with the content of faith" (*EiA* 67). *EiA* implicitly takes a stand on the actual theories about salvation emphasizing a christocentric view of salvation. It therefore implicitly rejects the "pluralistic" or "theocentric" view of Knitter and others.<sup>58</sup>

## (3) How Acts 4:12 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

Acts 4:12 is appropriated in *EiA* and helps shape a new identity for the Church. Acts 4:12 acknowledges Jesus as the unique mediator between God and human beings. Salvation is through him alone. The modern problem of salvation of people of other

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<sup>58</sup>KNITTER, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (New York, Orbis Books), Maryknoll, 1992

religions was not envisaged in Acts. *EiA* lays heavy emphasis on the proclamation of the Gospel and its effects on the life of the followers of Christ: "radical newness of life." Acts, in general, speaks about the christocentric view of salvation. "Acts alone of the New Testament writings describes the early church's evangelistic efforts in a religiously pluralistic context. It is the only New Testament work other than 1 Corinthians to give us any extended description or assessment of non-Christian religions."<sup>50</sup> It is to be remembered that Acts was not addressing today's problems of the pluralistic society. *EiA* encourages dialogue and advocates for respect for other religions, in particular the traditional African religions (*EiA*, 7). The use of Acts 4:12 in *EiA* raises new concerns which are typical of a pluralistic modern society, thereby extending the limited world of Acts. The interreligious dialogue between Christianity and other religions (Islam and Traditional African religions) is a current issue facing the African Church. African Catholics need to be formed in a mature and convinced Christian faith in order to engage in genuine interreligious dialogue.

#### 5. Acts 20:28 in *EiA* 98

##### Greek / English Text of Acts 20:28

προσέχετε ἑαυτοῖς καὶ παντὶ τῷ  
ποιμνίῳ, ἐν ᾧ ὑμᾶς τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον  
ἔθετο ἐπισκοποῦς ποιμαίνειν τὴν  
ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ, ἣν περιεποίησατο  
διὰ τοῦ αἵματος τοῦ ἰδίου.

"Keep watch over yourselves and over the whole flock of which the Holy Spirit has appointed you overseers to shepherd the church of God which he has acquired with his own blood."

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<sup>50</sup>ROMMEN and NETLAND, *Christianity and the Religions*, p. 73.

## 5.1. Significance in Acts

The significance of Acts 20:28 will be discussed under the following points: (1) context, and (2) function.

### (1) Context of Acts 20:28

Acts 20:28 is an integral part of Paul's farewell discourse to the elders in Miletus (20:17-38). According to the literary structure based on *νῦν* ("now -clauses"), verse 28 appears within the unit of verses 25-31. It is, therefore, to be understood in that context. At the beginning of this episode (v. 17), the elders of Ephesus are called *πρεσβυτέρους τῆς ἐκκλησίας*. It is only in v.28 that they are called *ἐπισκοπούς* ("overseers, guardians"). This last term is found nowhere else in Luke-Acts. "It does not seem here to be the name of an office but rather the description of a role of a presbyter, like being a leader."<sup>60</sup> It does, however, have its cognate abstract (*ἐπισκοπή*) in Luke 19:44 and Acts 1:20. It is used here interchangeably with *πρεσβυτέρους* since it is the same people who are called by both titles "*πρεσβυτέρους*" and "*ἐπισκόπους*." "Luke apparently saw no difference between their functions and regarded the titles as equal designations."<sup>61</sup> Witherington comments that the term *ἐπισκόπους* "is used in its

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<sup>60</sup>D. A. JONES, "Was there a Bishop of Rome in the First Century ?" *New Blackfriars* 80 (1999) p. 131.

<sup>61</sup>FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 679

functional, not titular sense of 'overseer.'" <sup>62</sup> It invokes the image of a shepherd who feeds, guides and protects the flock (1 Peter 5:2). Such a language of shepherding the flock is unique and is not found anywhere else in Acts.

## (2) The Function of Acts 20:28

Acts 20:28 "is both the practical and theological centre of the speech" of Paul to the elders of Miletus.<sup>63</sup> This speech ends his missionary activity in Miletus since he has established an autonomous community with a minimum necessary institution. It is pastorally-oriented and stresses the responsibility entrusted to the leadership of the Church in Miletus. Paul calls for the leadership of humble and dedicated service, not domination, and presents himself as a model. He would like the legacy he has started to continue for the sake of the mission. He entrusts the Church to the elders and warns them of the future prospects of defection within the flock. The elders in charge of the Church in Miletus are not sent from Jerusalem but are locals. It is truly a local Church with its own indigenous leaders. Paul's main concern is not the missionary expansion of the Church in Miletus but how to remain faithful disciples of the Risen Christ. Acts 20:28 has important pastoral implications for the Church.

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<sup>62</sup> WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts*, p. 623.

<sup>63</sup> BARRETT, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 974.

## 5.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 20:28 is found in chapter five of *EiA*, paragraph 98 which reads thus:

**The Bishops themselves will carefully pastor the Church which God obtained with the Blood of his own Son, fulfilling the responsibility entrusted to them by the Holy Spirit (cf. Acts 20:28).** According to the recommendation of the Second Vatican Council, Bishops dedicated to carry out “their Apostolic office as witnesses of Christ before all the peoples” are to exercise personally, in a spirit of trusting co-operation with the presbyterate and other pastoral workers, an irreplaceable service of unity, carefully fulfilling their responsibilities of teaching, sanctifying and governing. Moreover they are regularly to update themselves theologically and to foster their spiritual life, taking part as much as possible in the sessions of renewal and formation organized by the Episcopal Conferences or the Apostolic See. In particular, they should never forget the admonition of Pope Saint Gregory the Great, according to whom the pastor is the light of his faithful above all through an exemplary and moral conduct marked by holiness.

### (a) Context of Acts 20:28 in *EiA*

Paragraph 98 is found under the sub-title: “Agents of Evangelization” and speaks about bishops as principal witnesses of Christ. Bishops are named last in the long list of the agents of evangelization however they are the ones called upon to set good example of moral conduct and holiness to other agents of evangelization. Acts 20:28 is used to reinforce this responsibility. It is found right at the beginning of paragraph 98 and hence is thematic in function and is the only reference to Acts which does not fall under the cycle of Peter (Acts 1-12). This verse contains some of the key-words from Acts, namely, bishops (ἐπισκοπους) to pastor (ποιμαίνειν), the Church of God (τὴν ἐκκλησίαν τοῦ θεοῦ), and appointed by the Holy Spirit (τὸ πνεῦμα τὸ ἅγιον ἔθετο). Acts 20:28 is also echoed in paragraph 132 of *EiA*: “In their daily ministry to the flock entrusted to them, they must never lose sight of the needs of the Church as a whole.” Bishops are singled out because of the special role they play in evangelization as witnesses. They are described as “witnesses of Christ before the people.” They are

“entrusted with the responsibility of co-ordinating the commitment of evangelization by gathering the faithful together and confirming them in faith” (*EiA* 88).

According to the teaching of the Church, bishops are considered successors of the apostles. “As lawful successors of the apostles, and as members of the episcopal college, bishops should always realize that they are linked one to the other, and should show concern for all Churches. For by divine institution and the requirement of the apostolic office, each one in concert with his fellow bishops is responsible for the Church” (*Christus Dominus*, 6 quoted in *EiA* 17).

#### (b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 20:28

The phrase “fulfilling the responsibility,” in paragraph 98, is not part of the vocabulary of Acts 20:28. Also the use of the word “bishops” (ἐπισκόπους) has been given new meaning in *EiA*. It refers to an established rank within the Church’s hierarchy. It is an ecclesiastical office. In *EiA*, paragraph 98 describes the role of bishops as a “trusting co-operation with the presbyterate and other pastoral workers” since the ministry of unity is entrusted to the bishops as pastors. They are “to shepherd the Church of God” (Acts 20:28). *EiA* stresses the pastoral responsibility of bishops as overseers of the Church which is an actualization and appropriation of Acts 20:28. *EiA* has therefore expanded the meaning of *episcopous* in Acts 20:28 to embrace the contemporary understanding of “bishops” as pastors.

#### (c) How Acts 20:28 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

*EiA* is a pastoral document addressed mainly to bishops. Acts 20:28 is used in a pastoral sense to the bishops of Africa in their capacity as pastors, with the powers of teaching, sanctification and government invested in them by the Church. In Acts there is no such a hierarchical distinction between bishops and priests. Acts 20:28 has therefore been used to underline the role of bishops as Church leaders who are, by virtue of their office, witnesses of Christ before all people. While Acts does not make any such

distinctions within the Church, the Church's tradition considers bishops the successors of the apostles.

Acts 20:28 is used to define the identity of the Church in Africa, especially its leadership. It illustrates the role of bishops as agents of evangelization and witnesses. They are expected to be witnesses of Christ before all people according to *Christus Dominus*, 16 which is quoted in *EiA* 98. The bishops are to lead by living an exemplary life and are exhorted to exercise their power in an evangelic way, that is, in responsibility and service to the Church. They are to perform their role with gentleness, as service not as power.

According to reader-response theory the implied author of *EiA* has appropriated Acts 20:28 in a new way to support the role of bishops as pastors of the Church and to shape a specific way of being a Church leader. Originally, the reference was not understood in the same way as the bishops are perceived today. Bishops are said to be the successors of the apostles and in communion with the Pope. Such an interpretation, rooted in the Church tradition, is consistent with Acts whose teaching on leadership is service and care. *EiA* reads the present understanding of episcopacy into Acts 20:28. In turn, Acts 20:28 helps to name and shape the role of bishops within the Church today.

#### 6. Acts 2:42 in *EiA* 100

Greek/ English text of Acts 2:42:

ἦσαν δὲ πρῆσκαρτεροῦντες τῇ διδασκαλίᾳ  
τῶν ἀποστόλων καὶ τῇ κοινωνίᾳ, τῇ  
κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου καὶ ταῖς  
προσευχαῖς.

“And they devoted themselves to the  
apostles' teaching and fellowship, to the  
breaking of bread and the prayers.”

## 6.1. Significance of Acts 2:42 in Acts

### (1) Context of Acts 2:42

There are three major summaries on the life of the first Christian community in Acts, namely, 2:42-47; 4:32-35; and 5:12-16. Acts 2:42 is the opening verse of the first major summary on the life of the early Church (Acts 2:42-47).<sup>64</sup> It is an integral part of Acts 2:42-47. "There are word links and thematic connections in Acts 2:42-47 which can prove the literary unity and coherence of this passage."<sup>65</sup> Verse 42 announces the four basic characteristics of the early Christian community, namely, (1) the teaching of the apostles (διδασκαλία) (see 4:2, 18; 5:21, 25, 28, 42); (2) fellowship (κοινωνία) which is mentioned only at this place in the whole of Acts; (3) breaking of the bread (κλάσει τοῦ ἄρτου) which is mentioned a few times in Acts (2:46; 20: 7, 11); and (4) prayers (προσευχαίς) which is mentioned many times in Acts (1:14, 24; 4:24-30; 6:4, 6, etc.) They may be paired as follows: firstly, apostolic teaching and fellowship; and secondly, breaking of bread and prayer

### (2) Function of Acts 2:42 in Acts

Different interpretations have been given of these four qualities. According to Barrett, "The διδασκαλία of the apostles cannot be sharply or consistently distinguished from their preaching."<sup>66</sup> On the other hand, according to Fitzmyer, "the (διδασκαλία) teaching is to be distinguished from the *kyrigma*, the proclamation that the apostles

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<sup>64</sup>FITZMYER, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 97, makes three categories of summaries in Acts: 1) major 2) minor 3) numerical summaries

<sup>65</sup>M. A. CO, "The Major Summaries in Acts: Acts 2:42-47; 4:32-35; 5:12-16," *Ephemerides Theologicae Lovanienses* 67 (1992) p. 60

<sup>66</sup> See BEGS as quoted in C.K. BARRETT, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Acts of the Apostles*, (vol. I, Edinburgh: Clark, 1994) p. 163.



made as they bore testimony to the risen Christ, and from *katechesis*, instruction given to catechumens."<sup>67</sup> The latter is a more plausible position which can be demonstrated from Acts. The apostolic teaching assumes two forms in Acts depending on the audience. For non-Christians the basic teaching is the "kerygma" which prepares them for conversion and leads to baptism. For Christians, it is διδασκαλία which is a much more profound teaching of the Gospel to believers. The apostles carried out their work of teaching assiduously: πᾶσάν τε ἡμέραν ἐν τῷ ἱερῷ καὶ κατ' ὄικον οὐκ ἐπαύοντο διδάσκοντες καὶ εὐαγγελιζόμενοι τὸν Χριστὸν (Acts 5:42). Subsequently, the early Christian community remained faithful to the teaching of the apostles. On the other hand, the apostles attracted a number of non-Christians by their kerygmatic teaching which was often accompanied with signs and wonders (Acts 2:43; 4:30; 5:12).

The second characteristic of the early community is communion or fellowship (κοινωνία). It implies a common form of life. According to Begg, "There are four ways in which the word may be taken: 1) it may refer to the fellowship with the apostles; 2) it may mean the 'communism' of verse 44; 3) it may be an equivalent to the breaking of bread; 4) it may be almost equivalent to almsgiving."<sup>68</sup> It is no doubt rich in significance. But in the summary of Acts 2:42-47, Fitzmyer explains it as a term that "denotes specifically a 'communal manner of life,' as Luke uses it here."<sup>69</sup> It has a sense of common life, fraternity or solidarity. In order to capture its full meaning, it is to be interpreted in the context of the verses that follow immediately. It is a fellowship experienced by the common sharing of possessions (Acts 2:44; see also 4:34-35; 11:29-30).

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<sup>67</sup> FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 270.

<sup>68</sup> Quoted in BARRETT, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 163.

<sup>69</sup> FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 270.

The last pair of qualities is not difficult to understand, that is, the breaking of the bread and prayer. The breaking of the bread refers to the Lord's supper, "eucharist," although the term as such is not found anywhere in Acts. But the reality of the eucharist is mentioned, apart from Acts 2:42, also in Acts 20:7, 11, and perhaps in 13:2. The prayers in plural probably refer to "prayers offered by Christians in community, as in 1:24-25; 4:24-30; 12:12."<sup>70</sup> These four characteristics of the internal life of the early community are reiterated and alluded to in the following summaries: Acts 4:32-35; 5:12-16.<sup>71</sup>

## 6.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 2:42 is found in paragraph 100 of Chapter Five of *EiA*.

By its very nature the parish is the ordinary place where the faithful worship and live their Christian life. In it they can express and practice the initiatives which faith and Christian charity bring to the attention of the community of believers. The parish is the place which manifests *the communion of various groups and movements*, which find in it spiritual sustenance and material support. Priests and lay people will see to it that the parish life is harmonious, expressing the Church, as Family, where all devote "themselves to the Apostles' teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

### (1) Context of Acts 2:42 in *EiA*

Acts 2:42 appears at the end of paragraph 100 hence concludes the theme of the paragraph. It is a verbatim quotation from Acts which is applied to a parish context as the basic structure of evangelization and a proper milieu for life in common. The parish is singled out as the first structure of evangelization and described as an "ordinary place where the faithful worship and live their Christian life" In other words, the parish is a

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<sup>70</sup>FITZMYER, *Acts*, p. 271.

<sup>71</sup>CO, "The Major Summaries in Acts," pp. 81-82.

natural place for Christians where they share life together. Other structures of evangelization listed in *EiA* are the following: movements and associations (paragraph 101); schools (102); universities and higher institutes (paragraph 103).

The basic Christian qualities mentioned as being present in the early Church are: devotion to the apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers. They are interpreted within a parish context. They are realized in worship and are to bear practical fruits.

## (2) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:42

Of the four Christian qualities mentioned above, the emphasis in paragraph 100 is on fellowship which is expressed in different ways: "the community of believers," and "communion of various groups and movements." A parish that manifests such a fellowship favours "fraternal harmony which bears living witness to the gospel". This is stated in the following paragraph 101, which is also an interpretation and actualization of Acts 2:42, since it starts with "fraternal harmony" (*EiA* 101). *EiA* promotes the concept of *koinonia* in Acts 2:42 which is a bond of love among Christians that entails sharing of spiritual gifts and temporal goods. The apostolic movements and associations are given as actions and expressions of the fellowship mentioned in Acts 2:42.

The parish reflects the Church as family (*EiA* 100) and this is first mentioned in paragraph 63. The Church as "the family of God" has been adopted as a proper image for the Church in Africa. It is used as a guiding metaphor for evangelization in Africa, "for this image emphasizes care for others, solidarity, warmth in human relationships, acceptance, dialogue and trust" (*EiA* 63)

Acts 2:42 speaks about the community of goods applied to a parish setting in *EiA*. It has enlarged the horizons of a parish according to *EiA* by forging a new way of becoming a parish. Acts 2:42 sounds a clarion call to basic Christian values of worship, fellowship and prayer. There is a special emphasis on "koinonia" which is expressed in

different ways in *EiA*: “communion of various groups and movements.” and “fraternal harmony.” It covers both spiritual and physical communion.

In *EiA*, Acts 2:42 agrees more with paragraph 101 than with paragraph 100 where it is actually found. The notion of *koinonia* is better expressed in paragraph 101. There are few lexical links between Acts 2:42 and the rest of paragraph 100. As stated earlier, *EiA* promotes the concept of *koinonia* in Acts 2:42, which is a bond of love that entails sharing of spiritual and temporal goods. This is in keeping with Acts since believers are presented, not only as spiritual but also as physical persons. In the reader-response approach, the implied reader of Acts has appropriated the text and given a new emphasis in meaning which is in keeping with the original text.

### (3) How Acts 2:42 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The use of Acts 2:42 helps to shape a new identity for the Church in Africa in a fashion that resembles the early Christian community. It focuses on parishes as the most basic structure of the Church where Catholics acquire and form their identity as members of the Church. Parishes are centres of ecclesial communion. They are compared analogously to the first Christian community in Acts 2:42. *EiA* has appropriated Acts 2:42 and uses it to further define the identity of the Church in Africa as a Church that is called to be faithful to the apostolic teaching, that prays and celebrates the Eucharist. Acts 2:42 invites and stimulates harmony between priests and lay people so that the Church in Africa, as a family, may live the model of the Church it expresses.

### 7. Acts 2:44-45 in *EiA* 129

#### Greek \ English Text of Acts 2:44-45

πάντες δε οἱ πιστευόντες ἦσαν ἐπὶ τὸ αὐτὸ καὶ εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινὰ καὶ τὰ κτήματα καὶ τὰς ὑπαρξείας ἐπιπρασκόν καὶ διεμερίζον αὐτὰ πᾶσιν καθὼς ἅν τις χρεῖαν εἶχεν.

“And all who believed were together and had all things in common and they sold their possessions and goods and distributed them to all, as they had need.”

## 7.1. Significance in Acts

### (1) Context of Acts 2:44-45

Acts 2:44-45 is an integral part of the first summary on the life of the early Church, speaking specifically about the community of goods. The two verses should be interpreted together since they express the same idea of common sharing.<sup>72</sup> The concept of having things in common (εἶχον ἅπαντα κοινῶς) in verse 44 is reminiscent of κοινωνία (v.42). It also looks forward to Acts 4:32: "now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which he possessed was his own, but they had everything in common (κοινῶς)." The people involved are qualified as πιστευσαντες (the believers) and this echoes "those who welcomed the Word and were baptized" (verse 41). The community of believers born of Pentecost is not yet called the Church, εκκλησία. Verse 45 in particular specifies the way each member contributed to the community at large: "They sold their properties and possessions and distributed them to all as they had need."

### (2) Function of Acts 2:44-45

As stated above, the quotation of Acts 2:44-45 is one of the many summaries on the life of the early Church in Acts. It paints an idealistic picture of the early Christian community. As a summary it plays a special role in the narrative of Acts. It acts like a conclusion or a synthesis of the description of what a Christian community is. Other episodes within Acts however, give a more realistic presentation of the life of early Christians which was far from perfect. It was not always easy to live up to the ideal as shown by the second of the following episodes: (1) Acts 4:32-37 is a positive presentation of the community of goods. In verses 36-37, there is Joseph, surnamed

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<sup>72</sup> WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts*, p. 161.

Barnabas, a Levite, who sold his own field and brought the money to the apostles: (2) On the other hand, Acts 5:1-11 presents the case of Ananias and Sapphira who sold their own property but kept back some of the proceeds and brought only a part to the apostles.<sup>73</sup> This is an example of counter witness.

## 7.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Acts 2:44-45 is referred to in Chapter Seven, paragraph 129 which reads:

It is on account of this commitment to the Church's catholicity that the *Lineamenta* of the Special Assembly for Africa declared: "no particular Church, not even the poorest, can ever be dispensed from the obligation of sharing its personnel as well as its spiritual and temporal resources with other Churches and with the Universal Church ( cf. Acts 2:44-45)." For this part, the Special Assembly strongly stressed Africa's responsibility for mission "to the ends of the earth" in the following words : "The prophetic words of Paul VI, 'You Africans are missionaries to yourselves,' is to be understood as 'missionaries to the whole world'... An appeal is launched to the particular Churches of Africa for mission outside the confines of their Dioceses.

### (a) Context of Acts 2:44-45 in *EiA*

*EiA* 129 is found at the beginning of chapter seven which speaks about the Church's openness to the universal mission Paragraph 129 focuses on the catholic identity of the African Church and its implications. The Church in Africa has its rightful place within the universal Church. As a member of the universal Church, it has a duty and obligation to contribute to the welfare of the whole Church. "In virtue of this catholicity each individual part of the Church contributes through special gifts to the good of the other parts and the whole Church" (*Lumen Gentium* 13, quoted in *EiA* 20). Despite its material poverty, the African Church cannot be dispensed from sharing its

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<sup>73</sup>See S. J. NOORDA as quoted in MARGUERAT, pp. 248-249: "The Ananias story reveals an important side of this *κοινωνία*: it is not just a community of friends, but an enterprise of divine character [...] This expresses a central idea for Luke."

personnel, spiritual and temporal resources with the universal Church. Acts 2:44-45 is used in paragraph 129 as a principle for sharing among particular African Churches: "no particular Church, not even the poorest, can be dispensed from the obligation of sharing." In paragraph 129, Acts 2:44-45 is interpreted and actualized in three ways: that is, sharing with other Churches and the universal Church, namely, (1) personnel (2) spiritual and (3) temporal resources. According to *EiA* the ability to share with other particular Churches is an eloquent expression of the Church's catholicity and maturity. The Church of Africa has accepted involvement in the exchange of personnel with other particular Churches which manifests in a tangible way the level of maturity it has attained (*EiA* 38).

#### (b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:44-45

*EiA* reads the African Church's obligation to share into Acts 2:44-45 to include "personnel" and "spiritual resources" which are not terms originally found in the text of Acts. *EiA* has, therefore, given new dimensions of meaning to Acts 2:44-45. As we have seen earlier, Acts is limited to the sharing of material goods. By appropriating Acts 2:44-45 in its literary world, *EiA* has enlarged the world of Acts. While the idea of sharing is maintained from Acts, *EiA* has extended it to accommodate the African Church's best contribution to the universal mission, its own personnel. The African Church is blessed with a boom of vocations to priestly and religious life. There are different groups of African missionaries who are working in other countries and on other continents. There are also some diocesan priests who work outside their own dioceses and abroad as *fidei domum* as we have seen in paragraph 38. For some international religious orders or congregations there is a mutual exchange of personnel between the so-called older churches and the younger churches. The distinction between "sending churches" and "receiving churches" becomes irrelevant. Such a manifestation of solidarity and care for other churches resonates from what we read in Acts 13. Paul and Barnabas were sent on a mission even before the Church in Antioch was well established.

### (c) How Acts 2:44-45 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

In paragraph 129, Acts 2:44-45 is an appeal and a call to commitment and responsibility to the particular churches of Africa vis-à-vis one another and vis-à-vis the universal Church. The Churches in Africa, poor though they may be in material resources, cannot be dispensed from their obligation to share their personnel as well as their material and spiritual resources amongst themselves and with the universal Church. This is an important feature of a mature Church. The particular Churches in Africa are called to be active agents of the missionary activity of the universal Church. They are to become truly African and truly Catholic. They are called to assert their rightful place within the universal Church. The use of Acts 2:44-45 in *EiA* helps name and configure the status of the African Church vis-à-vis the other Churches. The African Church is being treated as one among "believers," making up the *koinonia* of Acts. That is a moment of great status for the African Church: it is one among equals.

### Summary of the Use of Quotations of Acts in *EiA*

The analysis and evaluation of the use of quotations of Acts in *EiA* are based on the philosophical and literary criteria from Ricoeur's hermeneutics and reader-response criticism as developed by Iser. According to Ricoeur and Iser the focus of hermeneutics is on the effect of the text on the reader and the reading process. Reading is described as a dialectic between the world of the text and the world of the reader and that meaning is the encounter between the genotext and the phenotext. Intertextually speaking Acts is the genotext while *EiA* is the phenotext. An intertextual analysis focuses on the mutual interpenetration of genotext and phenotext since intertextuality is a two-way process. *EiA* influences the world of Acts by reading the African Church into the text. At the same time, the quotations from Acts help shape a new identity for the Church in Africa by naming the experience of the African Church according to Acts. Ricoeur's theory of appropriation has been quite useful in naming the process of the interaction between



Acts and *EIA*. *EIA* has appropriated the quotations of Acts in its literary fabric thereby changing the way we look at these quotations now. The appropriation of these quotations engenders a new self-understanding and self-awareness for the Church in Africa as described by *EIA*. The search for a new identity for the African Church is at the heart of *EIA*.

The quotations from Acts make an irrepressible intertextual noise for recognition and are the most conspicuous intertextual devices within *EIA*. The reader of *EIA* does not need any special perspicacity to identify them. They facilitate the dialogue between Acts and *EIA* in shaping a new identity for the Church in Africa. Being scripture, they are the highest authority of appeal for the implied reader of *EIA*. They are used as authoritative warrants in the theme of the exhortation. *EIA* has read the experience of the African Church into them. In turn, they have created an irrefutable evidence of the concern for the continuity between Acts and the African Church. They present a configuration, a paradigm, or pattern of what the Church in Africa should look like, and at the same time, the context of the Church in Africa, according to *EIA*, makes the reader see them in a new light. They have acquired new dimensions of meaning by virtue of their flexibility and elasticity to adapt to any context. They tremendously influence the perception of the African Church and allow us to name the identity of the African Church in biblical terms.

These quotations of Acts have bridged the hermeneutical gap that exists between Acts and *EIA*. They are not simply ornamental but add theological weight and credibility to *EIA*. They persuade, urge and motivate African Catholics to carry on their missionary activity and think of a new way of being Christ's witnesses. They clarify and enrich the message of *EIA*. Concurrently *EIA* gives a new perspective for reading Acts and enlarges its interpretative horizons. Acts and *EIA* are open texts, mutually disclosing their worlds to each other and their interaction engenders a new self-understanding for the African Church. A summary for each quotation follows below.

	Acts 8:27-39	Acts 10:45-46	Acts 10:34-35, 47
1. Distribution	Introduction, <i>EiA</i> 6	Chapter 2, <i>EiA</i> 28	Chapter 2, <i>EiA</i> 28
2. Quantity	"Minister of Candace, Queen of Ethiopia, rejoiced at having received the faith through Baptism and went on his way bearing witness to Christ (cf. Acts 8:27-39)."	"The believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God" (Acts 10:45-46).	"Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to him... Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have ? (Acts 10:34-35,47)."
2. Quality	Paraphrasing	Verbatim and complete	Verbatim but incomplete
3. Literary Genre	Conversion	Theophany	Declaration
4. Markers	Parenthesis	Quotation formula: "The Acts of the Apostles says"	Quotation formula: "The Acts of the Apostles says"
5. Type	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
6. Function	Thematic	Thematic	Thematic
	Acts 2:11	Acts 2:11	Acts 4:12
1. Distribution	Chapter 2, <i>EiA</i> 32	Chapter 4, <i>EiA</i> 76	Chapter 4, <i>EiA</i> 74
2. Quantity	"We hear them telling in our languages the mighty works of God." (Acts 2:11).	"Mighty works of God"	"The Name of Jesus Christ is the only one by which it has been decreed that we can be saved, (cf. Acts 4:12)"
3. Quality	Verbatim and complete	Verbatim but incomplete	Paraphrasing
4. Literary Genre	Declaration	Declaration	Confession
5. Markers	Quotation formula: "The Acts of the	Quotation marks	Reference in brackets

	Apostles indicate.”		
6. Type	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
7. Function	Thematic	Thematic	Thematic

	Acts 20:28	Acts 2:42	Acts 2:44-45
1. Distribution	Chapter 5, <i>EiA</i> 98	Chapter 5, <i>EiA</i> 100	Chapter 7, <i>EiA</i> 129
2. Quantity	“The Bishops themselves will carefully pastor the Church which God obtained with the Blood of his Son, fulfilling the responsibility entrusted to them by the Holy Spirit. (cf. Acts 20:28) ”	devote “themselves to the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers” (Acts 2:42).	“Sharing its personnel as well as its spiritual and temporal resources with other particular Churches and with the universal Church” (cf. Acts 2:44-45).
3. Quality	Paraphrasing	Verbatim and complete	Paraphrasing
4. Literary Genre	Exhortation	Summary	Summary
5. Type	Authoritative	Authoritative	Authoritative
6. Function	Thematic	Thematic	Thematic

1) Acts 8:27-39 speaks about the conversion to Christianity of an Ethiopian (African) as a prototype of conversion for the African Church. By quoting Acts 8:27-39, *EiA* makes the connection between the African Church and its biblical heritage. It establishes the continuity between Acts and the African Church and makes explicit the implicit reference to Africa as the end of the earth. Just as the Ethiopian became a witness of Christ to his own people, the African Church is called upon to carry on its evangelizing mission throughout Africa today. The Ethiopian minister epitomizes the joy of the African Church in having embraced the Christian faith. As a result of this intertextual dynamic between Acts 8:27-39 and *EiA*, the evangelization of the Church in Africa today is seen as the continuation of the mission started long ago in Acts. *EiA* has appropriated Acts into its literary fabric and has thus extended its meaning. The Ethiopian minister is not

only a convert to Christianity (evangelized), but he becomes an evangelizer to his own people. *FiA* turns him into a witness of Christ to his own people as was the case with the witnesses in Acts, e.g. Peter and Peter. The use of Acts 8:27-39 in paragraph 6 suggests that *FiA* is to be read based on Scripture.

(2) Acts 10:34-35,45-46,47 refers to the Church's mission *ad gentes* exemplified by the conversion of Cornelius. *FiA* applies Peter's reaction to the conversion of Cornelius to that of the first missionaries to evangelize Africa. They must have had a similar reaction to Peter's vis-à-vis the Africans. They were amazed by the African sense of the sacred and openness to Christianity. For example, the African belief in the One Supreme Being did not come with the evangelization of the continent. God is given names in different African languages. Just as the expatriate missionaries had to convert themselves, the African Catholics are in turn called to convert themselves to witness to people of other cultures with their own religious background. Just as Peter has been called to such a conversion at the beginning of the Church, the Church of Rome and the African Church are called to conversion. We may infer that it is the whole African Church that is called to convert and understand its new missionary identity. The particular Churches of Africa are to understand their role within the universal Church as subjects, no longer as objects, of evangelization. They are called to be autonomous and missionary, no longer mission Churches after the example of the Church of Antioch in Acts 13:1-4.

(3) By using Acts 2:11, *FiA* refers to Pentecost as a repeated experience within the Church. Whenever the Gospel is proclaimed and received, a new Pentecost takes place. By quoting Acts 2:11, *FiA* puts the Church in Africa on the list of the chorus of languages that proclaim the mighty works of God. A truly local Church develops its own ways of worship and praising God. Christian countries in Africa express in their own languages and cultures the mighty deeds of God. For example, the Church in the Congo has developed the Zairean rite for the celebration of the Eucharist. The increasing number of vocations to consecrated life and priesthood in countries like Nigeria, Congo and Uganda is seen as a sign of the mighty deeds of God. The recent canonization of Sister Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese, is another sign of the mighty deeds of God for

which the African Church gives thanks to God. *EiA* reads these experiences of the African Church as “mighty deeds” of God into Acts. Acts 2:11 helps to name and configure them.

(4) Acts 4:12 speaks about Christ as the unique universal saviour. In *EiA*, it points to the urgency of evangelization. Despite mass conversions to Christianity, there are still many people in Africa and elsewhere who have not yet heard the gospel. Evangelization is therefore a matter of urgency. While the quotation above speaks of Jesus as the only Saviour, the Church in Africa today lives in a pluralistic society where interreligious dialogue is a necessity, especially between Christianity, Islam and traditional African religions. This experience of the African Church is read into Acts. The question that is being asked today, in the context of other religions, is whether and how Christ is the unique and sole saviour of the world. Such a question is not addressed in Acts but is raised today in Africa, even though it is not specifically mentioned in *EiA*. The original meaning of Acts 4:12 is forced to stretch itself to be able to embrace the pluralistic milieu of the African Church. Christianity is not lived out at the detriment of other religions; but it is to be lived out in harmony and respect for other religions. That is to say Christianity is to be lived fully in its particularity although not in exclusion of other religions. In order to avoid compromising the Gospel, the affirmation of Jesus as the unique universal saviour, though still pertinent for the Church today in interreligious dialogue, needs to be further reflected upon in the actual African context.

(5) Read in its original context Acts 20:28 refers to the pastoral responsibility of the elders of the Church in Ephesus and their concern for the flock. Read in *EiA*, it refers to the African bishops in their capacity as heads of particular Churches in Africa and as lawful successors of the apostles, in keeping with the Catholic tradition. Acts 20:28 has facilitated the interrelation between Acts and *EiA*. *EiA* reads the present structure of the Church into Acts 20:28 and expands its contours. In turn, Acts 20:28 helps to name and configure the present organizational structure of the Church and to assess its leadership.

(6) Read in its original context Acts 2:42 speaks about the four fundamental qualities which characterized the life of the early Christian community, namely, devotion to the apostles' teaching, to fellowship, to the breaking of the bread and to prayers. *EiA* appropriates these qualities for the parish setting as the basic structure of evangelization. The life of a parish is made to emulate the early Christian community with a special emphasis on fellowship so that the parish may become truly a place of fellowship for all various groups and movements. Acts 2:42 calls for a peaceful and harmonious life and witness between priests and lay people of the same parish. The appropriation of Acts 2:42 within *EiA* increases its vitality and draws a picture of a parish as a conducive place for evangelization.

(7) Acts 2:44-45 focuses on sharing material goods as a sign of communion. *EiA* extends the meaning of sharing to include personnel and spiritual resources. Every local Church is expected to make a contribution to the universal Church, and the African Church cannot be dispensed from this obligation. The use of Acts 2:44-45 helps to name the status of the African Church in communion with others as one among equals. During the colonial period, missionaries who worked in Africa, were exclusively from abroad, members of various religious congregations and orders. Even the *Fidei Donum* priests who worked on the continent were all expatriates. Today that situation is gradually being changed. There are particular Churches in Africa where the indigenous clergy and religious have taken over from the expatriate missionaries, e.g. Burundi, Uganda, Nigeria and Lesotho. Moreover some religious institutes founded in Africa actually supply missionaries across the continent and abroad, e.g. Bene-Tereziya Sisters of Burundi, Evangelizing Sisters of Mary in Uganda, Missionaries of St Paul in Nigeria. But, in applying the text of Acts 2:44-45 to the African Church, *EiA* asks for an increase of sharing the personnel and spiritual resources of the African Church within the universal Church.

The above quotations give a new mapping to the theological geography of Acts. They place the Church in Africa at the beginning of the Church as narrated by Acts. The new mission of the Church in Africa is to be witness starting from Africa to the ends of

the earth. The quotations encourage the Church in Africa to construct its own story based on the story of the Acts of the Apostles. They also revitalize the missionary activity of the Church in Africa. They open up new avenues of perceiving mission and new modes of being witness in the world today. The Church in Africa is seen as a continuation of the story of Acts. *EiA* reads the African Church's current situation into Acts and brings the world of the African Church into Acts. In turn, Acts incorporates the African Church into its own world thereby perpetuating the missionary thrust of Acts. The select use of quotations from the first part of the book of Acts is to help the Church of Africa to look at itself through the life of the early Church. The African Church is similar to the Church of Acts in that it is in the process of growth and progressive discovery of what it implies to become a witness of Christ to the whole world. The quotations of Acts in *EiA* provide a firm biblical and theological basis for the understanding of the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission.

Although they appear eclectic and scattered all over *EiA*, the quotations of Acts in *EiA* are related in different ways and at different degrees to Acts 1:8 which is the thematic framework of the whole exhortation and the keynote biblical text in *EiA*, as we saw in chapter three of this thesis. The excerpts develop other aspects of being witness which were not dealt with in our previous chapter. All these quotations work harmoniously in developing a new understanding of the identity and the mission of the Church in Africa today. They all have missionary overtones, marking the expansion of the gospel from Jerusalem to the ends of the world (Acts 1:8). They are classical texts for the understanding of mission and evangelization in Acts. Acts 8:27-39 is a partial fulfilment of Acts 1:8 in that the agent and the scope of witness in that passage are about Africa. The Ethiopian minister, after his baptism, carries the Gospel message as far as Africa. The story of the Ethiopian introduces two necessary conditions to become an authentic witness of Christ, namely, conversion and baptism. Conversion is one's life commitment to follow Christ which leads to baptism. Through baptism one is incorporated into the Church. So the ecclesial dimension of witness is necessary. Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47 is a further expansion of the evangelizing mission of the Church

according to Acts 1:8. Whereas Acts 8:27-39 has Africa as the scope of witnessing. Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47 marks formally the expansion of witness to the ends of the earth. It validates the Church's mission *ad gentes*. Acts 2:11 evokes a witness which is inculturated whereas Acts 4:12 evokes a witness which is Christocentric. Acts 20:28 links witness to the pastoral concern of the Church. Acts 2:42, 44-45 brings forth the community aspect of witness which is proposed for the Church in Africa.

By not naming places and situations, *IiA* paints a general picture of the reality of the Church in Africa. In the first place, there is no physical entity called the Church in Africa. Africa is a vast continent with many diverse local churches which differ from region to region and from one country to another. The use of Acts in *IiA* tends to promote an idealized African Church which does not take into account the different socio-political, cultural and economic situations of each country.

*IiA* does not exhaust the actual situation of the Church and does not pretend to do so. However, it gives this graphic description of the deplorable situation of the continent which was voiced by the synod fathers: "One common situation, without any doubt, is that Africa is full of problems. In almost all our nations there is abject poverty, tragic management of available scarce resources, political instability and social disorientation. The results stare us in the face: misery, wars, despair" (*IiA* 40). It is against this background of the continent of Africa that the synod of bishops for Africa "was intended to be an occasion of hope and resurrection, at the very moment when human events seemed to be tempting Africa to discouragement and despair" (*IiA* 1).

The use of Acts, therefore, provides hope, vision and inspiration for the African Church to persevere and to look forward to the future with courage. The use of quotations from Acts in *IiA* is not a description of the actual situation of the African Church but rather a projection for the future of the Church in Africa. It proposes new approaches and new strategies for the evangelizing mission of the African Church in the third millennium of the Christian faith



## CHAPTER FIVE: ALLUSIONS TO ACTS IN *EiA*

This chapter presupposes the two previous chapters on quotations of Acts in *EiA*. It is entirely devoted to the analysis and evaluation of allusions to Acts in *EiA*. As it was stated at the outset, quotations and allusions are the main points across the spectrum of intertextual relationship between Acts and *EiA*. They are the two poles on which this thesis rests. Chapters three and four were about the analysis and the evaluation of quotations of Acts in *EiA*. According to Genette's theory of intertextuality, quotations and allusions are equally levelled subcategories of intertextuality.<sup>1</sup> Any informed reader of *EiA* is, by now, supposed to recognize the presence of allusions to Acts in *EiA* since they presuppose the quotations which have been analyzed in the previous chapters. Allusions invite and engage the imagination of the reader and presuppose the reader's competence in reading Acts since things are not said explicitly but implicitly. Therefore, they require the active participation of the reader in determining their evocative potential in *EiA*. Concerning intertextuality in general, the role of the reader is crucial. This is even more so with allusions.

For the analysis and evaluation of the use of allusions to Acts in *EiA* we will again use the philosophical and literary criteria based on the hermeneutics of Ricoeur, and the tools of literary analysis and reader-response criticism of Iser. We will follow the same procedure as for the study of quotations. The significance of each allusion will be studied

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<sup>1</sup>GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 8.

separately. A general summary on the significance of the use of these allusions to Acts in *EiA* will follow.

The following allusions to Acts in *EiA* will be analyzed and evaluated: (1) Acts 2:1-13 which is alluded to six times (paragraphs 28, 32, 57, 61, 140, 144); (2) Acts 2:14-40 (paragraph 73); (3) Acts 1:8 (paragraph 105); and (4) Acts 17:22-34 (paragraph 71). They will be treated as follows: firstly, the allusions to the Pentecost event will be treated together (Acts 2:1-13); secondly, the allusion to Peter's kerygmatic discourse (Acts 2:14-40); thirdly, the allusion to witness (Acts 1:8); and finally the allusion to Paul's speech at *Areopagus* (Acts 17:22-34).

## 1. General Observations

### 1.1. Allusions as Intertextual Devices

Allusions are not new concepts in literary criticism since they have always existed in literature. However, intertextuality has aroused a new interest in them. They serve as important intertextual devices and literary linking devices as quotations do. Whereas quotations refer directly to the genotext, allusions evoke it. The main difference between allusions and quotations remains the fact that allusions are less conspicuous than quotations. Allusions are disguised and unobtrusive. Unlike in quotations, in allusions the genotext is assimilated and absorbed into the phenotext. Allusions do not appear in quotation marks and are therefore not as easy to detect. "They are an over-arching category under which quite diverse devices for establishing verifiable intertextual relations can be subsumed."<sup>2</sup> For example, echoes, traces, motifs and references in general can be

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<sup>2</sup>U. J. HEBEL, "Towards a Descriptive Poetics of Allusion," in *Intertextuality* (Berlin, New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1991) p. 137.

subsumed under allusions. The recognition of allusive markers requires a high degree of literary competence from the reader and some readers may fail to observe them. This does not mean however that allusions are less important than quotations.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, allusions and quotations are closely related and in some cases the distinction between them may not be readily apparent.<sup>4</sup> Both are intertextual devices that draw the reader's attention to the existence of other texts that make up the focused text. Their intertextual value depends on how they are used in a given text, that is, their distribution and frequency. It is their function in the alluding text that is important.

Ben-Porat defines literary allusion as follows: "The literary allusion is a device for the simultaneous activation of the two texts. The activation is achieved through the manipulation of a special sign: a sign (simple or complex) in a given text characterized by an additional larger 'referent.' This referent is always an independent text. The simultaneous activation of the two texts thus connected results in the formation of intertextual patterns whose nature cannot be predetermined."<sup>5</sup>

What can be inferred from the above definition is that allusion is an important literary device that establishes intertextual patterns. It forms a relationship between two texts that was not there originally and could not have been predetermined.<sup>6</sup> Allusion is also

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<sup>3</sup>HEBEL, *Intertextuality, Allusion, and Quotation*, p. 4, says: "The question whether allusion or quotation should be considered the more encompassing category has been answered both ways." It is a debatable question. I follow the position of Genette who sees them as equally important intertextual categories.

<sup>4</sup>HEBEL, *Intertextuality, Allusion, and Quotation*, p. 4, says: "A careful assessment of studies on quotation and allusion reveals frequent terminological insecurities and inconsistencies when it comes to describing the true nature of this connection."

<sup>5</sup>Z. BEN-PORAT, "The Poetics of Literary Allusion," *A Journal for Descriptive Poetics and Theory of Literature* 1 (1976) p. 107.

<sup>6</sup>HEBEL, *Intertextuality*, p. 136, makes a critical appraisal of the recent studies on allusion and identifies important names within the field of intertextuality.

associated with terms like echoes, traces, and references.<sup>7</sup> It is never defined adequately; but it is defined generally as an implicit, indirect or hidden reference.<sup>8</sup>

Other writers offer further viewpoints. Hays prefers to speak about allusive echoes. He describes the function of an allusive echo thus: "Allusive echo functions to suggest to the reader that text B should be understood in light of a broad interplay with A, encompassing aspects of A beyond those explicitly echoed." <sup>9</sup> From the intertextual viewpoint the important thing is what the reader perceives when reading any piece of literature. An allusion is equivalent to what Riffaterre calls *la trace de l'intertexte*, that is, the perception, by the reader, of the relationship between a work s/he is reading and others that have either preceded or followed it.<sup>10</sup> According to him an intertextual trace carries an indelible mark of the text from which it was originally found (genotext) into the focused text (phenotext).

As was stated earlier, Genette treats allusion as another manifestation of intertextuality. He defines allusion thus: "sous forme encore moins explicite et moins littérale, celle de l'allusion, c'est-à-dire d'un énoncé dont la pleine intelligence suppose la perception d'un rapport entre lui et un autre auquel renvoie nécessairement telle ou telle

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<sup>7</sup>Some authors identify allusions with echoes so that the two terms are used interchangeably. HAYS, *Echoes in Scripture in the Letters of St Paul*, p. 29.

<sup>8</sup>C. PERRI, "On Alluding" *Poetics* 7 (1978) pp. 289-307. See also T. K. BEAL, "Glossary" in D. Nolan FEWELL, *Reading between Texts: Intertextuality and the Hebrew Bible* (Kentucky: Westminster/ John Knox Press), 1992, p. 21.

<sup>9</sup>HAYS, *Echoes in Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, p. 20.

<sup>10</sup>M. RIFFATERRE, "La trace de l'intertexte," *La Pensée* 215 (1980) p. 4, says: "L'intertextualité est la perception, par le lecteur, des rapports entre une oeuvre et d'autres, qui l'ont précédée ou suivie. Ces autres oeuvres constituent l'intertexte de la première. La perception de ces rapports est donc une des composantes fondamentales de la littérarité d'une oeuvre, car cette littérarité tient à la double fonction, cognitive et esthétique, du texte."

de ses inflexions, autrement non-recevable.”<sup>11</sup> In other words an allusion is less explicit and less literal than a quotation. It is a tacit or implicit reference to another text. It is similar to what Genette calls the *paratext* which includes such features as titles, subtitles, chapter headings, prefaces, epigraphs, forwards, etc.<sup>12</sup>

It is incumbent on the reader to perceive the relationship between an allusion and another implied text. Allusions are more obscure than quotations, and as such more difficult to identify. It presupposes a wider knowledge on the part of the reader in order to detect them. The task at hand is to determine how to detect them and explain their function within *LiA*. Before analyzing allusions, the reader has to be able to recognize them and then see how they are presented. From what we have seen concerning the repertoire of quotations of Acts in *LiA* the reader is expected to be able to perceive the existence of allusions to Acts in *LiA*.

## 1.2. Ways of Detecting Allusions

There are no clear and absolute criteria, as far as I am aware, for detecting allusions. However, there are certain allusion markers or indicators, that is, identifiable segments of one independent text in another text. It is incumbent upon the reader to pay attention to these allusion markers. There are certain presuppositions needed for the reader: (1) The allusive competence of the reader is essential since one is dealing with more

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<sup>11</sup> GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 8. See GENETTE, *Palimpsestes* (translated by Channa NEWMAN and Claude DOUBINSKY, University of Nebraska Press, 1997) p. 2. J. NIEUVIATES, *L'entrée de Jésus à Jérusalem (Mt 21,1-17) Messianisme et accomplissement des écritures en Matthieu*, (Paris: édition du Cerf, 1999) p. 24, says about allusions: “Celles-ci constituent le cas le plus particulier et privilégié peut-être pour le texte récepteur, le plus difficile aussi à traiter pour le lecteur [...]. L'allusion ne se laissera reconnaître que par le connaisseur, car elle est, précisément, très homogène au récit.”

<sup>12</sup> GENETTE, *Palimpsestes*, p. 3, describes *paratext* as the second type of transtextuality which is less explicit and more distant relationship that binds together texts.

than one text at the same time, in this case, alluding text (*EiA*) and the evoked or alluded-to-text (Acts). (2)The reader must know both texts well in order to detect intertextual links.<sup>13</sup> Otherwise if the reader is not conversant with both texts, the whole exercise is futile and meaningless. Some allusions are so cryptic that only the informed reader can detect them. In any intertextual study the reader's competence is presupposed since it is the reader who initiates the process.

Sometimes the process is facilitated by obvious allusive signals or markers like verbal links, italicization, capitalization, or even a character's comment, and in most cases titles, or proper names.<sup>14</sup> But there are also subtle ones: "The marker for the allusion may be as economical as a single unusual and strategically placed word or as profuse as a whole episode parallel in situation to and abounding in citations from an earlier episode."<sup>15</sup> Of course all these signals are to be checked against the reader's competence.

The terminology of allusion gets easily confused with echoes by some authors as was mentioned above. In his book *Echoes of Scripture in the Letters of Paul*, Hays suggests some criteria for detecting literary echoes.<sup>16</sup> He also admits that these criteria do not have a compelling evidence. It is not so much the number of these criteria that counts

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<sup>13</sup>HEBEL, *Intertextuality*, pp. 139-140, speaks about the "dialogic allusions and the reader as text archaeologist." R. ALTER, *The Pleasure of Reading in an Ideological Age*, (New York, London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1996) p. 118, asks: "How does an audience identify an allusion? The whole system of signaling depends, quite obviously, on a high degree of cultural literacy." It takes a competent reader to identify allusions to one text in another text.

<sup>14</sup>HEBEL, *Intertextuality*, p. 141

<sup>15</sup>R. ALTER, *The World of Biblical Literature* (New York, BasicBooks Press, 1992) p. 111. R. ALTER, *The Pleasure of Reading in An Ideological Age*, p. 121, explains: "What I have said of the effect produced by single-word markers is also often true when a name or motif is borrowed, without actual citation, from one work by another."

<sup>16</sup>HAYS, *Echoes of Scripture*, pp. 29-32, says: "It is in principle very difficult to distinguish between allusion and echo." For him, allusion and echo could be used interchangeably.

but their effectiveness in detecting allusive intertextual links. He warns that they are not to be applied indiscriminately since they are not universally applicable. At times, it takes only one single word or even a name that indicates an allusion to another text and should be studied in the context of the original text as well as that of alluding text.

### 1.3. Types of Allusions

Generally speaking, allusions can be classified into marked or explicit and unmarked or implicit. Marked allusions have indicators or markers whereas unmarked allusions are cryptic. An allusive marker is a directional signal that hints to the alluded text. It is often identifiable as a segment belonging to the alluded text. Its function is to link the alluding text to the alluded text in order to guide the reader. A marked allusion is, therefore, easier to detect than an unmarked one. The classification of allusions into marked and unmarked is based on the work of Hebel who proposes the following categories: titular allusions and onomastic allusions.<sup>17</sup> Titular allusions are connected to titles and may also be marked or unmarked. Onomastic allusions are linked with names, like Mary, Peter or Paul. These become complex when dealing with fictional characters. The important thing about these categories is that they demand the allusive competence of the reader whose role is irreplaceable and vital. All of these different categories of allusions will help us to identify the allusions to Acts in *EiA*. According to their markers, allusions to Acts in *EiA* can be divided into four types: (1) onomastic allusions to Mary in *EiA* 57 and 140; and to *Areopagus* in *EiA* 71; (2) allusions to Pentecost in *EiA* 28, 32, 57,

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<sup>17</sup> In HEBEL, *Intertextuality*, p. 145

61, 140; (3) italicized allusion to the *kerygma* in *EiA* 73; (4) paraphrasing of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* 105.

## 2. Literary Analysis of Allusions to Acts in *EiA*

It is worth remembering that allusions are text-linking devices. They presuppose connections between two texts, the genotext and the phenotext, and reinforce the intertextual links already established by quotations. It is at this juncture that we will proceed in the same way as we did with quotations. To begin with, we will analyze the significance of each allusion in its original context of Acts. Then, we will analyze and evaluate the significance of each allusion in *EiA* for this new context, using the philosophical and literary criteria of Ricoeur and the reader-response theory of Iser. Each allusion will be interpreted based on its exact presentation in *EiA*. As before, only the pertinent elements will be analyzed and evaluated.

### 2.1. Acts 2:1-13 in *EiA* 28, 32, 57, 61, 140, 144

#### 2.1.1. Significance of Acts 2:1-13 in Acts

As previously mentioned, allusions will be analyzed and evaluated in the manner used for quotations. Allusions, like quotations, are linking devices between two diverse contexts. The significance of Acts 2:1-13 will be studied under the following points: (a) context and (b) function

##### (a) Context of Acts 2:1-13

We have seen in chapter two above, under the lexical links between Acts and *EiA*, that the word Pentecost (πεντηκοστῆς) appears ten times in *EiA* and is found only twice in Acts (2:1; 20:16). The Pentecost story, the key narrative in Acts, is an important



allusion indicator to Acts 2:1-13.<sup>18</sup> The main events in Acts are dependent on the Holy Spirit. Indeed, the entire book of Acts is replete with references and allusions to the Holy Spirit underlining His primacy.<sup>19</sup> It begins with the mention of Spirit (Acts 1:2,5) and ends with the repetition of the Word and the Spirit (Acts 28:25). Pentecost is the foundation event of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (ἐκχέω ἄπο τοῦ πνεύματος μου, Acts 2:18) on the apostles so that they could witness with courage and without any hindrance in fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel 2:28-32.<sup>20</sup> It also fulfils the prophetic promise Jesus made to his disciples before his Ascension (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:8). Pentecost marks the beginning of the Church and the empowerment of the human agents of witness in Acts. Pentecost is an enabling event for an effective witnessing. The apostles and the Holy Spirit bear witness to the resurrected Christ (Acts 5:32).

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<sup>18</sup>GOURGUES, "Mission et Communauté (Actes des Apôtres)", p. 17, calls it "La Pentecôte des Juifs." R. STRONSTAD, *The Prophethood of All Believers: A Study in Luke's Charismatic Theology* (England: Sheffield, 1999), p. 15, says: "Similarly, because Jesus transferred the Spirit from himself to his disciples on the day of Pentecost, the Pentecost narrative is programmatic for their ongoing ministry in the Spirit. In other words, from the day of Pentecost onwards they are the eschatological community of the Spirit-baptized, Spirit-empowered and Spirit-filled prophets. The programmatic function of the Pentecost narrative is amply reinforced by Luke's reports about the prophetic activity of the apostles (and their converts)."

<sup>19</sup>DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 130, says: "Les Actes des Apôtres sont d'abord les Actes de l'Esprit." POWELL, *What are they saying about Acts?*, p. 50, says: "Luke's second volume has been referred to as 'the gospel of the Holy Spirit.'" POUICUTA, *La Bible en terre d'Afrique*, p. 41, writes: "L'ensemble du livre des Actes est dominé par la présence de l'Esprit. Le titre *Actes des Apôtres* ne doit pas tromper." L. K. JOHNSON, *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minnesota: Collegeville, The Liturgical Press, 1992), p. 14, says: "Acts can appropriately be called the 'Book of the Holy Spirit.'" Luke not only includes five separate accounts of the Holy Spirit's dramatic "outpouring" on believers (2:1-4; 4:28-31; 8:15-17; 10:44; 19:6)—demarcating, it will be noted, the geographical and demographical progress of the "Word of God"—but also shows the Spirit actively intervening in the story, impelling and guiding it (see Acts 8: 29,39; 10:19; 11:15; 13:2; 15:28; 16:6; 20:22; 21: 4,11)."

<sup>20</sup>TREIER, "The Fulfilment of Joel 2:28-32: A Multiple-Lens Approach," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 60 (1997) pp. 13-26.

From Acts 2 onwards we are presented the recipients of the Holy Spirit, many of whom are said to be filled with the Holy Spirit and perform marvellous works. "The Holy Spirit governs, motivates, and empowers the characters who act in concert with God."<sup>21</sup> Peter is the first one described as acting under the power of the Holy Spirit. He convincingly explains the significance of the event of Pentecost (Acts 2:14-41). As a result of his Pentecost speech many conversions occur (Acts 2:41). The first Christian community was the fruit of the Spirit of Pentecost (Acts 2:42-47). In Acts 4:8 Peter, being filled with the Holy Spirit, was able to speak boldly before the Jewish authorities. Peter's community was also filled with the Holy Spirit (Acts 4:31). Stephen is described as full of faith and the Holy Spirit (Acts 6:5; 7:55) and was able to do great wonders and signs among the people (Acts 6:8). The Spirit in Acts is a power that helps both individual and community to bear witness.

The Spirit also takes charge of the mission in Acts, directing and guiding missionaries. He orders Philip where to go and what to do (Acts 8:29-39). It is the same Spirit that orders Peter to go to the house of Cornelius (Acts 10:44ff; 11: 12, 15ff). It is the same Spirit that orders the Church of Antioch to send out missionaries to found new communities (Acts 13:2, 4). Finally, it is still the same Spirit that tells Paul where to preach the Gospel (Acts 16:6, 7, 9; 19: 21; 23: 11).

#### (b) Function of Acts 2:1-13

We have already dealt with the Pentecost narrative in chapter four of this thesis under the quotation of Acts 2:11, paragraph 32. For the sake of clarity, I will reiterate

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<sup>21</sup> R. L. BRAWLEY, "The Spirit, the Power, and the Commonwealth in Acts." *The Bible Today* 37 (1999) p. 268.

some points mentioned previously. Pentecost has both a programmatic and a paradigmatic function in Acts. Acts 2:5 speaks clearly about every nation of the world represented at Pentecost. It is this universalistic concern expressed through the event of Pentecost that makes it the programmatic narrative in Acts. It is the first record of the outpouring of the Spirit. It also sets a precedence for the manifestations of the Spirit in the lives of believers. Wherever the Gospel is spread and received, Pentecost recurs. The Holy Spirit is the power (*dynamis*) that enables human witnesses to carry out their evangelizing mission. He is the principal agent of mission, the catalyst, the guiding and driving force of mission. He is not only the initiator and guide of mission, but He actually empowers missionaries.

The Spirit is poured upon the disciples of Christ enabling them to carry out the mission among all nations according to Jesus' promise to them in Acts 1:8. There are many such manifestations of the Spirit as Pentecost in Acts. The main extraordinary manifestations are recorded in the following episodes: (1) Acts 8:14-17; (2) 8:26-40; (3) 10-11; and (4) 19:1-6. The first episode, Acts 8:14-17, echoes the Pentecost narrative of Acts 2. It marks the experience of the Holy Spirit by the Samaritans who received the Holy Spirit when Peter and John laid their hands upon them (Acts 8:17). No wonder the episode is justly called "the Pentecost of the Samaritans."<sup>22</sup> The next episode, in Acts 8:26-40, is the conversion and the baptism of the Ethiopian. The Spirit orders and directs Philip (vv.29, 39). Another extraordinary manifestation of the Holy Spirit is in Acts 10-11, where the conversion and the baptism of Cornelius and his household is related. It marks the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the Gentiles even before they are baptized. It is a

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<sup>22</sup>GOURGUES. "Mission et Communauté: (Actes des Apôtres 1-12)" p. 26.

classical example which demonstrates that the Holy Spirit is indeed the principal agent of the whole of the Church's mission *ad gentes*. The episode of Acts 10-11:18 is therefore called the "Gentile Pentecost"<sup>23</sup> The last episode in Acts 19:1-6 is another reception of the Holy Spirit by people who have no knowledge of His existence. They had only received the baptism of John. The three above-mentioned episodes that reflect the phenomenon of Pentecost bring together the following elements, albeit in a varying chronological order: repentance, baptism and the gift of the Spirit.<sup>24</sup>

In Acts 10, the Pentecost event is evoked by the words of Peter: "Can anyone keep these people from being baptized with water? [...] They received the Holy Spirit as we have" (Acts 10:47; 11:15). It is therefore Peter who alludes to the first Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13). Acts 10:1-11:18 is a very important text for the admission of the gentiles into the Church. It marks a significant change of heart on the part of the Jewish-Christians in Jerusalem vis-à-vis the Gentile converts. It highlights the role of the Holy Spirit as a catalyst for the universal mission of the Church.

We have seen in chapter four of *FAA* that Acts 10:1-11:18 is focused more on the conversion of Peter and his companions than on Cornelius and his household. Just as Peter and his companions were surprised by the outpouring of Holy Spirit on the Gentiles, the first expatriate missionaries to reach the heart of Africa experienced a similar amazement.

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<sup>23</sup>GOURGUES, "Mission et Communauté (Actes des Apôtres 1-12) p. 31. B. WITHERINGTON III, *The Acts of the Apostles*, p. 134, says: "Acts 2 is frequently compared to Acts 10:46 and the Cornelius episode, which is sometimes called the Gentile Pentecost."

<sup>24</sup>POWELL, *What are they saying about Acts?* (New York: Paulist Press, 1991) p. 55.

## 2.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

We have seen that the word “Pentecost” is found ten times in *EiA*. It is found once in paragraphs 28, 73, 140 and 144 respectively, as well as twice in paragraphs 32, 57, and 61. Paragraphs 28 and 32 have already been studied under quotations.

### 2.1.2.1. Chapter One. Paragraph 28<sup>25</sup>

The liturgy of the sixth Sunday of Easter in 1994, at the Solemn Eucharistic celebration for the closing of the working session of the Special Assembly, provided me with the occasion to develop a meditation upon God's salvific plan for Africa. One of the Scriptural readings, taken from the Acts of the Apostles, recalled an event which can be understood as *the first step in the Church's mission 'ad gentes'*: it is the account of the visit made by Peter, at the bidding of the Holy Spirit, to the house of a Gentile, the centurion Cornelius. Until that time the Gospel had been proclaimed mainly to the Jews. After considerable hesitation, Peter, enlightened by the Spirit, decided to go to the house of a Gentile. When he arrived, he discovered to his joyful surprise that the centurion was awaiting Christ and baptism. The Acts of the Apostles says: ‘believers from among the circumcised who came with Peter were amazed, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and extolling God’ (Acts 10:45-46). In the house of Cornelius the miracle of **Pentecost** was in a sense repeated. Peter then said: “Truly I perceive that God shows no partiality, but in every nation any one who fears him and does what is acceptable to him ...Can anyone forbid water for baptizing these people who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?” (Acts 10:34-35, 47). Thus began the Church's mission *ad gentes*, of which Paul of Tarsus, would become the principal herald. The first missionaries who reached the heart of Africa undoubtedly felt an astonishment similar to that experienced by the Christians of the Apostolic age at **the outpouring of the Holy Spirit**.

As mentioned earlier, the significance of the allusion to Acts 2:1-13 in the above mentioned paragraph will be analyzed and evaluated under three points: (a) the context;

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<sup>25</sup> The block-letter font within the quotation of *EiA* is mine in order to highlight allusive indicators which are either a word or a phrase.

(b) how *EiA* enlightens and transforms Acts 2:1-13; and (c) how the allusion to Acts 2:1-13 helps shape a new identity for the African Church.

**(a) Context of Acts 2:1-13 in *EiA***

Paragraph 28 of *EiA* has been discussed at length in chapter four on quotations. Hence there is no need to repeat what has already been said. However, some points are worth remembering and will be reiterated now. The paragraph preceding paragraph 28 describes the divine salvific plan for humanity and for Africa in particular. Paragraph 27 says: "God's redeeming love embraces the whole of humanity, every race, tribe and nation; thus it also embraces all the peoples of Africa. The Divine Providence willed that Africa should be present during the Passion of Christ in the person of Simon of Cyrene, forced by the Roman soldiers to help the Lord to carry the cross cf. Mk 15:21." The same idea about the plan of God's will to save Africa is further developed in paragraph 28 with an illustration from Acts

Paragraph 28 contains the Pope's meditation on the visit of Peter to Cornelius (Acts 10:34-35, 47), which has been analyzed and evaluated in chapter four. Peter's visit to Cornelius is described as "the miracle of Pentecost" because the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift of tongues are clearly an allusion to the Pentecost narrative (Acts 2). There are two allusive indicators to Acts 2 in paragraph 28 of *EiA*: (1) The use of the word "Pentecost" in the middle of the paragraph, and (2) the use of the expression "outpouring of the Spirit" which is found at the very end of paragraph 28. According to Acts 2, Pentecost is described as the first "outpouring of the Holy Spirit". A similar usage is found in the preceding paragraph. The allusive sentence reads: "In the house of Cornelius the

miracle of Pentecost was in a sense repeated.” Paragraph 28 gives a short commentary on Acts 10:34-35, 47 and focuses on the role of the Holy Spirit who is the driving force behind all the main activities in Acts 10. He compels Peter to visit Cornelius. He falls upon the Gentiles while Peter is still speaking (Acts 10:44-45). This causes a big surprise among the believers from the circumcision party. The paragraph concludes with a statement that in a similar manner the first missionaries who went to Africa must have been astonished by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit as in apostolic times.

**(b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:1-13**

The appropriation of Acts 10: 34-35,45-46,47 in paragraph 28 alerts us to an allusion to Acts 2, the Pentecost event. As we have seen before, the above passage is about the conversion of Peter, Cornelius and his household which resembles in many ways the first Pentecost event: (1) the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 10:47); (2) the gift of tongues (Acts 2:11; 10:46); (3) baptism in the name of Jesus Christ (Acts 2:38,10:48); (4) the reaction of amazement (Acts 2:12; 10:45).<sup>26</sup> Pentecost is presented as the first outpouring of the Spirit in Acts. It is an irruption of the Spirit. It is a mysterious happening: “as sound of strong wind” (v.2) and “as tongues of fire” (v.3). The gift of tongues is described as the “miracle of Pentecost” in paragraph 28 whereas in Acts the gift of the Spirit is presented as a theophany rather than a miracle.

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<sup>26</sup> MEESTER, *Dialogue entre toi et cultures*, p. 59. STRONSTAD, *The Prophethood of All Believers*, p. 25, says: “The reception of the Spirit by Cornelius and his house-hold (Acts 10:44-48) is the same experience as the disciples’ reception of the Spirit on the day of Pentecost. Peter recognizes that ‘they have received the Holy Spirit just as [we did]’ (Acts 10:47). Later, he reports ‘the Holy Spirit fell upon them, just as [He did] upon us at the beginning’ (Acts 11:15), and, ‘God therefore gave them the same gift as [He gave] to us’ (Acts 11: 17).”

The emphasis in paragraph 28 is on the role of the Holy Spirit as the first agent of mission *ad gentes*, which is in keeping with the meaning of Acts 2. He works wonders and takes missionaries by surprise. "The first missionaries who reached the heart of Africa undoubtedly felt an astonishment similar to that experienced by the Christians of the Apostolic age at the outpouring of the Holy Spirit" (*EiA* 28).

According to the reader-response approach, the implied author of *EiA* has appropriated the text of Acts on the event of Pentecost and has established a new dimension of meaning for the text, at the same time remaining faithful to the original meaning of the text of Acts. The Pentecost event is said to have been "in a sense repeated." The new emphasis is on the word "repeated" which is used only in paragraph 28 in relation to Pentecost. Pentecost, therefore, is a continuous experience of Spirit in the life of any Christian or any community to whom the Spirit wishes to manifest his power. It is not only an event of the past but it is renewed in the life of the Church whenever and wherever the Gospel is proclaimed and received.

### c) How the Allusion to Acts 2:1-13 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The allusion to Pentecost in *EiA* helps shape a new identity for the Church in Africa and its evangelizing mission. The African Church is entrusted with the mission of announcing the Gospel in Africa to the ends of the earth. It is called to play an active role in the divine salvific plan, empowered and guided by the Holy Spirit. The Church's witness is Spirit-charged. According to Acts, Pentecost recurs whenever the Gospel is proclaimed and received. The allusion to Acts 2:1-13 brings the nature of witnessing, as we have seen



in chapter three, to another level. In the previous chapters of this thesis, we have seen the focus on human witnesses. Allusion to Pentecost evokes the divine witness of the Spirit which is a much more powerful type of witness in Acts.

In referring to the event of Pentecost, *IJA* highlights the all-embracing catholic identity of the Church in Africa. In other words, the Church in Africa must learn to become universal and expand its missionary horizons beyond the boundaries of the continent of Africa. For a long time the Church in Africa has been an object of mission. It is now called to be a subject of mission. It must be prepared to face similar challenges to that of the pioneer expatriate missionaries who evangelized the continent of Africa. This is the new major challenge facing the African Church. It will have to discern the work of the Spirit in other cultures and to respect religious cultural values of other peoples. It is expected that the Church has learned from the mistakes of the past where there was no serious consideration of other people's cultural values.

In summary, allusion to Acts 2:1-13 and *IJA* are mutually illuminating. On one hand, allusion to Acts 2:1-13 links the world of the Church in Africa with the first Pentecost event and portrays the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of the Church's mission. The activity of the Holy Spirit is pre-eminent in the mission *ad gentes*. On the other hand, *IJA* has configured Acts 2 and has expanded its meaning to include more people than is stated in Acts 2. The people who were at the first Pentecost were mainly Jews. The allusion to Pentecost in *IJA* is therefore more inclusive and culture-sensitive.

#### 2.1.2.2. Chapter Two, Paragraph 32

**On Pentecost Sunday, 7 June 1992, for the commemoration of the five hundred years of the evangelization of Angola, I said in Luanda: "The Acts of the Apostles indicate by name the inhabitants of the places who**

participated directly in the birth of the Church and the work of the breath of the Holy Spirit. They all said: 'We hear them telling in our own languages the mighty works of God' (Acts 2:11). Five hundred years ago the people of Angola were added to this chorus of languages. In that moment, in your African homeland **the Pentecost of Jerusalem** was renewed. Your ancestors heard the message of the Good News which is the language of the Spirit. Their hearts accepted this message for the first time, and they bowed their heads to the waters of the baptismal font in which, by the power of the Holy Spirit, a person dies with Christ and is born again to new life in his resurrection...It was certainly the same Spirit who moved those men of faith, the first missionaries, who in 1491 sailed into the mouth of the Zaire River, at Pinda, beginning a genuine missionary saga. It was the Holy Spirit, who works as he wills in people's hearts, who moved the great King of the Congo, Nzinga-a-Nkuwu, to ask for the missionaries to proclaim the Gospel. It was the Holy Spirit who sustained the life of those four Angolan Christians who, returning from Europe, testified to the Christian faith.

(a) Context of the Allusion in *EiA*

Paragraph 32 has already been studied in chapter four above under quotations. Whereas the analysis under quotations was focused on one verse (Acts 2:11), the allusion to Pentecost evokes the whole narrative in Acts (2:1-13). *EiA* 32 is the third paragraph in chapter two. The Pope quotes from the homily he gave on Pentecost Sunday, 1992, on the occasion of the commemoration of five hundred years since the evangelization of Angola. The Pope refers to this event of evangelization as "the Pentecost of Jerusalem renewed." The word "Pentecost" appears twice in the same paragraph and thus indicates its significance. The Christian Pentecost took place in Jerusalem and the Church was born there. Jerusalem has an important theological significance in Acts. The link between Pentecost and Holy Spirit is well understood in the paragraph. Paragraph 32 mentions the Holy Spirit six times in relation to the evangelization of Angola and Congo. The evangelization of Angola and Congo were important ecclesial events for the Church in

Africa. The success of the mission of the Church in Angola and in Congo is attributed to the Holy Spirit who empowered the first missionaries who evangelized there. And it was the same Spirit who moved the peoples of Angola and Congo to conversion.

(b) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:1-13

Paragraph 32 qualifies Pentecost as “the Pentecost of Jerusalem” and thus evokes the first Christian experience of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit which took place in Jerusalem (Acts 2:5). Jerusalem is the first qualifier given to Pentecost in *EiA* and there are other qualifiers of Pentecost in other paragraphs. The description of Pentecost as the “Pentecost of Jerusalem” is quite appropriate and is in keeping with the theological geography of Acts. Jerusalem has an important theological meaning in Luke-Acts.<sup>27</sup> The main salvific events took place in Jerusalem (Luke 24:47-49; Acts 1:8, 2:5). Just as the first Pentecost event took place in Jerusalem, the same experience was renewed in Luanda, the capital of Angola. The emphasis here, however, is on “the renewal” of that Pentecost of Jerusalem happening in Angola. This is a transformation or a new meaning of Acts 2:1-13 to describe the event of the evangelization of Angola in the sixteenth century as a renewal of the Pentecost of Jerusalem. Acts 2:1-13 is re-actualized and re-contextualized in paragraph 32 so that Pentecost for the Church in Angola occurred when the people of Angola were evangelized and accepted the Gospel.

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<sup>27</sup> DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 134, says: “L’intérêt de Luc pour Jérusalem apparaît déjà dans le fait que, sur 139 emplois du nom de la ville dans l’ensemble du Nouveau Testament, 90 se trouvent dans son oeuvre. Pour Luc, Jérusalem revêt une signification non seulement géographique mais aussi théologique.”

### (c) How the Allusion to Acts 2:1-13 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The allusion to Acts 2 highlights the role of the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of mission and the driving force behind the growth of the Church. The history of the evangelization of the continent bears witness to many different ways of the manifestation of the Spirit. As the following paragraph of *EiA* says: "Africa has responded with great generosity to Christ's call. In recent decades many African countries have celebrated the first centenary of the beginning of their evangelization. Indeed the growth of the Church in Africa over the last hundred years is a marvellous work of grace" (*EiA* 33). Statistically, Africa has been a success story for the expansion of Christianity in the last century. It has experienced mass conversions to Christianity and a vocation boom for religious life and the priesthood.

We have seen in Acts how the Pentecost experience is renewed in many other places. It is not an isolated event in the life of the early Church, something over and done with.<sup>28</sup> It is rather a continuous experience which can be reactualized and re-enacted. Every time that the Gospel is proclaimed and received is a renewal of Pentecost. Proclamation of the Gospel alone does not signify a Pentecost experience. For this to occur the Gospel must also be received. The first Christian Pentecost as recorded in Acts began in Jerusalem and spread to Samaria, Caesarea, and Ephesus. A Pentecost experience marks the expansion of the Gospel and the growth of the Church. It is quite appropriate to refer to the experience of evangelization in Angola and the birth of the Church in Angola

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<sup>28</sup>J. GAVIGAN, B. McCARTHY, T. McGOVERN, *The Navare Bible: The Acts of the Apostles*, Ireland: Dublin, Four Courts Press, 1989, p. 42.

as a renewed Pentecost of Jerusalem. Christians in Angola can rightly speak of their own Pentecost experience as they had joined the chorus of languages in praising God.<sup>20</sup>

According to Iser's theory of reader-response criticism, the focus of interpretation is on the effect of the text on the reader. The reader is drawn to the text by what the text presents. In other words, the reader is drawn into the world of the text. The allusion to "the Pentecost of Jerusalem" makes the Church in Africa present in Acts 2:1-13 with its particularities of cultures and languages. It is reinforced by the quotation of Acts 2:11 in the same paragraph (32). "We hear them telling in our languages the mighty works of God" (Acts 2:11)." We have seen that Acts 2:11 in paragraph 32 points to the process of the inculturation of the faith which is an important aspect of evangelization for the African Church. *LiA* has enlarged the limited world of Acts 2:1-13 to include the particular churches of Africa.

As was stated in the previous chapter of this thesis, Acts 2:11 calls for the particular Churches in Africa to express their faith in Christ in the diversity of their cultures. Liturgy has been the privileged place where a lot of creativity and innovation have been shown in composing songs and prayers which are a genuine expression of the diversity of cultures. The celebration of the Eucharist in vernacular languages and the Bible translations are important expressions of faith. Inculturation, however, affects all other aspects of life, not only liturgy.

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<sup>20</sup> J. de FEYTAUD, *Actes des deux Apôtres: Pierre et Paul*, (Paris, Téqui, 1995), p. 27, says: "De l'hébreu et de l'araméen au grec et au latin, les langues universelles, l'Eglise s'est ouverte plus encore, après Vatican II, aux langues vernaculaires, facilitant une 'inculturation' qui se fonde sur la parole de Dieu, transcendant toutes les cultures, et qui, à travers elles, se propage, non pour s'y diluer, mais pour les prendre en sa Lumière."

## 2.1.2.3. Chapter Three. Paragraph 57

“The Synod recalls that to evangelize is to proclaim by word and witness of life the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and risen, the Way, the Truth and the Life. To Africa, which is menaced on all sides by outbreaks of hatred and violence, by conflicts and wars, evangelizers must proclaim *the hope of life rooted in the Paschal Mystery*. It is precisely when, humanly speaking, Jesus’ life seemed doomed to failure that he instituted the Eucharist, ‘the pledge of eternal glory,’ in order to perpetuate in time and space his victory over death. That is why at a time when the African continent is in some ways in a critical situation the Special Assembly for Africa wished to be *“the Synod of the Resurrection, the Synod of Hope... Christ our Hope is alive; we shall live!”* Africa is not destined for death, but for life!” It is therefore essential that “the new evangelization should be centred on a transforming encounter with *the living person of Christ*.” “The first proclamation ought to bring about this overwhelming and exhilarating experience of Jesus Christ who calls each one to follow him in an adventure of faith.” This task is made all the easier because “the African believes in God the creator from his traditional life and religion and thus is also open to the full and definitive revelation of God in Jesus Christ with us, Word made flesh, Jesus, the Good News, is God who saves the African...from oppression and slavery.” Evangelization must reach “individual human beings and society in every aspect of their existence. It is therefore expressed in various activities, and particularly in those which the Synod examined: proclamation, inculturation, dialogue, justice and peace and the means of social communication.” For the full success of this mission, it must be ensured that “in evangelization prayer to the Holy Spirit will be stressed for a **continuing Pentecost**, where Mary, as at **the first Pentecost**, will have her place.” The power of the Holy Spirit guides the Church into all truth (cf. Jn 16: 13), enabling her to go into the world in order to bear witness to Christ with confident resolve.

(1) Context of the allusion in *EiA*

Paragraph 57 is the third one in chapter three of *EiA* which speaks about evangelization and inculturation. Appearing under the subtitle: “Proclamation,” it starts with a definition of evangelization given by the synod: “to evangelize is to proclaim by word and witness of life the Good News of Jesus Christ, crucified, died and risen, the Way, the Truth and the Life.” It goes on to speak of a new evangelization that must be

“centred on a transforming encounter with *the living person of Christ*.” It must reach “individual human beings and society in every aspect of their existence.” To ensure the success of this mission a prayer to the Holy Spirit will be said asking that the event be “a continuing Pentecost, where Mary, as at the first Pentecost, will have her place.” The allusive indicator to Acts 2:1-13 is the word “Pentecost” which occurs twice in paragraph 57. The figure of Mary is included. Paragraph 57 makes a clear connection between evangelization and the Holy Spirit. It ends with a strong emphasis on the power of the Holy Spirit which enables the Church “to go out into the world in order to bear witness to Christ with confident resolve.”

## (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 2:1-13

Whereas paragraph 32 speaks about the renewal of the Pentecost of Jerusalem, paragraph 57 gives two other important qualifiers of Pentecost: “the first Pentecost,” and “a continuing Pentecost.” Whereas the first Pentecost is clearly an allusion to Acts 2, a continuing Pentecost alludes to the abiding presence of the Spirit of Pentecost. The first Pentecost refers to the original event of Pentecost in Acts 2. It is the first Christian Pentecost from which all other experiences of the Spirit derive their significance. Peter refers to it as the initial (ἐν ἀρχῇ) Pentecost (Acts 11:15). The mention of Mary clearly alludes to her role within the community in Jerusalem. In Acts 1:14 Mary is the only woman singled out by name among others who were present with the apostles at prayer. She has a special place among the other members of the Christian community. There were more than just the twelve apostles on the day of Pentecost. Acts 2:1 πάντες ὁμοῦ τὸ αὐτό is ambiguous. Πάντες (all) may mean all of the apostles. It may also mean the

whole Christian community, including Mary (1:14) and 120 other followers of Christ (1:15).<sup>30</sup> *EIA* clearly chooses the latter interpretation.

The use of the allusion to Pentecost brings to light another dimension of the meaning of Acts 2:1 which states that more than twelve people were present at Pentecost. Pentecost becomes a universal event which includes many more people than the twelve. It is not only a prerogative of the few but the experience of all believers. *EIA* has enlarged the horizons of Acts 2:11 and describes Pentecost as a continuing experience of the whole Church.

### (3) How the Allusion to Pentecost Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The allusion to Pentecost points to the life of the particular Churches of Africa which have received the Gospel. The Holy Spirit assures the success of the African Church in its evangelizing mission. An allusion to Pentecost highlights the role of the Holy Spirit in shaping a new identity and the mission of the African Church. The African Church

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<sup>30</sup> M. RIGATO, "Il valore inclusivo di πάντες nella narrazione dell'evento di Pentecoste in Luca (At 2,3-4). Apostoli-testimoni pentecostali." *Rivista Biblica* 48 (2000) pp. 137-138, says: "At 2,1: I "tutti" riuniti sono in primo luogo il gruppo di At 1,14, Mattia incluso. In secondo luogo, [...] bisogna estendere il concetto "tutti" anche ai circa centoventi fratelli (At 1,15), tenendo presente che "circa" non esprime un numero preciso, ma un gruppo ragguardevole multiplo dei dodici." G.CROCETTI, "La Madre di Gesù e l'Eucaristia nella prospettiva lucana (Lc 1-2; At 1,14; 2, 42-47)." *Rivista Biblica* 48 (2000) p. 413 says: "Luca suppone, quindi, presente Maria in mezzo alla comunità credente anche dopo la Pentecoste." *Ibidem*, p. 411, he says: "Luca colloca la presenza di Maria nella chiesa nascente e in preghiera. Lo fa in modo esplicito in sommario degli Atti (At 1,12-14) che parla degli apostoli, di Maria e di altre persone in preghiera nel Cenacolo. Lo fa nel modo implicito nel successivo sommario (At 2,42-47) che formula come inclusione al primo e che parla della vita comunitaria ed eucaristica della comunità cristiana di dopo Pentecoste." DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 85, says: "La Pentecôte comme expérience universelle, c'est-à-dire vécue par toute la communauté des croyants [...] le collectif "tous" renvoie à la communauté entière des disciples telle que présentée précédemment: à 1,13-14 (les Douze, quelques femmes et les frères de Jésus) et mieux encore, à 1,15 ("environ cent vingt personnes")."



is entrusted with proclaiming the Good News by word and witness of life in every aspect of the people's life. In order to do this, the Church needs the help of the Holy Spirit who is the principal agent of mission. He is the power that propels the Church forward on its missionary activity. Whenever the Gospel is proclaimed and accepted there exists a continuing Pentecost.

#### 2.1.2.4. Chapter Three. Paragraph 61

Given the close and organic relationship that exists between Jesus Christ and the World that the Church proclaims, the inculturation of the revealed message cannot but follow the "logic" proper to the *mystery of the redemption*. Indeed, the Incarnation of the Word is not an isolated moment but tends towards Jesus' "Hour" and the Paschal Mystery: "Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (Jn 12:24). Jesus says: "And I, when I am lifted up from the earth, will draw all men to myself" (Jn 12:32). This emptying of self, this kenosis necessary for exaltation, which is the way of Christ and of each of his disciples (cf. Phil 2:6-9), sheds light on the encounter of cultures with Christ and his Gospel. "Every culture needs to be transformed by the Gospel values in the light of the Paschal Mystery." It is by looking at the Mystery of the Incarnation and of the Redemption that the values and counter-values are to be discerned. Just as the Word of God became like us in everything but sin, so too the inculturation of the Good News takes on all authentic human values, purifying them from sin and restoring to them their full meaning. Inculturation also has profound links with the *mystery of Pentecost*. Thanks to the outpouring and action of the Spirit, who draws gifts and talents into unity, all the peoples of the earth when they enter the Church live a **new Pentecost**, profess in their own language the one faith in Jesus, and proclaim the marvels that the Lord has done for them. The Spirit, who on the natural level is the true source of the wisdom of peoples, leads the Church with supernatural light into knowledge of the whole truth. In her turn the Church takes *sponsa ornata monilibus suis*, "the bride who adorns herself with her jewels" (cf. Is 61:10).

#### (1) Context of the Allusion in *EiA*

Paragraph 61 is situated in chapter three of *EiA* on evangelization and inculturation which is the core chapter within *EiA*. The allusion to Pentecost is presented in relation to

the issue of inculturation which is discussed in *EiA* from paragraph 59 on through to paragraph 62. Paragraph 59 explains the significance of inculturation and the urgent need for it in the Church in Africa. Paragraphs 60 and 61 are about the theological foundations of inculturation. Paragraph 62 speaks of the criteria and areas for inculturation. Paragraph 61 spells out the three theological foundations of inculturation: (1) the mystery of incarnation, (2) the mystery of redemption and (3) the mystery of Pentecost.<sup>31</sup> Firstly, inculturation follows the logic of the mystery of incarnation of the Word of God in Christ. Jesus is the perfect model of inculturation. At the incarnation, He emptied himself, and became one with humanity. He was human in all aspects except sin (Heb. 4:15). In the same way, inculturation is about the incarnation of the Good News in a given culture and the purification of cultural values so that they become expressions of the Christian faith. This implies the transformation of cultural values by the Gospel and cultural values which are not compatible with the Gospel values are eliminated and die away. Secondly, inculturation is based on the mystery of redemption in a similar manner. Christ redeemed humanity by his death and resurrection. In the same way, the counter-values of the cultures have to die and the positive values are called to live in a transformed way.

Finally, inculturation is linked to Pentecost which is described in *EiA* (61) as “the outpouring and action of the Spirit.” Pentecost is truly a “mystery” since it is the irruption of the power of the Holy Spirit in the life of the disciples of Christ. The event of Pentecost stands for unity in diversity. This is the meaning of “each one heard them speaking in the

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<sup>31</sup> M. P. GALLAGHER, *Clashing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith & Culture* (New York: Paulist Press), 1998, p. 106, says: “The Pope expands more than in any previous statement on the theological foundations of inculturation, pondering the three mysteries of Incarnation, Redemption and Pentecost.”

native language of each" (Acts 2:6; see also v.8 and 11).<sup>32</sup> People of different cultures and languages are enabled to profess one and the same faith in Christ. Moreover, they are empowered to "proclaim the marvels that the Lord has done for them" (Acts 2:11). Pentecost testifies to the presence of the Holy Spirit who is already active in different cultures, even before they are evangelized. He empowers the Church by bringing together such a diversity of talents into a unity.

## (2) How *EiA* Illumines and Transforms Acts 2:1-13

Paragraph 61 alludes twice to Pentecost: "mystery of Pentecost"; and "a new Pentecost". The mystery of Pentecost refers to the original event in Acts 2 whereas "a new Pentecost" refers to an experience of becoming a member of the Church. This use of Pentecost adds an important nuance to the understanding of Pentecost according to Acts 2:1-13. The mystery of the irruption of the Holy Spirit in people's lives takes place whenever the Christian faith is accepted and inculturated. The links between the mystery of Pentecost and inculturation are so profound that one could say that unless there is an authentic inculturation, Pentecost does not fully happen. Whoever accepts and professes faith in Jesus, lives a new Pentecost. The original Pentecost event took place once and for all. But the intervention of God in human history through His Spirit continues. Whenever and wherever the Gospel is proclaimed and received, it is Pentecost renewed.

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<sup>32</sup> DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 84, says: "A la Pentecôte, à partir de la diversité existante des langues (et des cultures) les humains deviennent unifiés. Le don de l'Esprit rétablit l'unité brisée à Babel, mais pas par un retour à l'unité originale de langue et de culture, bien plutôt en respectant et assumant toute la richesse engendrée par la diversité des langues et des cultures présentes dans le monde."

### (3) How the Allusion to Pentecost Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

Paragraph 61 touches on a singularly important issue for the African Church today. Inculturation is the top priority for the Church in Africa. It was one of the major themes of the African Synod and it is also a major theme in *EiA*.<sup>33</sup> Inculturation is considered an urgent priority in the life of the particular Churches in Africa as a “requirement for evangelization,” “a path towards full evangelization” and one of the greatest challenges for the Church on the Continent on the eve of the Third Millennium” (*EiA* 59). Inculturation is inextricably linked to evangelization. It is a process of the incarnation of the Gospel in the various human cultures. It is transformative of authentic cultural values and involves all aspects of life.

Inculturation is closely linked to the mystery of the Pentecost event which was an extraordinary phenomenon at the beginning of the Church. The allusion to Pentecost in paragraph 61 marks an important shift in emphasis from culture-dismissive to culture-intensive evangelization. The Church’s interest in inculturation is a recent phenomenon and needs to be promoted. *EiA* gives inculturation a real boost by insisting that Pentecost is not actualized today unless there is a real inculturation, that is a real incarnation of the

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<sup>33</sup> R. G. COTE, *Re-Vision Mission: The Catholic Church and Culture in Postmodern America*, New York: Paulist Press, 1996, p. 38, says: “Understandably, one of the major topics of discussion at the recent African bishops’ synod in Rome was precisely the urgent need and challenge to inculturate the gospel in African cultures.” McGARRY, *What Happened at the African Synod?*, p. 10, says: “At the heart of the synod is the theme of inculturation, which intertwines with every theme of the synod.” POUCOUTA, *Lettres aux eglises d’Afrique*, p. 251, says: “Le Synode africain insiste beaucoup sur l’inculturation. Elle constitue le sous-titre du troisième chapitre consacré à l’évangélisation (nos. 55-71).” *EiA* 87 goes as far as linking inculturation with holiness: “Inculturation, through which the faith penetrates the life of individuals and their primary communities, is also a path to holiness.” The term “inculturation” is referred to thirty times in *EiA*.

Gospel in the cultural values of the nations of Africa. It promotes a Church which is authentically African, whose entire Christian faith is fully incarnated in and enriched by African religiosity, cultural values, and world-view. This implies that the Gospel is fully and permanently rooted only when it has been received, celebrated and lived in different local cultures.

#### 2.1.2.5. Conclusion. Paragraph 140

Gathered around the Virgin Mary as at a **new Pentecost**, the members of the Special Assembly examined in depth the evangelizing mission of the Church in Africa on the threshold of the Third Millennium. At the conclusion of this Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation in which I present the fruits of this Assembly to the Church in Africa, Madagascar and the adjacent islands and to the whole Catholic Church, I give thanks to God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit – who granted us the privilege of living the genuine “moment of grace” which the Synod was. I am deeply grateful to the people of God in Africa for all that they did for the Special Assembly. This synod was prepared with zeal and enthusiasm, as can be seen from the answers to the questionnaire attached to the outline document (*Lineamenta*) and from the reflections gathered in the working document (*Instrumentum Laboris*). The Christian communities of Africa ardently prayed for the success of the work of the Special Synod, and it was abundantly blessed by the Lord.

#### (1) Context of the Allusion

*EiA* 140 is the first paragraph of the concluding chapter of *EiA*. It refers to the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa as “new Pentecost.” The assembly was seen as a manifestation of the Holy Spirit. It was in a sense a “Pentecost” event. It evokes the gathering together of the apostles and Mary in Acts 1:14. The special assembly was like a new Pentecost where Mary was also present. The phrase “gathered around the Virgin Mary as at a new Pentecost” echoes paragraph 57 studied above: “...in evangelization prayer to the Holy Spirit will be stressed for a continuing Pentecost, where

Mary, as at the first Pentecost will have her place.” Paragraph 140 makes it clear that there is a comparison between the special assembly of synod of bishops for Africa and the Christian Pentecost (Acts 2).

### (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 2:1-13

The allusion to Pentecost in paragraph 140 resembles what we have seen in paragraph 57 where Pentecost refers to a new experience of the synod. The special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa was a new Pentecost for the Church in Africa. The emphasis here is on “a new” Pentecost. Acts 2:1-13 has been illumined and transformed by *EiA* to mean the synod of bishops. The qualification of the synod as a new Pentecost is an actualization which expands and transforms the meaning of Acts 2:1-13.

### (3) How the Allusion to Pentecost Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

Allusion to Pentecost in paragraph 140 focuses on the African synod as an event and what it means for the Church in Africa. The allusion to Pentecost in the above paragraph makes the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa an occasion of the manifestation of the Spirit of Pentecost. This identification of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa with the gathering on Pentecost is meant to highlight the importance of the Spirit of Pentecost within the life of the African Church. Pentecost is, therefore, actualized and reinterpreted to refer to the African synod which was not originally the case in Acts.

#### 2.1.2.6. Conclusion. Paragraph 144

In thanksgiving for the grace of this synod, I appeal to Mary, Star of Evangelization and, as the Third Millennium draws near, to her, I entrust Africa and its evangelizing mission. I turn to her with the

thoughts and sentiments expressed in the prayer which my brother Bishops composed at the close of the working session of the Synod in Rome: O Mary, Mother of God and mother of the Church, thanks to you, on the day of the annunciation, at the dawn of the new era, the whole human race with its cultures rejoiced in recognizing itself ready for the gospel. On the eve of a new Pentecost for the Church in Africa, Madagascar and the adjacent islands, the people of God with its pastors turns to you and with you fervently prays: May the outpouring of the Holy Spirit make of the cultures of Africa places of communion in diversity, fashioning the peoples of the great continent into generous sons and daughters of the Church which is the family of Father, the brotherhood of the Son, the image of the Trinity, the seed and the beginning on earth of the eternal kingdom which will come to its perfection in the city that has God as its builder: the city of justice, love and peace.

#### (1) Context of the Allusion to Pentecost

Paragraph 144 is the very last paragraph of the conclusion and draws to a close the exhortation. It is the only prayer in the whole exhortation, and the Pope makes this prayer of bishops at the end of the synod his own: "I turn to her with the thoughts and sentiments expressed in the prayer which my brother bishops composed at the close of the working session of the synod in Rome." It is a prayer both of thanksgiving and supplication to Mary, the mother of God for the Church in Africa, Madagascar and adjacent islands "on the eve of a new Pentecost."

The word "Pentecost" is used only once in the paragraph above. It is equated with "the outpouring of the Holy Spirit" which is found in the same paragraph. In paragraph 57 it is written: "For the full success of this mission it must be ensured that in evangelization prayer to the Holy Spirit will be stressed for a continuing Pentecost, where Mary, as at the first Pentecost, will have her place." Paragraph 57 is therefore an invitation to prayer which is actualized in paragraph 144. In paragraph 144 there is an actual prayer to the

Holy Spirit. The new Pentecost refers to “the outpouring of the Holy Spirit who will make of all the cultures of Africa places of communion of diversity.” Hence the emphasis is here again on inculturation, that is on a Church exemplifying the unity in diversity of peoples of different cultures.

## (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 2:1-13

The word “Pentecost” in paragraph 144 is an allusive indicator of the Pentecost narrative (Acts 2). It is confirmed by the allusive expression “the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.” The text here speaks here of “the eve of a new Pentecost.” We have seen in some places in *EiA* that the new Pentecost is already here. The emphasis is on Pentecost as ushering in a new era for the African Church. Whereas the synod was described as a new Pentecost in paragraph 140, in paragraph 144 a new Pentecost refers to this new era inaugurated by the assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa. The meaning of Pentecost has been transformed to mean the promoter of communion and harmony in diversity among peoples of Africa with their different cultures.

## (3) How the Allusion to Pentecost Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church.

We have seen five paragraphs in *EiA* (28, 32, 57, 61, 140) which allude to Pentecost (Acts 2). It is given different qualifiers, “the miracle of Pentecost” ( paragraph 28), “the Pentecost of Jerusalem” (paragraph 32), “continuing Pentecost,” “the first Pentecost” (paragraph 57), “the mystery of Pentecost” (paragraph 61), and “a new Pentecost” (paragraph 140). Pentecost is alluded to for the last time in paragraph 144. The



text speaks here of “the eve” of a new Pentecost. In some places *EiA* speaks about the new Pentecost as already there. *EiA* is not consistent in its expressions.

The allusion to Pentecost in the above mentioned paragraph has an evocative force. It appeals to the power of the Holy Spirit to assist the Church in Africa in its evangelizing mission. Once again *EiA* says that the outpouring of the Spirit, that is the new Pentecost, will happen to the extent that the Church of Africa will be a reality made up of the community of various peoples who will live their faith in the diversity of their own unique cultures. It is a fervent prayer of supplication. *EiA* depicts the African synod as a very important event for the African bishops. The success of the mission of the African Church depends upon the power of the Holy Spirit who animates the universal Church and works in many different cultures of the world.

The schema on the allusions to Pentecost in *EiA*

	<i>EiA</i> 28	<i>EiA</i> 32	<i>EiA</i> 57
1. Distribution	Middle of the paragraph and towards the end of Chapter 1	Middle of the paragraph and at the beginning of chapter 2.	Towards the end of the paragraph and at the beginning of chapter 3.
2. Type	Marked	Marked	Unmarked
3. Function in <i>EiA</i>	Illustrative	Illustrative	Conclusion
4. Description in <i>EiA</i>	Pentecost was in a sense repeated	Pentecost of Jerusalem was renewed	A continuing Pentecost, where Mary, as at the first Pentecost, will have her place
5. New Significance for Acts	Pentecost is a continuous experience	Pentecost is renewed whenever the Gospel is preached and accepted	Pentecost continues whenever the Gospel is preached and accepted
	<i>EiA</i> 61	<i>EiA</i> 140	<i>EiA</i> 144
1. Distribution	Towards the end of the paragraph	Beginning of the paragraph and the	Middle of the paragraph and the end of the

	and the middle of chapter 3	beginning of the conclusion	conclusion.
2. Type	Unmarked	Unmarked	Unmarked
3. Function	Conclusion	Thematic	Illustrative
4. Description in <i>EiA</i>	Mystery of Pentecost; Outpouring and action of the Spirit: a new Pentecost	Gathered around Mary as a new Pentecost	The eve of a new Pentecost; outpouring of the Holy Spirit
6. New Significance for Acts	Pentecost presupposes inculturation	The African Synod is a new Pentecost	The new era for the African Church expressed through communion and diversity of cultures

The above schema highlights the following. Firstly, the distribution of allusions to Pentecost in *EiA*, indicates the role and significance given to the Holy Spirit throughout the exhortation. Secondly, the type of the allusion to Pentecost in *EiA* refers to the relation between Acts and *EiA*. Thirdly, the function of allusions to Pentecost is the most significant part of this exercise since it describes how the allusions fit into *EiA*. Finally, the description refers to the actual meaning attributed to Pentecost in *EiA*.

The first four allusions to Pentecost appear in the first three chapters of *EiA*, namely, chapters one (*EiA* 28), two (*EiA* 32), three (*EiA* 57,61); and the last two allusions appear in the conclusion (*EiA* 140, 144). The context of these allusions demonstrates clearly that the role of "the Holy Spirit as the principal agent of evangelization" (*EiA* 21) is evoked throughout the exhortation, that is in the beginning, in the middle and at the end of the exhortation. In chapter one, paragraph 28, the allusion to Pentecost concludes the chapter by evoking the presence of the Holy Spirit in the Africans even before they had contact with the first missionaries. The same idea is further developed in chapter two

paragraph 32 where Angola and Congo are given as outstanding examples of conversions caused by the Holy Spirit. The beginning and splendid growth of the Church in those countries then could only be attributed to the working of the Holy Spirit. In chapter three, which is devoted to evangelization and inculturation, Pentecost appears four times in two paragraphs. This is a further important development from the previous paragraphs in that now the Holy Spirit becomes the principal agent of both evangelization and inculturation. The last paragraphs (140, 144) carry on the idea of inculturation as the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

## 2.2. Acts 2:14-40 in *EiA* 73

### 2.2.1. Significance in Acts

Acts 2:14-40 is Peter's first keynote address made immediately after Pentecost. Tannehill describes it as "one of the most carefully constructed speeches in Acts. It is carefully shaped as a persuasive appeal to the kind of audience pictured in the narrative."<sup>34</sup> It ends with a dialogue between Peter and his audience (Acts 2:37-38). Having listened carefully to Peter, the people ask what to do (v. 37). Peter demands three things of them in order to obtain the gift of the Holy Spirit: repentance, baptism, and forgiveness of sins (v.38). In Acts 2:38 repentance means an acceptance of Jesus as the saviour "that He is indeed the Messiah in spite of the crucifixion. The people were challenged to admit that they were wrong about Jesus. They were asked to look beyond the crucifixion; God has raised Jesus from death to life, and empowered Jesus to sit at the right hand of God."<sup>35</sup> Here Peter addresses his Jewish audience and succeeds in persuading them to recognize

<sup>34</sup> TANNEHILL, *Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts: A Literary Interpretation*, volume two: *The Acts of the Apostles* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1994) p. 41.

<sup>35</sup> P. W. WALASKAY, *Acts*, (Louisville: Kentucky, Westminster John Knox Press), p. 45.

their sin and turn to God. Acts 2:38 sets a basis for other speeches to follow which are addressed to Jews. The call to repentance (*metanoia*) is an underlying theme in most speeches of Acts (3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20) and in many stories in Acts (8:14-25, 26-40; 9:1-19; 10:1-48). It stands in stark contrast to the reaction in Acts 5:33 where members of the Sanhedrin wanted to kill the apostles. It is also in opposition to the angry reaction of the murderers of Stephen (Acts 7:54). In addition to repentance, Peter demands that the repentant Jews be baptized. The importance of baptism is greatly stressed in Acts but nowhere is it presented as a *conditio sine qua non* for salvation. "Baptism is presented as the means of joining the Christian community, even though there is no mention in the New Testament of any of the apostles or the original 120 followers of Christ ever being baptized in this scene."<sup>30</sup> The two first requirements, namely repentance and baptism, are in view of the remission of sins. They refer to the effect of the salvific Christ-event. As a result believers will receive the Holy Spirit, which is God's free gift to believers in Christ. It is a guarantee of Christ's presence with his disciples who will now function under the direction of the Spirit, being a Spirit-filled community.

### 2.2.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Paragraph 73 reads thus:

**The first urgent task** is of course evangelization itself. On the one hand, the Church must assimilate and live ever more fully the message which the Lord has entrusted to her. On the other hand, she must bear witness to this message and proclaim it to all who do not yet know Jesus Christ. It is indeed for them that the Lord said to the Apostles: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations" (Mt 28:19). Just as at Pentecost, the goal of preaching the *kerygma* is to bring the hearer to *metanoia* and *baptism*.

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<sup>30</sup> FITZMYER, *Acts of the Apostles*, p. 265.

**‘The proclamation of the word of God has *Christian conversion* as its aim: a complete and sincere adherence to Christ and his Gospel through faith.’ Conversion to Christ moreover ‘is joined to baptism not only because of the Church’s practice, but also by the will of Christ himself, who sent the Apostles to make disciples of all nations and baptize them (Mt 28: 19). Conversion is also joined to baptism because of the intrinsic need to receive the fullness of new life in Christ. As Jesus says to Nicodemus: *Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God*’ (Jn 3:5). In baptism, in fact, we are born anew to the life of God’s children, united to Jesus Christ and anointed in the Holy Spirit. Baptism is not simply a seal of conversion, a kind of external sign indicating conversion and attesting to it. Rather, it is a *sacrament which signifies and effects* rebirth from the Spirit, establishes real and unbreakable bonds with the Blessed Trinity, and makes us members of the body of Christ, which is the Church. Therefore a journey of conversion that did not culminate in baptism would stop half-way. It is true that people of upright heart who, through no fault of their own have not been reached by the proclamation of the gospel but who live in harmony with their conscience according to God’s law, will be saved by Christ and in Christ. For every human being there is always an actual call from God, which is waiting to be acknowledged and received (cf. 1Tim 2:4). It is precisely in order to facilitate this recognition and acceptance that Christ’s disciples are required not to rest until the Good News of salvation has been brought to all.**

The significance of the allusion to the Pentecost discourse will be analyzed and evaluated under the three usual points: (1) context of the allusion to Acts; (2) how *EcA* enlightens and transforms Acts 2:14-40; and (3) how the allusion helps shape a new identity for the African Church.

#### **(1) Context of the Allusion to Acts**

Paragraph 73 makes allusion to Peter’s first missionary speech to the Jews in Acts 2:14-40. The allusion, as such, is not to the event of Pentecost (Acts 2:1-13) but to the *kerygma*, that is, the missionary preaching that followed Pentecost (Acts 2:14-38). The language of Peter’s *kerygma* resonates throughout the above paragraph. The allusive

indicators are the following words: "Pentecost," "kerygma," "metanoia" and "baptism." They are central to Peter's first missionary speech (Acts 2:14-40).

Paragraph 73 is the second paragraph of chapter four which is about the present-day challenges facing the African Church at the dawn of the Third Christian Millennium. It appears under the title: "Need for Baptism." Paragraph 73 is focused on conversion to Christ and his Gospel, and baptism which are linked together. The words "conversion" and "baptism" are each mentioned six times: "just as at Pentecost, the goal of preaching the *kerygma* is to bring the hearer to *metanoia*"; "conversion to Christ moreover 'is joined to baptism not only because of the Church's practice"; "conversion is also joined to baptism because of the intrinsic need to receive fullness of the new life in Christ"; "In baptism, in fact, we are born anew to the life of God's children"; "baptism is not simply a seal of conversion"; "a journey of conversion that did not culminate in baptism would stop half-way." The first mention of baptism is found in the second part of the paragraph which clearly states that, just as at Pentecost, those who heard the preaching of the apostles were called to conversion and baptism. *EiA* also uses the word *metanoia* for conversion in paragraphs 73 and 87. In *EiA*, paragraph 87 spells out the meaning of *metanoia* as a change of mentality. The call for conversion (*metanoia*) and baptism at Pentecost is reminiscent of Acts 2:14-38.

## (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 2:14-40

The event of Pentecost affected not only the apostles, but also those who listened to the preaching of Peter. They wanted to know what to do (Acts 2:37). *EiA* describes conversion differently from Acts 2:38. It is not a remorse for having crucified and killed

Jesus and subsequently turning to God. It is a conversion to Christ in view of baptism which is provoked by the proclamation of the Word. True conversion leads to baptism. The need for baptism for those who are not yet baptized in Africa is compared to Peter's injunction to those who heard his Pentecostal speech to be baptized (Acts 2:38). There is a close link made between conversion and baptism in *EiA* 73 as in Acts 2:14-40. Conversion and baptism are the results of hearing the *kerygma*. They are provoked by proclaiming the *kerygma*. Hearing the *kerygma* leads to conversion and conversion leads to baptism. The terms "kerygma," "metanoia" and "baptism" are closely associated in *EiA*. Conversion is presented here as the initial step towards baptism. It involves a dramatic change of life from paganism to Christianity. It is described from the viewpoint of the evangelized only, while in Acts it is a process that involves both the evangelizer and the evangelized.

### (3) How the Allusion to Acts 2:14-40 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The allusion to the Pentecost discourse makes the African Church a community born of the Holy Spirit like the first Christian community in Acts. The African Church has been born of the preaching and witness of life of heroic missionaries who were moved by the Holy Spirit. In turn, the Church in Africa has a duty to preach the Gospel in order to bring its hearers to *metanoia* and baptism. Acts 2:14-40 promotes the evangelizing mission of the Church as a work of the Holy Spirit. Just as Peter preached at Pentecost, the African Church should continue its evangelizing mission to call people of Africa to conversion to Christ and to baptism.

### 2.3. Acts 1:8 in *EiA* 105

#### 2.3.1. Significance in Acts

In chapter three above we have analyzed and evaluated the use of Acts 1:8 in *EiA* as the most important quotation and the thematic framework of *EiA*. Now we are dealing with it as an allusion. It is worth remembering some main points concerning the literary genre, the context and the function of Acts 1:8 in Acts. It is a commissioning statement, a command and a promise which the Risen Christ makes to His disciples at the moment of His Ascension into heaven, to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth. It is a promise of the coming of the Holy Spirit who will descend upon them in order to empower them to be daring witnesses. Acts 1:8 is a keynote text in Acts: it lays out the general structure of Acts according to the thematical, geographical, ethnical and cultic aspects of Acts. Thematically, Acts 1:8 introduces the two major themes in Acts, namely, the Holy Spirit and Witness. Both themes are closely linked together and permeate the whole of Acts. Firstly, the Holy Spirit gives power and authenticates the testimony of all the witnesses of Christ as we have seen above under allusions to Pentecost. The major events of conversion and evangelization in Acts are motivated by the Holy Spirit. Acts is replete with episodes involving the Holy Spirit. The first extraordinary manifestation of the Holy Spirit is Pentecost which is a paradigmatic event in Acts, as we have seen above. Secondly, Acts 1:8 introduces witness in its multifaceted aspects: the agents, the content, the manner and the scope of witness which are developed throughout Acts. Acts 1:8 carries over the theme of being witness from Luke 24:48 and is echoed in Acts 2:32; 13:31; etc. Geographically according to Acts 1:8, evangelization begins in Jerusalem, then



extends to Judea, to Samaria and to the end of the earth. Acts 1:8 also outlines the ethnical outreach of the gospel from Jews, to Samaritans and eventually to Gentiles. The fulfilment of Acts 1:8 extends beyond the literary framework of Acts thus making Acts an open-ended story. Finally, Acts 1:8 announces a cultic shift away from Jewish institutions of worship such as the temple and synagogues to household. As the Gospel expands beyond Jerusalem, household conversions become significant in Acts (Acts 10:48; 11:14; 16:14-15, 33-34).

### 2.3.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

#### Chapter Six, Paragraph 105

**The mandate that Jesus gave his disciples at the moment of his Ascension into heaven is addressed to the Church of God in all times and places. The Church as the family of God in Africa must bear witness to Christ also by promoting justice and peace on the Continent and throughout the world. The Lord says: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:9-10). The Church's witness must be accompanied by a firm commitment to justice and solidarity by each member of God's people. This is especially important for the lay faithful who hold public office, because such witness demands an abiding spiritual attitude and a way of life consistent with the Christian faith."**

#### (1) Context of the Allusion to Acts 1:8

*EiA* 105 is the first paragraph of chapter six. It opens with an allusion to Acts 1:8: "The mandate that Jesus gave to his disciples at the moment of his Ascension into heaven is addressed to the Church of God in all times and places. The Church as the family of God in Africa must bear witness to Christ also by promoting justice and peace on the continent and throughout the world"

The allusion to Acts 1:8 is quite obvious from the viewpoint of vocabulary of paragraph 105. The important indicators are found in the first sentence of the paragraph: "the mandate Christ gave" and "moment of His Ascension."<sup>37</sup> We find a similar wording in paragraphs 86 and 128 of *EIA* which refer to Acts 1:8 as "the mandate" which Christ gave to his apostles and which the Church received from Christ. In *EIA* the mandate Christ gave to his disciples at the moment of his Ascension is "to bear witness" (Acts 1:8). The most important allusive indicator in paragraph 105 is the word "witness" which is used three times in the above paragraph. "The Church as the family of God in Africa must bear witness to Christ also by promoting justice and peace on the continent and throughout the world." "The Church's witness must be accompanied by firm commitment to justice and solidarity by each member of God's people [...] because such witness demands an abiding spiritual attitude and a way of life consistent with the Christian faith." The idea of witness described in paragraph 105 is carried further into paragraph 106 entitled: "Ecclesial Dimension of Witness." "The Synod fathers drew attention to the ecclesial dimension of this witness and solemnly declared: 'The Church must continue to play her role and be the voice of the voiceless.'" The emphasis in paragraphs 105 and 106 is on the social dimension of bearing witness to Christ in matters of justice and peace which was a topical issue of the special assembly of the synod of bishops for Africa.<sup>38</sup>

<sup>37</sup> Luke has two Ascension narratives (Lk 24:50-51; Acts 1:9-11). In the given context it is clear that the allusion is to Acts 1:8-11.

<sup>38</sup> McGARRY, *What Happened at the African Synod?*, p. 10, says: "There were more interventions of the synod fathers on the theme of 'justice and peace' than any other single theme, reflecting the 'hopeless' state of the continent." W. R. O'NEILL, "African Moral Theology," *Theological Studies* 62 (2001) p. 124, writes: "Of the major synodal topics, only the issue of justice and peace emerged with greater frequency than that of inculturation." The pope is most vocal on justice and peace. He denounces strongly dishonest and corrupt leaders and financial malpractices of public funds (*EIA* 113).

## (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 1:8

Acts 1:8 focuses on the apostolic witnessing which is mainly through proclamation of the word. The allusion to Acts 1:8 in paragraph 105 focuses on the human agents of witness and expands the contours of witness according to Acts. Witness cannot be limited only to proclamation: it must also include peace and social justice. "Inculturation of the faith and action on behalf of justice are constitutive elements of evangelization."<sup>39</sup> The Church's involvement in matters of justice and peace is not so prominent in Acts. There are certain individuals who denounce injustice and oppression. Peter and the apostles declare openly that they must obey God rather than men (Acts 5:29). Paul's speech in Pisidia Antioch denounces the injustice in condemning Jesus to death: "Though they could charge him with nothing deserving death, yet they asked Pilate to have Him killed" (Acts 13:28). Here in *EiA*, however, a different dimension of justice is introduced which is social justice linked to peace and solidarity.

In reader-response criticism we look for the new dimension of meaning that has been established and its faithfulness to the original text. We have seen in chapter three that Acts 1:8 is indeed both the theme and the framework of *EiA*. It refers to the witness of action which is consistent with the Christian faith, but here the appropriation of Acts 1:8 goes a step further from what it means in Acts.

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<sup>39</sup> McGARRY, *A Light on Our Path*, p. 64.

### (3) How the Allusion to Acts 1:8 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

The allusion to Acts 1:8 defines a new identity for the Church in Africa and her evangelizing mission. It defines the *raison d'être* of the Church and its evangelizing mission. Commitment to the promotion of justice and peace contributes the most important sign of witnessing to the gospel in Africa today where there are wars, conflicts and great violations of the fundamental rights of human beings. The Church must be deeply committed to justice and peace. This is especially so for the lay faithful who hold public office because their witness demands coherence between their way of life and the Christian faith. "The Church must continue to play her prophetic role and be the voice of the voiceless" (*EiA* 106). The Church must reflect justice and peace in its structures and in its relationships among its members. It is intrinsic to evangelization to promote peace and justice and to respect fundamental human rights. By rooting this demand into the mandate of Christ in Acts 1:8, *EiA* makes it an intrinsic component of the missionary identity of the Church in Africa.

#### 2.4. Acts 17:22-34 in *EiA* 71.

##### 2.4.1. Significance in Acts

The word Areopagus (Ἄρειον Πάγον) is found twice in Paul's missionary speech to the Athenians (Acts 17:16-34)<sup>40</sup> It is found in vv.19, 22. It is the name of a

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<sup>40</sup> DUMAIS, "Le salut en dehors de la foi en Jésus Christ? Observations sur trois passages des Actes des Apôtres." *Eglise et Théologie* 28 (1997) p. 180, says: "Le discours de Paul devant l'Aréopage d'Athènes est un texte subtil et complexe. Il n'est pas étonnant que les opinions des exégètes soient depuis longtemps partagées sur son interprétation." See also DUPONT, *Nouvelles Etudes sur les Actes des Apôtres*, p. 387: "Le discours à l'Aréopage constitue une réalité complexe." M. L. SOARDS, *The Speeches in Acts, Their Content, Context and Concerns* (Louisville: Kentucky, Westminster/ John Knox Press, 1994), pp. 95-96, says: "A controversy

place from which Paul delivered his missionary speech to the Athenian audience of assembled Stoic and Epicurean philosophers. Paul addresses the Athenians using the language of their poets and philosophers. He comments on their popular religiosity and remarks that they pray to an unknown God and then he claims to preach that same God (Acts 17:23). He vehemently preaches against the belief that God resides in temples made by human hands (Acts 17:24). God is almighty and lacks nothing (Acts 17:27). He then calls them to repent from their ignorance of God (Acts 17:30). It was when he spoke about the resurrection of the dead that they turned away from him (Acts 17:32). The speech results in only a few conversions. According to Fitzmyer, this *Areopagus* speech is “the second most important Pauline speech in Acts. It is a Lucan composition, another example of an inserted speech, a missionary speech, addressed not to Jews, but to pagan Athenians and alien Greek-speaking sojourners”<sup>41</sup> Tannehill sees it as a model of communicating with the larger world. “The Areopagus speech may provide a helpful model of the delicate task of speaking outside the religious community through critical engagement with the larger world. A mission that does not engage the presuppositions and dominant concerns of those being approached leaves these presuppositions and concerns untouched, with the result that the message, even if accepted, does not transform hearers”<sup>42</sup> Dumais presents the idea of the *Areopagus* speech as a model of communication of faith across cultures: “Le discours missionnaire, dans son intentionalité et sa forme littéraire, est essentiellement une réalité de communication. Celui d’Athènes

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arose when some Epicureans and Stoics heard Paul preaching Jesus and the resurrection. The conclusion of some hearers was that Paul seems to be a proclaimer of foreign divinities.”

<sup>41</sup> Fitzmyer, *Acts*, p. 601.

<sup>42</sup> Tannehill, *The Narrative Unity of Luke-Acts*, vol. 2, p. 215.

est un bel exemple d'évangélisation – c'est-à-dire de communication – "transculturelle": un orateur chrétien imbu de culture religieuse juive cherche à communiquer le contenu de sa foi à des auditeurs non-juifs de culture grecque."<sup>45</sup> It is in a similar perspective that it is applied in *EiA* as we shall see below.

#### 2.4.2. Significance in *EiA*: Analysis and Evaluation

Paragraph 71 reads thus:

From the beginning it has been a characteristic of God to want to communicate. This he does by various means. He has bestowed being upon every created thing, animate and inanimate. He enters into relationships with human beings in a very special way. 'In many and various ways God spoke of old to our fathers by the prophets; but in these last days he has spoken to us by a Son' (Heb 1:1-2). The Word of God is by nature word, dialogue and communication. He came to restore on the one hand communication and relations between God and humanity, and on the other hand those of people with one another. The Synod paid great attention to the mass media under two important and complementary

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<sup>45</sup> DUMAIS, "Le salut en dehors de la foi en Jésus Christ" p. 180. DUPONT, *Nouvelles Etudes des Actes des Apôtres*, p. 398, says: "Le discours est tributaire de deux cultures religieuses différentes." DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 162, says: "Le discours d'Athènes nous présente un exemple d'inculturation, mais qui n'en est finalement qu'aux premiers stades: ceux de l'enculturation et de l'acculturation." M. P. CALLAGHER, *Cushing Symbols: An Introduction to Faith & Culture* (Newyork/ Mahwah, N.J. Paulist Press, 1998) p. 120, says: "St Paul's discourse on the Areopagus is often cited as the greatest New Testament example of a positive outreach to pagan culture and of the possible harmony between human aspirations and the revelation-event of Christ." L. LEGRAND, "A l'écoute des premiers chrétiens," *Spiritus* 43 (1970) pp. 359-360, says: "Le discours à l'Arcopage symbolise la rencontre d'un univers nouveau que l'église va devoir intégrer à sa vie [...] Athènes, c'est l'expression typique du dialogue de l'église avec le monde." JOHN PAUL II, *Redemptoris Missio* 25, says: "The speeches in Lystra and Athens (cf. Acts 14: 15-17; 17: 22-31) are acknowledged as models for the evangelization of the Gentiles. In these speeches Paul enters into "dialogue" with the cultural and religious values of different peoples. To the Lycaonians, who practiced a cosmic religion, he speaks of religious experiences related to the cosmos. With the Greeks he discusses philosophy and quotes their own poets (cf. Acts 17:18, 26, 28). These are speeches which offer an example of the inculturation of the gospel." BOSSUYT et RADERMAKERS, *Témoins de la Parole de la Grâce*, p. 550, says: "Le discours de Paul à l'Arcopage apparaît bien comme un modèle: parole de sagesse, langage d'inculturation." *Lineamenta* paragraph 47 reads: "The discourses of the Apostle Paul in the book of Acts, notably his allocutions in the Areopagus, manifest the same concern for inculturation and present a clear example of the process involved." L. LEGRAND, *Unity and Plurality*, New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1988, p. 109, says: "This lengthy prologue is an attempt to dramatize the significance of the discourse at Athens: the encounter between the Word and the Western culture."

aspects: as a new and emerging cultural world and as a series of means serving communication. First of all, they constitute a new culture that has its own language and above all its own specific values and counter-values. For this reason, like any culture, the mass media needs to be evangelized. Today in fact the mass media constitute not only a world but also a culture and civilization. And it is also to this world that the Church is sent to bring the Good News of salvation. The heralds of the Gospel must therefore enter this world in order to allow themselves to be permeated by this new civilization and culture for the purpose of learning how to make good use of them. "The first Areopagus of the modern age is the world of communications, which is unifying humanity and turning it into what is known as a 'global village.' The means of social communication have become so important as to be for many the chief means of information and education, of guidance and inspiration in their behaviour as individuals, families and within society at large." Training in the use of the mass media is therefore a necessity not only for the preacher of the Gospel, who must master, among other things, the media style of communication but also for the reader, the listener and the viewer. Trained to understand this kind of communication, they must be able to make use of its contributions with discernment and critical mind. In Africa, where oral transmission is one of the characteristics of culture, such training is of capital importance. This same kind of communication must remind pastors, especially bishops and priests, that the Church is sent to speak, to preach the gospel in words and deeds. Thus she cannot remain silent, at the risk of failing in her mission, except in cases where silence itself would be a way of speaking and bearing witness. We must therefore always preach in season and out of season (cf. 2 Tim 4:2), in order to build up, in charity and truth.

#### (1) Context of Acts 17:22-34

*LiA* 71 is the last paragraph of chapter three, and is entitled "Means of Communication". It does not have any close links with the preceding paragraphs of the chapter. It discusses one of the major topics of the African synod, the means of social communication which is first mentioned in paragraph eight of *LiA*. Social communication is enlisted again with four other topics in paragraph sixteen, namely, evangelization, inculturation, dialogue, pastoral care in social areas.

Paragraph 71 alludes to Acts 17:22-34. The most obvious allusive indicator lies in the word "Areopagus." It is mentioned once in the paragraph above and nowhere else in *EiA*. It is a quotation from Pope John Paul II's encyclical Letter, *Redemptoris Missio*, paragraph 37 which reads thus: "The Areopagus of the modern age is the world of communications, which is unifying humanity and turning it into what is known as a 'global village.' The means of social communications have become so important as to be for many the chief means of information and education, of guidance and inspiration in their behaviour as individuals, families and within society at large."<sup>44</sup> It highlights the importance of mass media and a need to enter into dialogue with them in view of evangelizing the world of communications.

Read in the context of *EiA*, chapter three, the "Areopagus" allusion is linked directly to the heading of the chapter which is evangelization and inculturation: "Today in fact the mass media constitute not only a world but also a culture and civilization." Paragraph 71 speaks about the impact of communications on the evangelization of Africa. The world of communications is a culture to be evangelized and at the same time is an important means of evangelization. *EiA* encourages training in this area for both the preacher and the reader of the gospel.

## (2) How *EiA* Illuminates and Transforms Acts 17:22-34

The *Areopagus* speech is basically an issue of communication of the good news between the evangelizer and those to be evangelized. *EiA* rightly links it with social

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<sup>44</sup>M. ZAGO, "Commentary on *Redemptoris Missio*," in W. R. BURROWS, *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading *Redemptoris Missio* and *Dialogue and Proclamation**, New York: Maryknoll, Orbis Books, 1993, p. 80, says: "The term 'Areopagus,' taken from Saint Paul's meeting with learned persons in Athens, is used with this meaning. It reminds us of Paul's efforts at inculturation and therefore of missionary activity."



communication in paragraph 71. Acts does not deal as such with social communication, but the allusion to *Areopagus* in *EiA* extends the contours of Acts 17:22-34. It is an example of the inculturation of the gospel whereby the Christian faith gets into dialogue with the modern means of social communication and into a network of international relations. The encounter between the African culture and the new culture of mass media is relatively new. It therefore implies some cultural shock and a learning process for both the evangelizer and the evangelized. The modern meaning of inculturation based on the *Areopagus* speech implies taking into consideration cultural African means of communication through either a song or proverb. It also means promoting the oral tradition which is so prevalent on the continent. The great tendency is to ignore these traditional means of communication and replace them with the modern means which are more expensive.

### (3) How the Allusion to Acts 17:22-34 Helps Shape a New Identity For the African Church

An allusion to the *Areopagus* speech is quite pertinent for the African Church. "The key to the *Areopagus* speech will not sound strange in the ears of the followers of African traditional religion. The speech, if it had been addressed originally to the Africans, would have been received by an appreciative audience. It is a clear recognition by the early Church of non Christian religions, in our case African traditional religion, as a providentially developed stage in man's approach to, and contact with, God."<sup>45</sup> Religion is an essential component of the African culture.

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<sup>45</sup>C. D. ISIZOH, *The Resurrected Jesus Preached in Athens* (Lagos/ Rome: Ceede Publications), 1997, p. 223.

Acts 17: 22-34 highlights one of the pressing challenges facing the Church in Africa today, the mass media. Bishops and priests are urged to learn about the means of social communications and use them effectively for the propagation of the faith. This is presented as an imperative for the Church in Africa. The allusion to *Areopagus* speaks about the values and counter-values of the media in the life of faith. It is a good foundation for inculturation which is one of the main themes in *EiA*. It highlights the need to evangelize the media, which constitute a new culture. The world of communication is the new *Areopagus*, that is, a new sector for evangelization. It is not only a world but it is also a culture and civilization. It is incumbent on the Church in Africa to promote dialogue with this new culture of social communication. Communications through media can be quite a useful vehicle for evangelization if properly used. They could also have a negative devastating effect on the African cultural religious values. For example, the rich countries inundate poor countries with pornography and violence (*EiA* 124). An authentic communication within the context of evangelization in Africa has to be a dialogue with the local cultures. The means of communication, both oral and written, must promote and safeguard the African cultural values of the family, ancestral veneration, solidarity and respect for the sacredness of human life. The spoken word is an important aspect of African culture which must be promoted as a means of evangelization.

#### Summary on the Use of Allusions to Acts in *EiA*.

The above analysis and evaluation of the use of allusions to Acts in *EiA* have demonstrated that there are allusions to passages of Acts, which are literary linking devices between Acts and *EiA*. Allusions to Acts have established an irrefutable

intertextual relationship between Acts and *EiA* which is more subtle than quotations. They have revealed that the alluding technique is a two-way process creating a dynamic interplay between Acts and *EiA*. The alluding text (*EiA*) and the alluded-to text (Acts) produce mutually illuminating commentary on each other. According to intertextual hermeneutics the phenotext (*EiA*) assimilates, illuminates and transforms the genotext (Acts) and vice versa. According to Ricoeur's theory of appropriation, allusions attest to another degree of appropriation of the text. *EiA* has appropriated allusions to Acts into its literary fabric and at the same time these allusions to Acts help shape a new identity for the African Church which is truly African and truly Catholic.

According to the above analysis and evaluation, the passages alluded to from Acts in *EiA* fall into three categories, namely, Pentecost, witness and the *Areopagus* speech, each of which deals with a different aspect of inculturation. Firstly, Pentecost is the key allusion indicator which explains the role of the Holy Spirit in *EiA*. Out of the nine allusions to Acts in *EiA*, six of them refer to Pentecost (Acts 2) and allude to its different aspects. Three of them allude to the Pentecost event which is described as the "outpouring of the Holy Spirit" (28.61.144). Two allude to the gift of tongues (32. 76). One alludes to the presence of Mary at Pentecost (57). These allusions to Pentecost emphasize the indispensable role of the Spirit in the evangelizing mission of the Church which was not stressed enough by the quotations of Acts. The nature of the mission of the Church is divine; it is willed by God and is Spirit-impelled. Without the help of the Holy Spirit the evangelizing mission of the Church would become a mere human enterprise. The Holy Spirit is the primary agent of mission and He is referred to forty times in *EiA*. He is the

power animating the Church *en mission*. He initiates, motivates and universalizes the mission of the Church.

Pentecost is closely linked with inculturation as we have seen in *EIA* 61. There is no Pentecost event unless there is true inculturation which is the incarnation of the gospel in the various human cultures. Pentecost is a theological foundation for inculturation; it enables peoples of different cultural and linguistic backgrounds to profess one faith in Christ. The allusion to the *Arcopagus* speech in *EIA* reaffirms the importance of inculturation in evangelization and defines mass media as a new culture and a new civilization to be evangelized.

The modern means of communication need to take into account the oral transmission which is prevalent in Africa. "The traditional forms of social communication must never be underestimated. In many places in Africa they are still very useful and effective. Moreover they are 'less costly and more accessible.' These forms include songs and music, mimes and theatre, proverbs and fables. As vehicles of wisdom and soul of the people they are a precious source of material and of inspiration for the modern media." (*EIA* 123). In some countries, there are schools on orality in which the illiterate are taught to memorize passages from the Bible and learn to recite them by heart. At the African Synod the opening and the closing ceremonies were celebrated to "the sound of drums and other African musical instruments" (*EIA* 6)

True evangelization of the media implies inculturation which embraces all domains of life including mass media and the means of social communication. The allusion to

*Areopagus* provides a model for inculturation which is the encounter between Christianity and the new culture of mass media.

The use of allusions to Pentecost advances the missionary nature of the African Church and helps create a new inculturated and universal identity for the African Church. The Church in Africa is becoming truly African and truly Catholic. It is faced with this challenge in all aspects of its life. Allusions to Pentecost in *LiA* help enlarge its missionary horizons and highlight its role within the universal Church and the world.

Indeed an important function of the Spirit is to make the Church universal. The event of Pentecost was the origin of the universality of the Church (Acts 2:1-13). Peoples of different tongues and cultures received the Spirit of Pentecost and consequently, they were able to pray God in their own respective languages (Acts 2:11). The Spirit ordered Paul and Barnabas to be put aside for the mission to the world (Acts 13:1-4). He is always present in every Christian and every Christian community.

The use of allusions to Pentecost shows the intimate link between the Spirit and witness as the distinctive but inseparable features of the missionary paradigm according to Acts. It is the apostles together with the Holy Spirit who are witnesses of the resurrected Christ (Acts 5:32); they decide together (Acts 15:28). The Holy Spirit plays a unique role as the motivating witness who empowers human witnesses to carry out their mission with courage and enthusiasm (Acts 2:29; 4:13, 29, 31; 9:27-28; 13:46; 14:3; 18:26; 19:8,26; 28:31). The use of allusions to Pentecost marks a shift in emphasis from human agents of mission of the Church to the divine agent, that is, the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit that is primarily and ultimately responsible for the expansion of the mission of the Church (*LiA*

21). The success of evangelization and the growth of the Church in Africa over the last hundred years can be attributed only to the power of the Holy Spirit. No human effort alone could have accomplished so much in such a short time. The Spirit works in ways that are not always known to human beings. The mission of the Church is not a human initiative; it is divine. Ultimately, the mission of the Church is *missio Dei*; God is the ultimate agent who acts through His Spirit. Therefore human beings alone cannot carry it out: they need the power of the Holy Spirit.

The allusion to Acts 1:8 in *EiA* 105 reinforces the fact that witness is the central theme of *EiA* and the new metaphor for the African Church as we have seen in chapter three of the present thesis. This allusion in *EiA* 105 adds another dimension of witness to those underlined in the various paragraphs of *EiA* which quote and interpret the mandate of Acts 1:8. It spells out the Church's commitment to justice and peace as the most appropriate type of witness within the African Church and the society at large. The theme of justice and peace was the most talked about by the synod fathers since it is so relevant to the African continent. There is a special emphasis made on the promotion of justice and peace as an integral part of the evangelizing mission of the Church. The promotion of justice and peace is part of an all-encompassing inculturated evangelization.

In conclusion, the use of allusions to Acts in *EiA* adds more weight to the intertextual significance of the genotext (Acts) and the phenotext (*EiA*) which has been established by quotations. Allusions complete, emphasize and expand the significance of quotations of Acts found in *EiA*. They take further the intertextual relations between Acts and *EiA*. Whereas quotations project a clearly defined world indicated by either a

quotation formula or quotation marks. allusions are assimilated in the literary fabric of the phenotext and cover a larger context than quotations do. Allusions, as such, fill up the gaps made by quotations. For instance, allusions to Pentecost complete the full significance of quotations of Acts 1:8, 2:11, 8:27-39, 10:44-45, 47, in which the Holy Spirit plays a central role in the genotext. These allusions to Pentecost in the phenotext show that the role of the Holy Spirit is not limited to these above mentioned passages of Acts only. In Acts, the Holy Spirit is dynamically present, animating, inspiring, guiding and empowering. Allusions to Acts expand the significance of Pentecost to include any place wherever the gospel is preached and accepted. The allusion to Acts 1:8 mainly reinforces the theme of witness which has been well established by the repetition of quotation Acts 1:8. An allusion to Acts 1:8 adds another dimension of meaning to the type of witnessing, namely, justice and peace. The allusion to the Areopagus speech introduces a new area of inculturation, mass media which needs to be evangelized like many of the emerging cultures.

## CHAPTER SIX: SYNTHESIS AND EVALUATION OF THE INTERTEXTUAL INQUIRY INTO THE USE OF ACTS IN *EiA*

This chapter is a synthesis and evaluation of the whole exercise of the intertextual inquiry into the use of Acts in *EiA*. It contains four parts: firstly, the synthesis of the fruits of the inquiry; secondly, the ideological underpinnings; thirdly, suggestions for possible improvement on the use of Acts in *EiA*; and finally, some criteria to be used in assessing the use of Scripture in a magisterial document such as *EiA*.

Genette's theory of intertextuality in this inquiry has proved to be a suitable frame of reference. It has helped identify and analyze quotations from and allusions to Acts in *EiA*. Whereas Genette includes plagiarism as another form of intertextuality, the present thesis has been restricted to quotations and allusions only since there is no trace of plagiarism of Acts in *EiA*. The Bible is used extensively. However, it is to be remembered that of all biblical texts found in *EiA*, Acts has the most quotations and allusions.

The philosophical hermeneutics of Ricoeur, whose focus is the capacity of world-disclosure yielded by the genotext and the phenotext, has provided a firm basis for the analysis and evaluation of the use of Acts in *EiA*. In addition, Ricoeur's hermeneutics has highlighted the surplus of meaning found in both texts. Iser's reader-response criticism, which focuses on the phenomenology of reading, has helped us to see how Acts has been received into *EiA* and ascertain the new dimensions of meaning it has acquired. In other words, the whole study demonstrates how *EiA* reads Acts. Literary tools have made us focus on the reading process of *EiA* which is the essential part of intertextual hermeneutics.



## 1. Synthesis of the inquiry

The present study has yielded interesting results in three ways: firstly, the appreciation of intertextuality as a literary approach to texts; secondly, a new self-understanding of the African Church, and finally, a new understanding of Acts.

### 1.1. Intertextuality

Intertextuality has brought about new insights into the reading of texts. Unlike the traditional studies of source-influence and comparative analyses, intertextuality is a two-way process involving the genotext (Acts) and the phenotext (*EiA*). Intertextuality supplants historical-critical approach which focuses on individual texts from the perspective of authorial intention. It involves the mutual illumination and transformation of Acts and *EiA*. Each text projects a world which interacts with the world of the other. Acts enters the world of *EiA* and gives it credibility and helps the African Church with a new self-understanding. At the same time, *EiA* enters the world of Acts and expands its contours. In other words, *EiA* reads the African Church into Acts, and imports the world of the African Church into Acts. In turn, Acts helps name and provide configuration and shape, bringing its world of understanding to the African experience. The interaction between Acts and *EiA* which constitutes the act of reading creates new meaning. In a sense, *EiA* brings the somewhat unshaped and complicated situation of the African Church's experience to Acts for clarification. Acts in turn, provides names, shapes and configurations to help to explicitate the African Church's experience. At the same time, the fundamental shapes and configurations of the Christian experience in Acts are affected, for they are stretched to be able to embrace unexpected experiences such as those of the

African Church. This creates new meaning, and meaning shapes the identity and the mission of the African Church. In summary, we can rightly say that the past (Acts) is actualized and re-contextualized in the present (*EiA*) to influence the future (how the African Church will act). Because of its surplus and fluidity of meaning, Acts is able to give new meaning to the present reality of the African Church. It opens up new ways of thinking and new modes of being Church in the current situation in Africa. Acts also helps the African Church to deepen its self-understanding and that of the world in which it lives, suffers and hopes.

Acts in *EiA* does not intend to provide a description of the present situation of the Church in Africa. It is rather the projection into the future of what the Church is called to become. Acts is actualized in *EiA* in order to influence how the African Church will act in the future. The Church in Africa has not yet attained the new identity as provided and named by Acts.<sup>1</sup>

## 1.2. New Self-Understanding of the African Church

The intertextual inquiry has revealed that, in some aspects, the African Church resembles the life of the early Church in that it is about the adventures of faith consisting of fidelity and failures. "As the great drama that it is, Acts tells the story of a people who

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<sup>1</sup> Intertextuality has also shed light on inculturation which is one of the main themes of *EiA*. Intertextuality and inculturation are analogous. Whereas intertextuality in this thesis involves mutual transformation and illumination between the genotext (Acts) and the phenotext (*EiA*) in the process of meaning, inculturation involves the mutual influence between faith and culture. Faith influences, guides and transforms culture, at the same time culture shapes and transforms the expression of faith. The gospel message and Christian tradition reached Africa in a westernized form. Analogically speaking, faith and Christian tradition might be called "genotext" while the African culture and religion might be called "phenotext." In the same way as intertextuality involves the interaction between two texts, so inculturation involves the mutual enrichment between faith and culture which results in a new identity for the African Church.

move from despair to a new beginning, from Pentecost power to the dailiness of life, from Torah fidelity to baptism in the name of the Lord, from ethnic boundaries of Judaism to the universal mission of the Church."<sup>2</sup> In the same way, *LiA* is a message of hope and resurrection to the people who are at the verge of discouragement and despair because of the actual situation of the continent. Acts provides a new paradigm for the Catholic Church in Africa to understand itself and redefine its mission by naming, shaping and configuring the African Church's experience.

Firstly, the African Church is both old and young: Christianity in North Africa dates back to the time of the apostles whereas in the Sub-Saharan Africa the Church is relatively young. The use of Acts 8:27-39 is a stark reminder of this fact. Secondly, it is the most rapidly growing Church with mass conversions to Christianity, just like the early Church. At the same time it is fragile and beset with many problems.

Thirdly, the Church in Africa is in transition from a mission church to becoming missionary. It reaches out beyond the confines of the continent. It is experiencing the struggles, failures and triumphs which are the modern ways of living out the Paschal mystery of the death and resurrection of Christ. The daunting challenges facing the African Church today, AIDS, war, and refugees, are modern guise of the experience of the passion and the death of Christ. The African Church is called to bear witness to the death and resurrection of Christ through evangelization, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace, and social communication, starting from Africa to the ends of the earth.

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<sup>2</sup> B. E. BOWE, "The Birth of the Church," *The Bible Today* 37 (1999) p. 288.

Fourthly, witness is a new identity given to the African Church and its evangelizing mission. It is a new paradigm for mission. The mandate of Christ to be his witness, originally addressed to the Eleven apostles (Acts 1:8), is now addressed directly to African Christians of today. They are being challenged to be Christ's witnesses in Africa and elsewhere through witness of life. Every baptized person is called to be an authentic witness before all people. According to *EiA*, there are many different ways African Catholics bear witness, namely, by pursuing the Church's evangelizing mission in Africa and elsewhere, being committed to justice and peace, making a preferential option for the poor, being the voice of the voiceless, and promoting human dignity and human rights. All these above-mentioned types of witness are evaluated in the light of Acts.

Fifthly, the African Church is hopeful. Acts shapes a more positive and hopeful identity for the African Church. "To Africa, which is menaced on all sides by outbreaks of hatred and violence, by conflicts and wars," Acts has provided a vision that encourages the African Church to look to the future with hope (*EiA* 57). "In a continent full of bad news," Acts brings the good news of inspiration and optimism (*EiA* 40).

Sixthly, an object of mission in the past, the African Church is now becoming a subject of mission. The church of a mission church which is becoming missionary, a young, vibrant Church which is becoming increasingly mature. The references to Acts in *EiA* underline the full responsibility of the African Church towards the churches of other continents. It is a Church which must become missionary, much like the Ethiopian minister as read in the quotation of Acts 8:27-39. The African Church is called to convert and learn how to be missionary by being open to all other peoples recognizing their positive cultural

as in the case of Peter and Cornelius in the quotation of Acts 10:34-35, 45-46, 47. It is a Church invited to inculturate the Gospel in order to tell the mighty deeds of God in its own language as in the quotation of Acts 2:11. However, it is faced with a serious pastoral concern of millions of Africans who are not yet evangelized, who need to hear the message of the gospel. In some places the initial proclamation of the Gospel is urgent and ought to be centred on Christ, the unchanging content of evangelization (Acts 4:12). The African Church needs credible leadership which bears witness to Christ through exemplary life (Acts 20:28). It is a Church which is called to live out the ideals of the early community, namely, apostolic teaching, fellowship, breaking of the bread and prayer (Acts 2:42). Finally, the African Catholic Church is at par and in communion with other churches and is expected to make its contribution through personnel and spiritual resources (Acts 2:44-45); and this means more responsibility. The overall image of the African Church is that of a family of God. Nevertheless, it is clear that the selected texts of Acts do not exhaust the complex reality of the African Church.

### 1.3. New Understanding of Acts

Quotations from and allusions to Acts found in *EiA* have acquired new significance and are seen in a new perspective when applied to the context of the Church in Africa. Acts, as a whole, is perceived mainly as a book of inculturated witness. In the first place, all the quotations of Acts are linked to the theme of witness which is introduced by Acts 1:8 in *EiA*. Witness is the key concept in *EiA* whose dimensions of meaning go far beyond that of the original meaning in Acts. *EiA* imports evangelization, inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace, and means of social communications into the

understanding of witness according to Acts. In turn, Acts has been forced to stretch its world to embrace these new aspects of witnessing for the African Church.

The quotation of Acts 1:8 is equated with evangelization as a way of witnessing to Christ. Although this is found in many places in Acts, for instance, in the missionary speeches of Peter and Paul and in the internal life of the early community (Acts 2:47), it is given new emphasis in *EIA* by linking evangelization to inculturation. What *EIA* means by inculturated evangelization comprises the whole of the Christian life and this is far different from the meaning in Acts. Nonetheless it is true that in Acts there are examples of the encounter between the gospel and different cultural and religious values. The spread of the Gospel starts from the Jews to the Greeks, and progresses finally to all the Gentiles. Each ethnic group has an encounter with the gospel. Acts becomes the book of inculturated evangelization par excellence.<sup>5</sup> It is in reading Acts that one is struck by the instances of inculturation.

Another issue is that of ongoing conversion and openness to mission raised by the quotations of Acts 8:27-39 and Acts 10:35-36, 44-45,47. Conversion involves both the evangelizer and the evangelized in an ongoing process of committing one's life to Christ, as we have seen in the use made by *EIA* of narratives of conversion par excellence in the cases of the Ethiopian, Peter and Cornelius.

The use of Acts has created a new meaning for the selected texts of Acts which was not originally intended by the author. Furthermore, the allusions to Acts have also

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<sup>5</sup> A. PEELMAN, *L'Inculturation: L'Eglise et les cultures*, Ottawa: Novalis, Université Saint Paul, 1989, p. 172, writes: "A vrai dire, Luc nous décrit l'histoire de l'inculturation de l'évangile aux origines du christianisme, en mettant en scène deux grands témoins du Christ: Pierre pour le monde juif (Jérusalem, Judée, Samarie) et Paul pour le monde païen (toutes les autres nations)."

extended themselves in order to be able to embrace the different experiences of the African Church. For example, allusions to Pentecost go far beyond the meaning of the Pentecost narrative in Acts. In Acts, Pentecost is described as an outpouring of the Holy Spirit which is expressed through the linguistic phenomenon of glossolalia. In *EiA*, Pentecost refers to a much extended reality that exists whenever the gospel is preached and accepted. Pentecost is also closely linked with inculturation; it occurs fully only when inculturation has happened. All the allusions to Acts revolve around the theme of inculturation.

## 2. Ideological Underpinnings of the Use of Acts in *EiA*

Intertextuality has unmasked the ideological underpinnings of *EiA*'s selection and use of quotations from and allusions to Acts. Ideology has to do with interest, power and control, all of which drive one to act or behave in a certain way; it has to do with one's belief system, conviction, and preference. Ideology is found in texts and in readers alike; texts and readers are interested parties. Texts are themselves ways of thinking and speaking ideologically. Readers too have vested interests in what they choose to read and how they appropriate or fail to appropriate what they have read into their own understanding. Intertextuality is not merely a neutral exercise; but it is ideologically biased by the interest, prejudices and preoccupations of the reader. "No one turns to a text unless one has a reason to do so— an experience or a question for which he hopes the text will provide illumination."<sup>4</sup> Writers do not, on the whole, just write texts for the fun of it; they

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<sup>4</sup> G. T. MONTAGUE, "Hermeneutics and the Teaching of Scripture," *The Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 41(1979) p. 13.

often have a point to make, a case to put, an argument to advance, an audience to persuade or convince.

The Pope wrote *EvA* with a clear intent and purpose to confirm African Catholics in their faith, "to urge them to persevere in the hope which the Risen Christ gives, overcoming every temptation to discouragement." (*EvA* 7). He makes use of Acts thus giving weight to his message. He brings to Acts his experience, interest, questions and preoccupations about the African Church. He makes his voice resound throughout the exhortation.

The Pope's use of Acts in *EvA* is one of the many possible ways of reading of Acts, and is therefore selective.<sup>5</sup> There were more references to Acts in the *Lineamenta* than in *EvA*, but he has chosen only the present passages from Acts for *EvA*. This reflects his own reading of Acts and such a reading is not only interesting and insightful, but is also interested.<sup>6</sup> The way he plays the reference game by expanding, abbreviating, and paraphrasing quotations from Acts reflects his ideological reading. Whereas he expands Acts 8:27-39, he abbreviates Acts 1:8. He paraphrases Acts 4:12. While there is only one verse quoted from Acts 2 in *EvA*, the Pope alludes several times to the Pentecost event. According to *EvA*, the Pope's use of Acts is coloured by concern for his own authority as the successor of Peter (*EvA* 11), and also by his vision of the African Church in light of the celebration of the Jubilee year 2000 (*EvA* 18).

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<sup>5</sup> It is interesting to note that whereas there are many references to Acts in *EvA*, there is only one quotation to Acts 1:8 (proposition 1) and one allusion to Pentecost (proposition 4) in the sixty-four propositions presented to the Pope by the synod fathers.

<sup>6</sup> BEAL, "Ideology and Intertextuality: Surplus of Meaning and Controlling Means of Production," *Reading Between Texts*, p. 36, writes, "Reading of the Bible is not only (and not always) interesting, but is interested, interested either in maintaining the legitimate boundaries of meaningful relationship between texts, or in transgressing them."



Besides the Bible, most other references in *EiA* are from the Pope's own writings which makes the document his very own.<sup>7</sup> His voice dominates the exhortation. He introduces himself in the first person singular. The document refers to him whenever it uses the first person pronoun singular, "I" (my), except for quotations of other texts. The use of the "I-form" in *EiA* is a consistent, pervasive and meaningful feature of the exhortation which reminds the reader that the document belongs to Pope John Paul II, as the successor of Peter exercising his petrine authority. *EiA* reflects what he thinks about the Church in Africa. The Pope has therefore stamped *EiA* "with the Apostolic authority of the Successor of Peter." (*EiA* 141)

The use of Acts in *EiA* reflects the Pope's own reading and therefore, must be evaluated against the background of his general use of Scripture in similar documents. Besides *EiA*, the Pope has promulgated a number of other exhortations in which he uses Scripture extensively. He refers liberally to the Bible preferably to the New Testament, especially John's gospel, e.g. *Ecclesia in America*, and *Ecclesia in Asia*. Since his goal is to make the Bible relevant for today, he has less regard for the historical context of the text. He uses Scripture in his documents in order to bring the word of God to the present. Moreover, he tends to select a biblical text and develop it into a theme such as in *EiA*

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<sup>7</sup> ELSENER, "The African Synod in the Light of the Post-Synodal Exhortation 'Ecclesia in Africa' of Pope John Paul II," p. 69, says: "Accordingly, the exhortation 'Ecclesia in Africa' (= *EiA*) has more the character of a pontifical pastoral letter addressed to the Church in Africa than of a document of the African Church itself. It means that the pastoral concerns of Pope John Paul II for the Church in Africa and quotations from his previous speeches and writings take up a large space whereas not even once is any of the many pastoral letters of national or regional Bishop's Conferences in Africa quoted." The Pope says: "I have emphasized once more in *my* Encyclical Letter *Ut Unum Sint*" (*EiA* 137) This is an example of where he refers specifically to one of his writings. (italics are mine). CHEZA, "Le Synode africain et l'exhortation Ecclesia in Africa," *Revue Théologique de Louvain*, p. 212, says: "Par contre, dans les questions de justice, Jean-Paul II se montre très ferme et va plus loin que les évêques."

(Acts 1:8) and *Ecclesia in Asia* (Jn 10:10), *Ecclesia in America* (Jn 4), *Ecclesia in Oceania* (John 14:6). There are therefore similarities between the use of Scripture in *EiA* and in other exhortations, but the main difference here is that the Pope prefers to use Acts more. Without such a presence of Acts, *EiA* would have been a different document.

The use of Acts in *EiA* reflects the Pope's appreciation of the African Church and its evangelizing mission. These selected passages from Acts in *EiA* help define both a new vision of the African Church and the relationship between the African Church and the Church of Rome.<sup>8</sup>

In the first place, *EiA* is about the identity of the African Church and its evangelizing mission. The references to Acts in *EiA* help name the African Church's identity and mission. Most of these references to Acts focus on the fundamental elements of the mission of the early Church and the essential traits of the first Christian community. The Church in Africa is to be understood in the light of these references. The African Church is challenged to overcome the dependency and share its personnel, spiritual and temporal resources with the universal Church. It used to be a receiving Church only but now it is called to share its resources. References to Acts challenge African Catholics to be missionaries not only in Africa but in other continents as well.

The second point to consider is the relationship between the African Church and the church of Rome. The choice of quotations and allusions to Acts is mostly from the first part of Acts, that is, chapters 1-12, which deals with the cycle of Peter underlining his role as the leader and spokesperson of the apostles. Peter is the head of the college of the

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<sup>8</sup> John Paul II visited forty-two African countries; and throughout his apostolic visits on the continent, the Pope insisted on the need for inculturation and for justice and peace for the continent.

apostles who represent the Church in Jerusalem. A similar usage is found in *EiA* whereby the name Peter is used ten times. Obviously, the focus is on Peter, and less on Paul whose name appears one hundred and thirty-seven times in Acts 13-28, but only twice in *EiA*.<sup>9</sup> The name of Peter in *EiA* evokes the role of Peter in the whole of Acts. According to the traditional teaching of the Church, it makes sense to choose texts that relate to the Pope as the successor of Peter. Such a use of Acts has helped to underscore the primacy of the chair of Peter vis-à-vis the local churches in Africa.<sup>10</sup> *EiA* makes this stern warning: "The local Churches of Africa [...] are entitled to preserve and to develop their own traditions, without in any way lessening the primacy of the Chair of Peter. The Chair presides over the whole assembly of charity and protects legitimate differences, while at the same time it sees that such differences do not hinder unity but rather contribute towards it" (*EiA* 11). This statement spells out an underpinning ideology behind the writing of *EiA*. In paragraph 48, the Pope urges Africans to look inside themselves, to look to the riches of their own traditions and to look to the faith for a true and balanced inculturation. At the same time, *EiA* sets a control measure, a standard. Nothing should by-pass or lessen the power of the successor of Peter. The primacy of the chair of Peter is the legitimate authority that has to be respected by all Catholics.

Intertextuality has revealed a special interest in Peter's role within the Church which is found in *EiA*. With so much concern to protect and enhance the power of the successor of Peter, *EiA* shows less interest in the second part of Acts (chapters 13-28)

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<sup>9</sup> GOURGUES, "L'Évangile aux païens. Actes des Apôtres 13-28", p. 6.

<sup>10</sup> MILLER, *The Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortations of John Paul II*, p. 38, says: "By no means does he [Pope] limit the meaning of the Bible to an exclusively historical one, but he opens up its meaning for today." One observes the Pope's great desire to actualize the passages from Acts for the African Church.

which is focused on the cycle of Paul. Hence the Pope emphasizes affective collegiality (a way of collaborating with the Roman Pontiff in his primatial function) rather than effective one which means collaboration in the governance of the Church.

Another example of the ideological reading in *LHA* has to do with liturgy, the privileged place for inculturation. "In practice, and without prejudice to the traditions proper to either the Latin or Eastern Church, 'inculturation of the liturgy, provided it does not change the essential elements, should be carried out so that the faithful can better understand and live liturgical celebrations.'" (*LHA* 64) The above sentence implies the maintenance of the Roman Latin rite without any major changes that would reflect African cultural expression. The question is whether the African Church is entitled to its own tradition in matters of liturgical celebrations. The Church in Africa aims at inculturation (incarnation) of the gospel, not adaptation which seems to be the encouragement of the magisterium. *LHA* describes inculturation as a "synthesis between culture and faith" (paragraph 78). This statement has great significance for the incarnation of the gospel in African cultures and has far-reaching consequences for both faith and culture if it is honestly and faithfully followed through. It envisions a mutual interaction between faith and culture without manipulating either of the two elements. It implies mutual influence between faith and culture: faith influencing, guiding and even purifying culture at the same time as culture enriches and transforms the faith. Could African cultures be allowed to influence, guide and transform some of the practices of faith? This would not only enrich the African Church but also the whole universal Church. Such an ideal image of the African Church would make it truly African and catholic since in African society culture

and religion are intertwined. There seems to be a fear of the new ways and new expressions of the faith on the part of the magisterium, even though the Pope advocates for a new evangelization: "new in its ardour, new in its method, and new in its mode of expression."<sup>11</sup> It is not very clear how much scope is given to the African Church to actually carry out serious inculturation without interference from Rome. The issue of the inculturated liturgy is still very controversial between the African Church and Rome. The magisterial documents, including *EiA*, urge the African Church to respect the integrity of both the Eastern and Western rites (*EiA* 64).<sup>12</sup>

The use of Acts in *EiA* is ambivalent with regard to inculturation. On one side the quotations of and allusions to Acts insist on the necessity of inculturation; on the other side there is a restricted use of Acts within the cycle of Peter as we have seen above. Allusions to the Pentecost event and to the *Areopagus* speech imply inculturation which is the theme that permeates the quotations of Acts in *EiA*. The quotations of Acts link together witness of life with inculturation. Just as witness of life involves various aspects

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<sup>11</sup> JOHN PAUL II. "The Message of the Synod," in *The African Synod*, Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, p. 13.

<sup>12</sup> HEIJKE. "The African Synod Bishop's Synod of 1994," *Exchange* 25 (1996) pp. 158-159, writes: "On 5 April 1994, immediately before the opening of the African Synod the Vatican Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments published an instruction: 'for a proper application of the conciliar Constitution on Liturgy.' The document was dated 25 January 1994. Did any one wait until the eve of the Synod in order to launch it as a warning?" [...] "The date of the publication can hardly have been a coincidence. Among those who drew this document there is no doubt whatsoever that Africa should be reckoned among the territory of the Roman (previously: Latin) rite as a matter of course. From a cultural point of view, however, Africa does not in any way belong to this section." COTE, *Re-Visioning Mission*, p. 40, writes: "A second cause of confusion surrounding the pastoral praxis of inculturation is the failure, in many instances, to seriously honor the important distinction between "adaptation" and "inculturation." The latest instruction issued jointly by the Congregation for the Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments entitled *The Roman Liturgy and Inculturation* is a case in question [...]. It does so moreover interchangeably with the expression "inculturation," almost as though the two were synonymous, thereby threatening to devalue and neutralize the notion of inculturation as a mere superficial accommodation."

of the life of the Church. so does inculturation: it is to be theological, sacramental, liturgical and canonical. In other words, "it is the entire Christian life that needs to be inculturated."<sup>13</sup>

### 3. Possible Expansion in the Use of Acts

The selected texts of Acts which are found in *EiA* are classical for the understanding of the evangelizing mission of the Church according to Acts and provide irrefutable intertextual links with *EiA*. The fact that most quotations and allusions are found in the first part of the book of Acts shows the attempt to link the first Christian community with the Church in Africa. The first Christian community is presented as a firm basis for the mission of the Church in Africa. The African Church is made to look up to the first Christian community as a model and inspiration. "For our understanding of the church today, it is of great importance that we grasp these events described in the first chapters of Acts as our own history, the first chapters of our pilgrimage; they must be definitive for us. The Spirit entered the church at Pentecost, starting a movement that continues in and through us, the church of today."<sup>14</sup> Since the above quotation applies to all Christians, it is quite appropriate for the African Church.

The influence or impact of the quotations of Acts in *EiA* would have been more powerful if they had been verbatim and complete. For example, in the quotation of Acts 1:8, the Holy Spirit, the main protagonist of mission, is always missing; in Acts 8:27-39

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<sup>13</sup> JOHN PAUL II. "The Message of the Synod." *The African Synod*, paragraph 18, says: "The field of inculturation is vast: the Synod, which has so strongly insisted on its spiritual dimension by the place it accords to witnessing, demands that none of its dimensions, theological, liturgical, catechetical, pastoral, juridical, political, anthropological, and communicational be lost sight of."

<sup>14</sup> D. L. GUDER, *Be My Witnesses: The Church's Mission, Message, and Messengers*, Grand Rapids: Michigan, W. B. Eerdmans, Publishing Company, 1985, pp. 39-40.

the roles of the Holy Spirit and Philip also meet with silence. Philip's role is so inspirational for the African Church whereas there are so many men and women "evangelizers" who do not belong to any formalized ministry but whose work is laudable. Acts 2:42 and 2:44-45 could have been put together to give the text its full impact on *EiA*. Acts 2:42-47 is a summary of the internal life of the early community which is proposed as a model for the African Church. The above quotation would also strengthen the image of the Church as family. Another text that could have given more weight to the message of *EiA* is Acts 4:12 (paragraph 74), but quoted in its context as Acts 4:8-12. The quotation of Acts 4:12 has been often used apologetically as a proof-text in many Church documents as though it were an absolute exclusivist statement. In its context in Acts, it is a central part of Peter's powerful speech of witness on the Resurrected Christ.

While the importance of linking the Church in Africa with the early Christian community of Acts 1-12 is commendable, might not the African Church learn a lot more from the Church in Antioch which is made up of many Hellenists (Acts 13:1-3)? This would have given a more balanced use of Acts in *EiA*.<sup>15</sup> "The Hellenists differed from the Hebrews at decisive points. In their case, a paradigm shift was much more clearly in evidence.[...]. Hellenists believed that the Easter experience had by-passed Torah and temple. It would be 'the Spirit' rather than the Law that would guide the believers' life."<sup>16</sup> Whereas the community in Jerusalem finds its identity in the past of Israel and its observances and institutions, the Antioch community is future-oriented.

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<sup>15</sup> The *Lineamenta* displays a much more balanced use of Acts than *EiA*. There is a profusion of references to Acts taken from the cycles of Peter and Paul.

<sup>16</sup> BOSCH, *Transforming Mission*, p. 43.

The Church of Antioch is considered the cradle of the Gentile Christianity and the beginning of a new missionary thrust outside of the Jewish milieu.<sup>17</sup> It is in Antioch that “the disciples were first called Christians” (Acts 11:26). The mission of Antioch is a turning point from a Jewish Christian Church to a Gentile Church since Christianity is no longer regarded as a Jewish sect. The Church has acquired a new identity which is neither Jewish nor Gentile but a combination of both. The Church of Antioch is on good terms with the Church in Jerusalem but it is autonomous and does not need to consult the Jerusalem Church, let alone get its permission in organizing itself. It provides an inspiration to the world-wide Church found on the five continents on how to be truly autonomous local Church and less dependent on Rome.<sup>18</sup> The Church in Antioch shows more missionary enthusiasm than the Church in Jerusalem since it is able to send out missionaries (Barnabas and Paul) at an early stage of its foundation (Acts 13:1-3). The use of this model set by the Church of Antioch would have been an impetus to the Church in Africa which is already sending out missionaries to other countries in Africa and abroad even though it does not have enough missionaries for itself. The use of Acts 13:1-3 would have re-inforced the insistence already made in *IAA* on the responsibility of the African Church to be missionary to the whole world. The outstanding figure of Paul with all his

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<sup>17</sup> M. PASINYA. “Antioche, berceau de l’église des gentils Act 11.19-26.” *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 1 (1977), p. 32, writes: “Par ailleurs, s’il existe un plan de salut de Dieu, destiné à tous les peuples, sa réalisation doit pouvoir transparaître dans le récit de fondation de la première Eglise des Gentils. C’est la raison qui nous a déterminé à porter notre choix sur Act 11.19-26.”

<sup>18</sup> B. BALEMBO. “L’Autonomie des jeunes églises et les Actes.” *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 11(1987) p. 5, states: “Le livre des Actes peut leur servir de modèle pour apprécier le degré de maturation de ces églises. Les Eglises d’Afrique ne seront mûres que dans la mesure où elles deviendront capables de gérer elles-mêmes leur patrimoine religieux, reçu de la foi en Jésus-Christ.”



adventurous expeditions is an example of a missionary to the Gentiles. Paul is the catalytic factor who actually carried out the Church's mission *ad gentes*.

Unlike the Jerusalem community, the type of leadership and the exercise of authority in the Church in Antioch is less hierarchical and more collaborative. It is culturally and ethnically mixed: it includes Jews, Greeks and Africans. This intercultural and international character of the Church in Antioch makes it an attractive model for the African Church. The leaders of the Church of Antioch are prophets and teachers (Acts 13:1) whose regular functions resemble that of the Twelve, namely, the proclamation of the word and teaching. Two of them, Paul and Barnabas, are even called apostles in Acts 14:4,14. They are authentic representatives of the local Church in dealing with serious pastoral issues. For example, the way the crisis in Acts 15:1-35 is handled has set a model for synodality and decision-making within the Church.<sup>19</sup> During the Jerusalem council debate, the leaders and delegates of the Church in Antioch, Paul and Barnabas, showed that they are at par and in communion with the leaders of the Church in Jerusalem.

Another suggestion for improving the message of *EiA* for the Church in Africa is in terms of themes which are common to Acts and *EiA*: firstly, conversion (μετάνοια); secondly, service (δίακονία). I feel there has not been enough emphasis on the call to conversion for the Church in Africa. Together with themes such as witness and

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<sup>19</sup> L. K. JOHNSON, *Scripture & Discernment: Decision Making in the Church*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996, p. 106, writes: "In the story of Cornelius's conversion and the Apostolic Council, we see the early church deciding its future in a fundamental way. It determines how it understands itself as God's people, and how it understands God who calls it as a people. The process is theological." MONSENGWO, "L'inculturation dans le livre des Actes . ." *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 13 (1989) p. 36, writes: "Le texte fondamental sur l'inculturation nous paraît être celui qui dirima la querelle entre judaisants et chrétiens issus de la Gentilité (Act 15:1-29). Dans leur teneur les principes émis par les Apôtres au Concile de Jérusalem sont très significatifs et riches d'enseignements."

proclamation, there is a need for conversion, change of heart on the part of the evangelizer and the evangelized as depicted by Acts 10. "Because evangelization has neglected inculturation in recent centuries, many Africans tend to live in two worlds: the world of Christianity which they 'put on', as it were from outside, and their inner African world where they are more at home and live their deeper inner life. Tensions can arise between these two 'selves' especially during times of crises, when traditional values often prevail over Christian ones."<sup>20</sup> As we saw in Cornelius' story as being a story about Peter's conversion as well, conversion is an integral part of evangelization in Acts which is developed through the succession of stories both individual and communal. We have seen only two examples of individual conversion in *EiA*, namely, the Ethiopian and Cornelius but Acts has many more such stories (for instance, Acts 9:3-19; 16: 13-15, 25-34). There are also many stories of mass conversion in Acts (Acts 2:41,47; 8:5-13). According to Acts these stories are not an end in themselves but are the beginning of the Christian journey, a new life in Christ. Conversion is an ongoing process of change for the better in the life of the individual Christian and the community of faith. It is necessary for the evangelizer as well as for the evangelized, as we have seen in Acts 10 with the conversion of Cornelius through the conversion of Peter. The Church in Africa can become truly African through inculturation but to become truly Christian it has to undergo continuous

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<sup>20</sup> McGARRY, *A Light on Our Path*, pp. 64-65. C. McGARRY, "The Implications of the Synod Discussion for the Church in Africa," *African Ecclesial Review* 37 (1995) p. 16, writes "People have become Catholics but the Gospel has not transformed their whole lives. In particular, it has not penetrated social and public life in a way that has changed society where Catholics have been numerous. We have many individual sincere Catholics, but sometimes the expression of Christianity has been limited to Church on Sundays. Many bishops referred to the shallowness of the Christian faith among their people. During the Synod the horrific events taking place in Rwanda, one of the most Catholic countries on the whole continent, underlined the truth of what the bishops were saying."

conversion. *EiA* could have referred to Acts 15:1-35 which provides an excellent example not only of the conversion of the gentiles to the Church but also of the conversion of the Church as well by taking seriously into account other people's cultures and customs and yet being fully faithful to the resurrected Christ.

Secondly, there is the theme of ministerial service, *διακονία*, a significant issue in Acts (Acts 6:1; 11:29; 12:25; 20:24)<sup>21</sup> Different members of the early Church had different titles depending on the ministerial function designated them. There were apostles (the Twelve, Paul and Barnabas), the seven "deacons," the elders, the doctors and prophets. Each group or individual performed a function assigned to him/her for the common good. These ministries were services to the community and the society at large. There was complementarity in diversity in the exercise of these ministries. The twelve Apostles were ministers of the word while the seven "deacons" were entrusted with the serving at tables. However, we see in Acts that Stephen and Philip have become ministers of the word just like the apostles (Acts 6:8-10; 8:5; 8:40). The notion of service is not much developed in *EiA*; the word "service" is used fourteen times in relation to the mission of the Church but not in relation to the individuals. As the Church expands, it develops new ministries in order to meet its needs. There are certain ministries which are relevant to the Church in Africa today, namely, those of healing, and catechesis.

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<sup>21</sup> J. ONAIYEKAN, "Ministries in the Acts of the Apostles," *Revue Africaine de Théologie* 13 (1988) p. 43, says: "The most appropriate vocabulary used in the Acts for expressing the concept of ministry is the word "diakonia," which appears eight times, and refers to a wide range of functions. At the lowest level, it can refer to mere distribution of food." DUMAIS, *Communauté et Mission*, p. 52, says: "Le vocabulaire de la diaconie se trouve partout dans l'oeuvre de Luc lorsqu'il est question des ministères: il n'est pas donc caractéristique du passage relatif aux Sept."

The ministry of healing, in particular, is of singular importance for the African Church which suffers from all kinds of ailments: wars, AIDS, poverty and political instability (*EiA* 40). *EiA* paints a sombre picture of the African continent which definitely needs healing. The biblical icon which is used to express the situation of the African continent is that of "the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho: he fell among robbers who stripped him, beat him and departed, leaving him half-dead (cf. Lk 10:30-37)" (*EiA* 41). Such an icon of the African continent is indeed evocative of the need for curative care.

Regarding the magnitude of human suffering on the continent, it is quite regrettable that healing or health is not one of the major themes of *EiA*. There are few mentions of healing and health-care. Given the deplorable situation of the continent, the synod should have paid more attention to healing which is quite an issue of interest in traditional religion and in Independent Churches. Sickness and suffering often drive Catholics to seek help from the ancestral traditional religion or from new syncretistic or fundamentalist sects since the Catholic Church is perceived as having no power. The Church has an urgent need to help its believers to deal better with suffering and sickness. In Acts healing is part of the apostolic ministries of Peter and Paul (Acts 3:1-12; 14:8-13). Healing miracles are signs that accompany the growth of the word. The understanding of healing ministry according to Acts could be quite inspirational for the African Church in its evangelizing mission and catechesis.

#### 4. Some Criteria on the Use of Scripture in an Ecclesiastical Document

The use of Acts in *LtA* raises questions regarding the use of Scripture in general in official documents of the Church. The above analysis and evaluation, however, have shown the value of this exercise. The magisterial documents are often informed by Holy Scripture, that is, the Word of God in human words. The nature of the interrelationship between the Word of God and human language often remains not only ambiguous but subject to divergent articulations. Amid this obscurity and divergence, the location of the meaning of biblical texts is consequently ambiguous and undecided. Hence the need to evaluate and interpret biblical texts according to scientific literary methods of interpretation which have a sound philosophical basis. For instance, Ricoeur's philosophical hermeneutics concerning distanciation and appropriation form a good anchorage for interpretation since it gives due respect to the semantic autonomy of texts and their potential for the surplus of meaning. The interpretation of magisterial documents (e.g. *LtA*) is a hermeneutical and theological imperative. It is the nature of open texts to be interpreted whether they are biblical or non-biblical. Open texts demand actualization and recontextualization. Magisterial documents need to be subjected to the same principles of hermeneutics as the Bible in order to assess their authority and their use of Scripture. Moreover, Christian theology is faith seeking understanding (*fides quaerens intellectum*). In order to make a fair assessment of the use of Scripture in a magisterial document certain procedures and criteria are to be followed as we have seen above.

From the present study the following criteria can be drawn. Firstly, there needs to be a clear distinction between the world of the reader and the world of the text since

hermeneutics is primarily about the capacity of world–disclosure yielded by texts. Readers bring their own world to the text they read, namely, their various experiences, presuppositions, interests, competence and prejudices. They read from their own perspective which is conditioned by their social location and culture. Therefore, the world of the reader is an integral part of the process of reading. Different worlds of the text need to be considered, namely, the world behind the text, the world within the text and, finally, the world in front of the text. This provides an integrated approach to texts to be interpreted. Secondly, Scripture must be respected for what it is: it is the word of God in human words. It is not an archaeological piece of the past; it is forever alive and active. It is a continuous revelation of God in human history. We have seen how the selected passages of Acts found in *EA* are indeed the living word of God which still inspires and motivates the Church in Africa today. Thirdly, there is the original meaning of the genotext in the world of the biblical text, and reading gives it another dimension of meaning which might be somewhat different from the original meaning. Reading revitalizes and reactivates texts which would have been dormant and lifeless. Reading brings forth new dimensions of meaning, but which are always in coherence with the meaning in the world of the text. Fourthly, Scriptures are contextualized: they are created within a certain life context. They need to be read contextually since context gives meaning: the context of the reader, but also the context of the text of Scripture. Such an interpretation serves to safeguard against an overly subjective and skewed understanding of the text. Fifthly, the reader must respect the limits and constraints put to him by the text and must refrain from reading into the text. Finally, the literary genre of a text affects its

meaning. There is an intimate relationship and interconnectedness between a literary genre and the content of a text, that is, between what is said (content) and how it is said (genre). Different kinds of genres are capable of different kinds of meaning and offer different information to a reader. For example, an exhortation is not to be read as though it were a narrative and vice versa. There are different dynamics governing the interpretation of a narrative or an exhortation. To say that a text is open does not mean that it will allow any interpretation whatever. The text dictates the limits of interpretative creativity.

Interpretation of Scripture in a magisterial document is not an arbitrary exercise; it has to follow clear guidelines.

## CONCLUSION

The whole study has been an inquiry into the intertextual relationship between Acts and *EiA*. The result of this inquiry is positive. Quotations from and allusions to Acts used in *EiA* provide an irrefutable evidence of the link between the two texts. All these references to Acts have played a significant role in *EiA* depending on where and how they are employed. They are cleverly embedded in *EiA*, advancing, and broadening the theme of the document and enhancing its rhetorical quality. I conclude with some comments on three salient points of this study, namely, intertextuality as a method, a new understanding of Acts and a new identity of the African Church.

Firstly, intertextuality as a theory goes far beyond the scope of this thesis. Vast and elusive, it cannot be limited to the analysis and evaluation of quotations and allusions only, as I have done in this thesis. Nonetheless, I use it here as a methodological tool with special emphasis on quotations and allusions as the most prominent manifestations of intertextuality which can be perceived by the reader on the surface of the phenotext. Intertextuality calls into question fundamental beliefs concerning textuality. Whereas textuality focuses on texts as independent entities, intertextuality focuses on their relationships and recognizes the reader as a text, too. Intertextuality is of great value in accounting for the complex relationships between the genotext and the phenotext, and between the phenotext and the reader, and it contributes to a new understanding of a text as a network, web or tapestry. Moreover, it assumes that the genotext and phenotext mutually illumine and transform each other, and that the genotext acquires new significance through the interaction with the phenotext. Intertextuality is an intrinsic



property of texts. It recognizes that no text is ever truly autonomous; no text is ever produced or read apart from other texts. A text always implicates other texts in its weave. Texts engender other texts. Moreover, intertextuality focuses on the reader, not the writer, because it is the reader who facilitates the dialogue between the genotext and the phenotext. The reader assigns meaning in the interaction between genotext and phenotext. Intertextuality highlights the importance of reference strategies to the genotext which are found in the phenotext.

Additionally, intertextuality provides a suitable framework for the study of relationships between diverse texts and encourages a critical reading of texts. It serves as a critical gateway to the study of ideology within texts. It unmask the strategies used within texts for a production of meaning. However, as with any method, it is limited and cannot exhaust the meaning of texts. Used without a sound philosophical basis, intertextuality becomes superficial. It might suffer from the extreme tendency of focusing only on the world before the texts or the role of the reader without giving due consideration to the world of the text. Intertextuality alone does not accomplish much; it needs to be coupled with other methods such as reader-response criticism.

Secondly, since intertextuality contributes to a new understanding of a text as a network, Acts has been given new meaning. The references to Acts found in *EIA* have become an integral part of the mosaic of texts that make up *EIA* and can now be interpreted in the light of *EIA*. Just as a context gives meaning to texts, so the change of context from Acts to *EIA* means the change of meaning as well. This study has revealed that Acts can be used with great flexibility to any situation. Acts stands out as an open

text, ready to be re-actualized and recontextualized not only in the context of the Church in Africa but in other contexts as well.

Thirdly, the interaction between Acts and *EiA* creates a new identity for the African Church. *EiA* takes into account the past history, present situation and future prospects for the African Catholic Church. The synod for Africa took place mindful of the fact that Christianity is no novelty in Africa. In the first centuries of the Church, there were established Churches in North Africa, but they disappeared completely (*EiA* 31). During the 15th and 16th centuries there were established Churches in West Africa, in Congo (Zaire), Angola and Mozambique but they also disappeared altogether (*EiA* 32). This sad decline in the history of the African Church is mentioned in paragraphs 31 and 32 of *EiA*. It was in light of this historical background that the synod discussed the evangelization of Africa in order to see what lessons could be learnt from the past so as not to repeat the errors of history. The African Church was also reminded of the serious challenges facing the continent by the genocide in Rwanda, one of Africa's most Christian (Catholic) countries. The synod for Africa took place in the wake of this genocide which hung as a dark cloud over the proceedings of the synod. As a result, the issue of being authentic witnesses, based on Acts 1:8, has been very much emphasized in *EiA*.

We have seen throughout the thesis that the intertextual inquiry of the interaction between Acts and *EiA* has borne fruit. Despite its limitations, intertextuality has given new insights into the reading of both Acts and *EiA*. It has forced us to read Acts into *EiA* and vice versa, thereby activating the potential of the two texts for a new meaning. Otherwise they would lie dormant. On the one hand, *EiA* presents a fresh reading of Acts. It has

illuminated and transformed the meaning of Acts and has activated it in a new way, and Acts has taken on new dimensions of meaning and new life in being appropriated by *EiA*. The reality of the Church in Africa as described in *EiA* has been read into the open-ended story of Acts and has been given a new significance. On the other hand, references to Acts have helped to name and configure the experiences of the African Church. Acts provides a suitable model of inspiration and hope for the African Church based on inculturated witness. The African Church is called to bear witness to the Risen Christ in the world today in both word and deed and to be truly African and Catholic at the same time.

Intertextuality has highlighted the various aspects of the interculturated witness which are found throughout *EiA*. *EiA* has extended the original biblical meaning of witness in Acts. In *EiA*, being witness means more than just preaching the death and resurrection of Christ. It also includes inculturation, interreligious dialogue, justice and peace, means of social communication, promotion of human dignity, human rights, and integral human development. Unlike in Acts where inculturation focuses on the power of the Gospel which transforms and integrates positive cultural values, in *EiA* the field of inculturation is multi-dimensional: theological, liturgical, catechetical, pastoral, juridical, political, anthropological and communal. In other words, central to the evangelizing mission of the African Church is making Christianity enter the blood and veins of Africans, to make it meet their needs and aspirations thereby creating a unified and harmonious identity, instead of dualism with one foot in Christianity and the other in an African world view. It is only when Christianity has found a home in the people's minds and hearts that it endures and produces men and women of faith who become truly witnesses.

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The bibliography below is quite selective since it covers mainly the significant works which are more relevant to the topic. It is classified in the following order:

A) Works on the document *Ecclesia in Africa* cover criticisms, analysis and the works done in the light of the post-synodal exhortation. B) Works on intertextuality embrace various writings on the different theories and uses of intertextuality. C) Works on hermeneutics consist of articles on philosophical and theological hermeneutics. D) Works on reader-response criticism are writings on the use of this approach. E) Works on the Acts of the Apostles are divided into four parts, namely, (1) commentaries and major works, (2) other works on Acts, (3) specific studies on Acts consist of the passages of Acts used in *Ecclesia in Africa*, (4) African Studies on Acts. F) Other related works consist of writings which have been consulted but do not specifically belong to any of the categories given above. G) Works on the use of Scripture in some ecclesiastic documents consist of some official Church documents whose use of Scripture has been analyzed and evaluated.

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