Founding Pauline Small Groups: 
An Examination of Material in the Pauline Letters 
Using a Small Group Founding Model 

by 

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Wycliffe College 
and the Biblical Department of the Toronto School of Theology 
in partial fulfilment of the requirements 
for the degree of Doctor of Theology 
awarded by Wycliffe College and the University of Toronto. 

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Murray Clare Baker

Doctor of Theology

Wycliffe College and University of Toronto

2013

Abstract

Between research on conversion/recruitment of the individual and the study of the expansion of the early church lies an area of research which has not been widely examined: group founding, where founding is seen as the actual coalescence of a group and not, for example, the development of group identity in an already established group. The following work probes the founding of Pauline groups by first developing a small group founding model using recent social psychology research and then analyzing the records of the founding of small groups in the Greco-Roman world. Then the group founding model is broadly applied to the founding of Pauline small groups as seen in the Pauline letters and utilized in three case studies to groups founded in Thessalonica, Corinth and Galatia.

The small group founding model utilizes a multi-perspectival approach which emphasizes context, connections and coalescence, with the forces of coalescence including behavioural, affective and cognitive elements. By maintaining a multi-dimensional view the model moves beyond previous approaches to Pauline group founding which have predominantly emphasized cognitive elements (e.g., attraction to Paul’s message) and current approaches to recruitment and dispersion which have predominantly emphasized socialization or network theory.
A comparative component, using associations and rhetorical and philosophical schools as analogues, examines group founding in the Greco-Roman world. This component is used not only to adjust the group founding model but also to provide data for comparison with the founding of Pauline groups.

Next the founding of Pauline groups is examined beginning with Paul's perspective on group founding. An general overview of the founding of Pauline small groups is then provided, noting such factors as: 1) the establishment of contacts; 2) the social context of Paul's activity; 3) the connections growing from ethnic/religious and occupational contacts; 4) the variety in coalescence, though focusing on cognitive coalescence and frame alignment. Finally, specific Pauline groups are considered as case studies with special attention given to the similarities and differences between the groups.
Acknowledgments

To successfully cross the finish line of such a project as this, involves the aid of many. I wish to highlight two of the many. Professor Terry Donaldson has been helpful and encouraging throughout. And my family: my children, David, Reuben, Sarah and Jonathan, who have grown from elementary school to university during the plodding progress of this adventure, and above all my wife, Denise (my thanks and more . . . “with the breath, smiles, tears, of all my life”).

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   - Galatians 4:12-20
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### Abbreviations

#### Periodical and Series Abbreviations

Abbreviations of periodicals, serials and classical authors follow the conventions of *The SBL Handbook of Style* (Patrick H. Alexander, et al. eds.; Peabody, Mass: Hendrickson, 1999). For convenience the following are provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Editions/Volume</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ABD</td>
<td>Anchor Bible Dictionary</td>
<td>Ed. by D. N. Freedman. 6 vols.</td>
<td>New York, 1992</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AJP</td>
<td>American Journal of Philology</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGAJU</td>
<td>Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>ANRW</td>
<td>Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt: Geschichte und Kultur Roms im Spiegel der neuer Forschung</td>
<td>Eds. H. Temporini and W. Haase. Berlin, 1972-</td>
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<tr>
<td>BBB</td>
<td>Bonner biblische Beiträge</td>
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<tr>
<td>BCH</td>
<td>Bulletin de correspondance hellénique</td>
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<tr>
<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca Ephemeridum Theologicarum Lovaniensium</td>
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<tr>
<td>BNTC</td>
<td>Black’s New Testament Commentaries</td>
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<tr>
<td>BR</td>
<td>Biblical Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>BTB</td>
<td>Biblical Theology Bulletin</td>
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<tr>
<td>BZ</td>
<td>Biblische Zeitschrift</td>
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<tr>
<td>BZNW</td>
<td>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die neutestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>CPSS</td>
<td>Classical Philology Supplement Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>CurBS</td>
<td>Currents in Research: Biblical Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>EQ</td>
<td>Evangelical Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>FRLANT</td>
<td>Forschungen zur Religion und Literatur des Alten und Neuen Testaments</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTKNT</td>
<td>Herders theologischer Kommentar zum Neuen Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>HTR</td>
<td>Harvard Theological Review</td>
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<tr>
<td>JAC</td>
<td>Jahrbuch für Antike und Christentum</td>
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<tr>
<td>JBL</td>
<td>Journal of Biblical Literature</td>
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<tr>
<td>JECS</td>
<td>Journal of Early Christian Studies</td>
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<td>JHS</td>
<td>Journal of Hellenic Studies</td>
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<td>JS</td>
<td>Journal of Jewish Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JNES</td>
<td>Journal of Near East Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JR</td>
<td>Journal of Religion</td>
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<td>JRH</td>
<td>Journal of Religious History</td>
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<tr>
<td>JRS</td>
<td>Journal of Roman Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSJ</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of Judaism in the Persian, Hellenistic, and Roman Periods</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNT</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament</td>
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<tr>
<td>JSNTSup</td>
<td>Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series</td>
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<tr>
<td>JTS</td>
<td>Journal of Theological Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>JTSA</td>
<td>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</td>
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**AE**
Année épigraphique

**AM**
Mitteilungen des deutschen archäologischen Instituts: Athenische Abteilung

**ASAtene**
Annuario della Scuola Archeologica di Atene e delle Missioni Italiane in Oriente

**BIFAO**
Bulletin de l’Institut français d’archéologie orientale

**BGU**

**CIG**

**CLJ**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Title</th>
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<th>Place of Publication</th>
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<tr>
<td>CIL</td>
<td>Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum</td>
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<tr>
<td>CIRB</td>
<td>Corpus Inscriptionum Regni Bosporani</td>
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<td>Clara Rhodos</td>
<td>Clara Rhodos. Studi e materiali pubblicati a cura dell’ Istituto storico-archeologico di Rodi. 10 vols.</td>
<td>Rhodes, 1928-1941</td>
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<td>CRAI</td>
<td>Comptes rendus de l’Académie des inscriptions et belles-lettres</td>
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<tr>
<td>FD</td>
<td>Fouilles de Delphes, vol. 3, Épigraphie</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paris, 1929-</td>
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<td>IAsMinLyk</td>
<td>Reisen im südwestlichen Kleinasi.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vienna, 1884-1889</td>
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<tr>
<td>IEph</td>
<td>Die Inschriften von Ephesos.</td>
<td>Bonn, 1979-</td>
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<td>IG II²</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Atticae Euclidis anno anteriores.</td>
<td>Ed. J. Kirchner.</td>
<td>4 vols. 1913-40</td>
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<td>Inscriptiones Graecae Aeginae, Pityonesi, Cercyphalai, Argolidis.</td>
<td>Ed. M. Fränkle.</td>
<td>1902</td>
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<td>IG IX/T².3</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Locridis occidentalis, part 1, no. 3.</td>
<td>Ed. G. Klaffenbach.</td>
<td>1968</td>
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<td>Inscriptiones Thessalaiæ, part 2.</td>
<td>Ed. O. Kern.</td>
<td>1908</td>
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<td>IG X/2.1</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Thessalonicae et viciniae, part 2, no. 2.</td>
<td>Ed. C. Edson.</td>
<td>1972</td>
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<td>IG XII/1</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Rhodi, Chalces, Carpathi cum Saro, Casi.</td>
<td>Ed. F. Hiller von Gaertringen.</td>
<td>1895</td>
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<td>Inscriptiones Symes, Teutlussae, Telî, Nisyri, Astypalaeae, Anaphes, Therae et Therasiae, Pholegandri, Meli, Cimoli.</td>
<td>Ed. F. Hiller von Gaertringen.</td>
<td>1898</td>
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<td>IJO</td>
<td>Inscriptiones Judaicae Orientis.</td>
<td>D. Noy et al.</td>
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<td>Reference</td>
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<td>SB</td>
<td>Sammelbuch griechischer Urkunden aus Aegypten. Ed. F. Preisigke et al. Vols. 1- . 1915-</td>
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<tr>
<td>SEG</td>
<td>Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZPE</td>
<td>Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik</td>
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1.1. Introduction

ϕύσει μὲν οὖν ἡ ὀρμή ἐν πᾶσιν ἐπὶ τὴν τοιούτην κοινωνίαν· ὁ δὲ πρῶτος συστήσας μεγίστων ἰγαθῶν αἵτιος.

Therefore by nature the impulse to this kind of partnership is present in all; but the one first bringing people together was responsible for many good things.

Aristotle, Politics 1.1253a 29-31

In his discussion of the nesting of human social groupings culminating in the *polis*, Aristotle’s observations resonate with the concerns of cross-cultural social psychology. He proposes that in the area of group development there are both intrinsic, universal elements (φύσει . . . ἐν πᾶσιν) and local, individual elements (ὁ . . . πρῶτος συστήσας). If this were actually so, the possibility would be opened up for a cross-cultural (or historical) social psychological examination of group development through the appropriate fitting of universals within their local context. The conviction that Aristotle’s intuitions are correct is the impulse for the following work.

The social phenomenon to be investigated is the founding of Pauline small groups. This in itself is a stripped down version of the question of how Pauline communities began – a question which easily overflows on the macro level to the question of the expansion of early Christianity or the nature of Christian identity and on the micro level to the question of individual conversion.

In *The First Urban Christians*, Wayne Meeks begins the chapter “The Formation of the *Ekklēsia*” with these statements:

“The Pauline congregations belong to the category studied extensively by modern sociologists, especially American sociologists, and called ‘small groups’ or simply ‘groups.’ . . . In this chapter we shall deal with matters that are more basic, I believe,
but also more elusive than the process of organization of the group. What makes a group a group? *How does it come together* and how does it hold together?”

Meeks does go on to compare the Pauline communities with Greco-Roman groups and to scour Paul’s letters for clues to how these early groups constructed social cohesion, how they held together. However, he only skirts the edge of the first half of his final question, the question of *how these groups came together*. This question has been similarly overlooked in numerous studies since then, when, for example, on one hand, studies have focused on the micro-sociological level of conversion and the socialization of converts into early Christian groups, or on the other hand when, focusing on the macro level, studies have examined the expansion of the early Christian movement. While both of these perspectives seek to examine the growth of the early Christian (or Pauline) movement, the focal point is on either the recruitment of the individual into an established group or the propagation of the movement. When the small group enters the equation it is taken as a given and the focus becomes maintaining boundaries, developing group cohesion, constructing group identity, group socialization or such like. The actual *founding* of Pauline small groups is rarely addressed from a social-scientific viewpoint.

While there has been scarce attention to small group founding in New Testament studies, in the past decade the flow of social psychological research on small groups has substantially increased and significant progress has been made, in particular, with the use of novel perspectives (e.g., small

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Two full issues in volume 35 (2004) of the journal *Small Group Research* were dedicated to this. Revised articles from these volumes were published as *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Marshall Scott Poole and Andrea B. Hollingshead, eds., *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, [Thousand Oak: Sage Publications, 2005]) (see also Susan A. Wheelan, ed., *The Handbook of Group Research and Practice* [Thousand Oak, California: Sage Publications, 2005] for a related look at the variety of perspectives on small groups). The origin of this interdisciplinary work is told in Poole et al.: “Since 1998, an interdisciplinary group of researchers has conducted an assessment and evaluation of the current state of knowledge of small groups in an attempt to link disparate areas and foster integrative positions in group theory and research” (Marshall Scott Poole, Andrea B. Hollingshead, Joseph E. McGrath, Richard L. Moreland, and John Rohrbaugh, “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Small Groups,” *Small Group Research* 35 [2004]: 3-16, here 5).

The founding of Pauline communities has been a neglected area of study in the examination of Paul’s letters. The purpose of this dissertation is to examine the Pauline letters for the way in which Pauline small groups were founded. This will be supported by making use of current social psychological theories on small group founding, by carrying out a comparison with the founding of other small groups in the Greco-Roman world, and by including case studies of three clusters of these groups. Succinctly put, this dissertation answers the question, “How were Pauline small groups founded?”

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2Two full issues in volume 35 (2004) of the journal *Small Group Research* were dedicated to this. Revised articles from these volumes were published as *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (Marshall Scott Poole and Andrea B. Hollingshead, eds., *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, [Thousand Oak: Sage Publications, 2005]) (see also Susan A. Wheelan, ed., *The Handbook of Group Research and Practice* [Thousand Oak, California: Sage Publications, 2005] for a related look at the variety of perspectives on small groups). The origin of this interdisciplinary work is told in Poole et al.: “Since 1998, an interdisciplinary group of researchers has conducted an assessment and evaluation of the current state of knowledge of small groups in an attempt to link disparate areas and foster integrative positions in group theory and research” (Marshall Scott Poole, Andrea B. Hollingshead, Joseph E. McGrath, Richard L. Moreland, and John Rohrbaugh, “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Small Groups,” *Small Group Research* 35 [2004]: 3-16, here 5).

3In the past little was done concerning group founding for several reasons: 1) the nature of the small group theories used: for example, social identity theory assumes the presence of a group; or 2) the nature of the research: much of the research deals with groups concocted by the researcher and so little could be learnt about the founding of natural groups. Recent research has included more natural groups and theories compatible with investigating group founding.

4Galatians is addressed των ἐκκλησιῶν τῆς Γαλατίας and so we may speak of clusters of groups. However, we will consider the actual founding of individual groups from which the later cluster of groups may have arisen.
What then will we find as we explore the relatively uncharted area of a rigorous study of Paul’s group founding? 1) We will find that we need to be sensitive to the social and cultural context. The collectivist culture in which Paul operated had a significant impact on the founding of his groups. As well, Paul’s Jewish background and the Jewish content of his message, combined with the evidence of the non-Jewish make-up of the groups he founded, gives evidence of a very specific type of individual who first joined in Paul’s groups. 2) We will see that social networks provide the skeleton on which Paul’s groups are built. These networks provided the framework in which strengthened ties coalesced to form small groups. The nature of the original social networks are of import for the resulting groups with, for example, a homogenous occupational network resulting in a significantly different group than the group resulting from a heterogeneous household network. 3) As we investigate the coalescence of the groups we will see that all three areas of coalescence – behavioural, affective and cognitive – contribute to group founding. Thus, the simple equation that accepting Paul’s message equals group founding is certainly deficient – though a cognitive element is an important component of coalescence. Similarly, an over-emphasis on socialization and personal attraction does not fit the cultural context or actual data for group founding – though, as well, an affective element is a component of coalescence. And, though often overlooked, the reality of behavioural coalescence should not be underestimated – some of the founding members of Paul’s groups would have found the primary element involved in their consolidation into a group to have emerged from actions taken together with others. It is attention to the interplay of all of these factors which will yield a clearer picture of how Pauline groups were founded and which will be a focus of this dissertation.
We will also see how elements that arise during the founding process persist and can explain the differences later seen between the groups. In particular, the level of homogeneity (as noted above) and the level of social conflict play a significant part in the differences between the groups.

1.1.2. Narrowing the Quest

For a preliminary orientation to the method to be used, the question, “How were Pauline small groups founded?” may be further developed:

1. How were Pauline small groups founded? Rather than looking at founding communities, churches, etc., the field of inquiry will be reduced to the entity small group.

2. How were Pauline small groups founded? The focus will be on the actual founding of small groups and not on topics such as boundary maintenance, group structure, intergroup relations, recruitment, and so on, all of which presume the presence of a group. Thus the emphasis will be on the process up until the point at which the group comes into existence. Although founding has not been extensively explored in small group theories, there is enough material to construct a model of small group founding which would aid in understanding Greco-Roman and Pauline small group founding.⁶

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⁶Holly Arrow, Joseph E. McGrath, and Jennifer L. Berdahl, Small Groups as Complex Systems: Formation, Coordination, Development, and Adaptation (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2000) provides a model for group founding which will be adapted.
3. How were Pauline small groups founded? This work will examine what can be extracted concerning founding from Paul’s letters. Although the material in Acts could be sifted through in order to provide further information on the founding of Pauline groups, I have narrowed the field for this work to only the undisputed Pauline letters for several reasons: 1) Paul's letters are closer chronologically to the founding of the groups than Acts; 2) Paul's letters are primary source material concerning the founding of the groups, while Acts, outside of (possibly) the "we" sections, is not and does not purport to be primary source material; 3) Paul's letters are often ignored or only cursorily used (and then often heavily theologized) when examining the starting of Pauline groups; and 4) Working with Paul's letters alone provides, if desired, a base for later comparison with the material in Acts.

Information from undisputed Pauline letters on the founding of other Pauline groups is minimal – for example, in Philippians we have mention of the initial time of the group (Phil 1:6) and possibly of some significant individuals in the group at the beginning (Phil 4:2-3) and that is all.

Over a century and a quarter ago Georg Heinrici voiced similar sentiments as he examined the beginning of the Pauline churches from the perspective of Greco-Roman associations ("Zur Geschichte der Anfänge paulinischer Gemeinden," ZWT 20 [1877]: 89-130).

L. J. Lietaert Peerbolte notes that “Paul’s letters unfortunately only reveal the fact that Paul stood at the basis of these congregations, whereas they are as good as silent on the question as to how he raised them” (Paul the Missionary [Leuven: Peeters, 2003], 204); his solution, however, to finding information in Paul’s letters on how new Christian communities were founded, is to first examine references to the proclamation of the gospel and then to move to Paul’s bolstering of the social identity in a group (through use of such concepts as ἐκκλησία and ἐν Χριστῷ). His examination reveals the assumption that if a number of individuals believe they will form a group: “The congregations he founded were the natural result of the fact that a group of people had come to believe in the gospel” (220, emphasis added). In making this assumption he abandons the need for any enquiry into the process of how the initial small group was founded or even whether there are tools to find out more about this.

Thus the method will involve a social-scientific (social psychological) and an analogical comparative component. In this way both a generalizing and a particularizing perspective will be brought to bear on the Pauline material.

1.2. The Founding of Pauline Communities: Related Studies

How Christian communities were founded by Paul has been approached from a variety of perspectives. Given a focus on small group founding these may be divided into two categories: historical-theological studies, which usually skip lightly over group founding or perhaps provide a descriptive rendition of the Acts accounts without reference to small group theory, and social-scientific studies.

1.2.1. Historical-Theological Studies

Here may be mentioned numerous studies which deal with the beginning of individual Pauline churches and Paul as a missionary. Although group founding may be mentioned, the process of group founding is rarely addressed. A sampling of more recent works illustrates this.

In his monograph on Paul as a church founder and organizer Friedrich Maier hints at concerns of later scholarship (the similarity of the early church with associations, group identity, and so on) and yet, even as he seeks to present a clear picture of community founding, his treatment reduces Paul’s church founding to an oversimplified process in which “mission preaching brings

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10Though as Hans-Josef Klauck notes, “Erstaunlicherweise werden in der Literatur die Anfänge christlicher Gemeindebildung in einer heidnischen Stadt, die doch alles andere als selbstverständlich sind, wenig behandelt” (Gemeinde zwischen Haus und Stadt: Kirche bei Paulus [Freiburg: Herder, 1992], 21).

11Friedrich Wilhelm Maier, Paulus als Kirchengründer und kirchlicher Organisator (Würzburg: Echter-Verlag, 1961).
repentance brings baptism brings community.” “An die Taufe schloß sich die eigentliche Gemeindegründung. Von Anfang an drang Paulus darauf, daß die Getauften sich als Brüder zu einem vereinsartigen Leben zusammenschlossen.”¹² This confuses recruitment and founding (unless there is a mass baptism) and, beyond a brief indication of Paul’s effort at pre-affiliation group identity building, he does not examine the way in which the group was brought together.

Franz Laub in his article on Paul as a church founder at Thessalonica takes a theological perspective, focusing on Paul as a preacher of the gospel to the individual. He, however, does not provide the bridge between the individual response to the gospel and the formation of a community. This is clearly seen when he explains the work of the church as a continuation of Paul’s work: “Die Funktionen, die Paulus so der Gesamtgemeinde überträgt, sind die Fortsetzung seines eigenen Bemühens bei der Gemeindegründung, als er jedem einzelnen zuredete und ihn ermutigte und beschwor, nun würdig der Berufung zu leben ([1 Thess] 2,12).”¹³

Abraham Malherbe draws conversion and church founding together in a similar manner. In Paul and the Thessalonians, he summarizes the chapter “Founding the Christian Community” in this way: “This chapter has focused on the setting in which Paul preached in Thessalonica and on the manner in which he brought individuals to conversion, thus founding the church. In the semiprivate setting of a workshop, plying his trade in the company of fellow manual laborers, he proclaimed the knowledge of God in a manner that revealed to his listeners their own condition and that turned them to God.”¹⁴ However, “turning to God” is not founding a group.

¹²Maier, Paulus als Kirchegründer, 24-25.
Eckhard Schnabel in *Early Christian Mission* provides an extensive discussion of Paul’s missionary work.\textsuperscript{15} Working with both the material in Acts and Paul’s letters he not only constructs a survey of Paul’s mission work but also provides a chapter on Paul’s missionary tactics and communication. Here he gives some indication of how Paul initiated contact in the cities he visited. Then in the midst of an extended discussion of the communication aspects of Paul’s ministry and of individual conversion, he includes a section on “Establishing Communities of Believers”\textsuperscript{16} in which he deals with Paul’s planting new churches and consolidating existing churches. His focus, however, is on group cohesion and the forming of group norms, both of which assume the presence of the group. The process of group founding, beyond contact and communication, is absent from Schnabel’s work.

There are other historical-theological studies. Ronald Hock, in dealing with the social context of Paul’s ministry, provides a detailed description of the contact component of Paul’s small group founding; he, however does not give the full picture of how Paul founded small groups.\textsuperscript{17} In a manner similar to that of Schnabel, other examinations of early Christian or Pauline mission, such as those of Wolfgang Reinbold,\textsuperscript{18} Rainer Riesner,\textsuperscript{19} and, as mentioned above, Lietaert Peerbolts,\textsuperscript{20} provide some mention of contact and a concentration on verbal communication, but pass over the process of group founding.

\textsuperscript{20} Lietaert Peerbolts, *Paul the Missionary*. 
1.2.2. Social-Scientific Studies

There are several social-scientific studies, including some using small group theory, which do touch on Paul as a group founder.

An early significant venture into the use of group theory in investigating Pauline churches is found in the publication of Alfred Schreiber’s 1975 dissertation, which is tellingly subtitled *Versuch einer gruppendynamischen Betrachtung der Entwicklung der Gemeinde von Korinth auf der Basis des ersten Korintherbriefes.* Building on Theodore Mills’ work on the sociology of groups, Schreiber applies various aspects of group theory to the apparent vagaries in the development of the Corinthian church. Mills’ perspective on the dynamics of small group development yields insight into not only the initial residence of Paul but also the subsequent leadership and divisions following his departure. Schreiber does provide a helpful chapter on the founding of the church in Corinth (“II. Die Entwicklung zur korinthischen Gemeinde als Gruppe”) in which he stresses the role of a network of relationships in group founding. He also provides a look at bringing newcomers into groups which would have been better placed later in the work given the problems that may arise from confusing recruitment (bringing new members into an established group) and bringing in initial members founding a group. Overall Schreiber’s presentation has a somewhat heavy handed concentration on intra-group dynamics (surely other factors were involved in the tensions revealed in 1 Corinthians) and lacks methodological sophistication in connecting modern group theory to the ancient text.

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A more psychologically sophisticated presentation is found in Walter Rebell’s *Gehorsam und Unabhängigkeit* which is markedly a social psychological study.²³ His object of study is Paul’s relationship with Jerusalem, his fellow workers and his established churches. To carry out his study Rebell employs a wide variety of approaches ranging through balance theory, psychological reactance theory, cognitive dissonance, double bind, reciprocity, communication theory and so on. However, with respect to group founding, given his focus on Paul’s leadership, authority and communication with his established churches, Rebell provides little help.

Promising more focus on group founding is Reinhold Reck’s *Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau*.²⁴ Reck’s focus is communication theory and he includes an overview of current communication research and of ancient structures of communication (language, travel and news dispersion). With these at hand he examines communication in Pauline communities, including the communication process involved in the origin of the community. He concentrates on verbal communication of the gospel but also includes a general overview of the origin of the relationship network within the new community. However, in this he concentrates on the “why” of group founding (his answer to which is that to assemble in groups is a logical consequence of the message and example of Jesus) and abandons the search for “how.” While group belief (the result of communication) is certainly a factor in building group cohesion, it is only a portion of the full picture.

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²⁴Reck, *Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau* is subtitled as a study of the origin, life and growth of Pauline communities.
Regina Börschel’s 2001 monograph\(^{25}\) is concerned with the building of a Christian identity in the church at Thessalonica. Part of this larger concern is the topic of the founding of the church, including “Paulus als Gemeindegründer” (Chapter 2). Given that she applies the sociology of knowledge to Paul’s activities at Thessalonica, she accents the development of the Christian community and socialization into it. She acknowledges, though, that initial converts stand in a unique position: “Die Konversion der Thessalonicher stellt insofern eine Besonderheit dar, als zumindest bei den ersten Konvertiten keine integration in eine face-to-face-group [i.e., a small group] am Ende des Konversionsprozesses stehen konnte.”\(^{26}\) Börschel recognizes the difference between the recruitment into and the founding of a small group; however, she does not pursue this in detail and so in practice assumes the presence of a small group.\(^{27}\)

Alan Le Grys’ presentation of the origin of Christian mission\(^{28}\) provides a chapter on the “Social Mechanics of Christian Mission” (Chapter 7) which gives an overview of group formation from initial penetration by early Christian missionaries to ongoing group maintenance. He uses insights from group theory (social categorization theory and social identity theory), and research on New Religious Movements and conversion. However, he rapidly deals with group founding, moving from the need for Paul to communicate the presence of the group (through Jewish or trade contacts) to the acknowledgment of the need for “[a] nucleus of like-minded enthusiasts who could form an embryo group. The crystallization of such a core group tends to occur informally as a small number


\(^{26}\)Börschel, *Die Konstruktion einer christlichen Identität*, 157.

\(^{27}\)Börschel also fails to recognize that other factors aside from a common symbolic world may be a component in bringing about the realization that, “We are a group” (e.g., loyalty within a household, affective attraction, or attraction to the founder).

of dedicated supporters meet for mutual encouragement and the exchange of information.”

After this minimal recognition of founding, Le Grys moves on to deal with other group processes (recruitment and group maintenance).

Bruce Malina, in “Early Christian Groups: Using Small Group Formation Theory to Explain Christian Organizations,” uses Tuckman’s oft-cited model of group development (forming-storming-norming-performing-[adjourning]) to outline the stages of small group life. Stage one is forming and Malina briefly outlines several elements seen in the founding of a small group. As with Le Grys, Malina’s presentation of group founding is brief and yet it is significant in that it applies small group research from social psychology to early Christian small groups.

While not dealing with a Pauline small group, Richard Ascough, in “Matthew and Community Development,” does add a comparative element to a small group development model.

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29Le Grys, Preaching to the Nations, 109.


He follows up on Malina’s article by applying the first three stages of Tuckman’s model to the Matthean community. In dealing with forming he examines the motivation for gathering together (negative experience in the synagogue) and the presentation of the founding of the group as a response to divine revelation. This latter element, Ascough points out, is also seen in the founding of Greco-Roman associations.34 Thus, he brings to the founding of early Christian groups not only an application of small group theory but also a comparative component.

Also noteworthy for its comparative element is James C. Hanges’ unpublished dissertation on Paul as a church founder.35 While he does provide a comparative examination of Greco-Roman documents dealing with city and cult foundation, he does not examine the small group element of founding.36 His focus is on the more frequently examined sociological aspects of Paul’s calling, authority and leadership.

In the following study we will provide a social-scientific approach to the founding of Pauline small groups. With that in mind a brief look at social-scientific criticism and its application across cultures and time is in order.

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34 Ascough briefly deals with the inscriptions SIG3 985, IG XI/4 1299 and IG II2 1366 (“Matthew and Community Formation,” 106-107).


1.3. Social-Scientific Criticism, Social Psychology and Culture, and Method

1.3.1. Social-Scientific Criticism

Simply put, social-scientific criticism of the New Testament involves the use of research, perspectives and models from the social sciences (primarily psychology, sociology and anthropology) to examine the social and cultural aspects of the New Testament text and its embedding context.

1.3.1.1. Acceptance in New Testament Studies

Although social historical studies had been part of biblical studies for over a century (one thinks of Heinrici, Deissmann or the Chicago school), it was only following the 1960's, mirroring a similar rise in social concerns in other historical fields, that social-scientific study took a firm, explicit hold in New Testament studies. Whether one takes the formation of the AAR/SBL working group on the social world of early Christianity or the early work of Gerd Theissen (both occurring in 1973) as an icon of the renewal of interest in social queries, one sees since then an explosion of social-scientific studies. This abundance of social-scientific research has heightened the realization that, as Mulholland bluntly states, “Without a comprehension of the sociological dynamics of that world, our understanding of the New Testament and the early Christian movement is terribly superficial at best and woefully mistaken at the worst.”

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1.3.1.2. Divisions

While having been accepted as a useful and necessary tool in New Testament studies, the application of social-scientific research has taken several approaches. These approaches may be roughly divided into two categories: sociological or social scientific approaches and social historical approaches. The divisions are illustrated in a debate between Bengt Holmberg and Edwin Judge. Judge, in critiquing Holmberg’s sociological study *Paul and Power*, does not rule out sociological interpretation, but he does heavily weight his method with the ascertaining of the social history of the New Testament world:

His [Holmberg’s] methodological stance does not bestride the ideas and facts in an equally secure manner. . . . It couples with New Testament studies a strong admixture of modern sociology, as though social theories can be safely transposed across the centuries without verification. The basic question remains unasked: What are the social facts of life characteristic of the world to which the New Testament belongs? Until the painstaking field work is better done, the importation of social models that have been defined in terms of other cultures is methodologically no improvement on the ‘idealistic fallacy’. We may fairly call it the ‘sociological fallacy’.

Holmberg takes to heart Judge’s criticism without giving up the use of sociological models: “A good knowledge of social history is indispensable for reaching secure conclusions . . . This is the undeniably strong point of Judge’s criticism against too-facile sociological interpretation of first-century Christian texts.” What we do see in the interaction between Holmberg and Judge is that

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41 These may also be labelled as two levels of social categories: description [social history approaches] and explanation [sociological approaches]. See J. Dorcas Gordon, *Sister or Wife?: 1 Corinthians 7 and Cultural Anthropology* (JSNTSup 149; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1997), 49.


45 Holmberg, “Methods of Historical Reconstruction,” 259.
both lie on a continuum (though not at the end points) between solely acquiring social historical data and blindly applying sociological or anthropological models.

There are also divisions within those using a more thoroughgoing sociological approach. Holmberg in the same article also examines the exchange between Philip Esler and David Horrell. While both apply social science theory – for Horrell, Gidden’s structuration theory, for Esler, anthropologically based models – they are deeply divided over the use of models and the implications for human agency. The debate is a reflection of a division found throughout the social sciences. Following James Spickard one may construct a list of contrasting labels which captures some aspects of this division: generalizing versus particularizing, ethnological versus ethnographical, nomothetic versus ideographic, etic versus emic. “The first term [in each pair] implies a dual wish: to generalize beyond particular cases and to uncover law-like regularities in human behavior. The second implies a wish to understand social actors in a particular locale from the inside.”

The most frequently used applications of the social sciences in New Testament study fall somewhere between the extremes. Methodologically a dual focus on both the general and the particular ensues, being seen, for example, in Elliott’s discussion of the logical process of abduction

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47Garrett provides a good introduction into how the debates within New Testament studies over sociological criticism are part of wider discussions within the social sciences (“Sociology of Early Christianity,” 91-93).


49Spickard, “Disciplinary Conflict,” 143. One may also see the contrast in the main philosophical debates of the social sciences: nominalism versus realism (the ontological debate), anti-positivism versus positivism (the epistemological debate), voluntarism versus determinism (the human nature debate), ideographic versus nomothetic theory (the methodological debate). See Gibson Burrell and Gareth Morgan, Sociological Paradigms and Organizational Analysis: Elements of the Sociology of Corporate Life (London: Heinemann, 1979), 1-37.
(oscillating between induction and deduction),\(^{50}\) or in Garrett’s endorsement of Geertz’s conjunction of emic and etic categories,\(^{51}\) or in Duling’s use of etic models and emic data in applying small group theory to the ancient Mediterranean.\(^{52}\)

1.3.1.3. Perspective of the Current Study

The current study will use a social psychological model. Social psychology lies at the intersection of psychology and sociology and may be seen as the pursuit of understanding the individual in the group, the group in the individual, and the group itself. These ways of viewing social psychology reflect its two major subfields: sociological social psychology, exploring social behavior in terms of relationships and associations; and psychological social psychology, exploring

\(^{50}\)Elliott, *What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?*, 47-48. Elliott also discusses emic and etic approaches (38-40). As well, he notes that all practitioners use models (generalizing) with the textual data (particularizing) (40-48).


social behavior in terms of the mental states and immediate social context. It is under the banner of social psychology that most small group research has been done and this research has followed two streams of enquiry, one using experimental groups and the other naturalistic groups (broadly reflecting the psychological-sociological divide).

The use of social psychology in this study will not involve a large scale homomorphic model but will examine a limited area of a small group model: group founding. Group affiliation (and so group founding) is a universal human behaviour and social psychological theories will be used to provide an analytical framework for this universal activity. However, given social psychology’s cross-cultural shortsightedness, special attention will need to be given to the question of the cross-cultural (or historical) applicability.

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54 Elliott (What Is Social-Scientific Criticism?, 40-48) provides a clear discussion of models building upon Thomas F. Carney (The Shape of the Past: Models and Antiquity, [Lawrence, Kans.: Coronado Press, 1975]). Isomorphic models are scaled models. Homomorphic models use abstract terminology and provide only selected significant elements of an object, which itself may be an abstraction such as a social system or, on a smaller scale, a small group. See also Gordon on models (Sister or Wife?, 51-52).

In 1973 Kenneth Gergen’s article “Social Psychology as History” crystallized concerns over the general applicability of social psychology. In it he expressed doubts concerning the universal (particularly diachronic) application of social psychology because of the inherent biases imposed by its methods and its self-reflective theories. While Gergen’s concern was primarily historical variance in social psychology, the crisis in social psychology, to which the article was a prominent contributor, also expanded to include cross-cultural variance. The cross-cultural variant of the “crisis” is found in Triandis’ “Social Psychology and Cultural Analysis,” in which he points out that the research concerns of social psychologists reflect the concerns and limited viewpoints of Western practitioners. Triandis provides the example of cognitive dissonance theory noting that much work had gone into consistency theories and yet the Western emphasis on dissonance reduction is not found universally. A more pointed example for the current work, in that it involves small group
theory, is found in the phenomenon of social loafing. Social loafing, the tendency for reduced individual effort when working in a group, was first investigated by Bibb Latane, Kipling Williams, and Stephen Harkins and then was soon accepted as a feature of group performance. However, a decade later, Steven Karau and Williams, in a meta-analysis of social loafing studies, noted task and cultural distinctions. Simple tasks resulted in social loafing in both American and Asian studies, while for complex tasks social loafing was observed in American studies and a reversal was seen in the Asian studies in which individuals worked harder. Further studies have found a similar reversal of social loafing among Chinese and Israeli groups and a distinction between work with peers and strangers. The social loafing phenomenon illustrates the need for recognition of cultural factors in effects which will not be evident in a mono-cultural study – that is, the type of study which has dominated social psychology research.

Social psychologists who recognize the short-comings of mainstream social psychology have taken several approaches to culture and psychology, which broadly follow the generalizing-particularizing division. Cross-cultural psychology examines thought and behaviour in different

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cultures with the aim to develop a more universal psychology. A variety of methods are used including those using quantitative and comparative analysis. Cultural psychology avoids direct contrasts and emphasizes understanding in context – an ethnographic approach. Culture is not treated as an independent variable but rather the individual and culture are seen as inseparable components of the same phenomenon. Indigenous psychology seeks to develop a psychology within a specific cultural context without abandoning the possibility of a universal psychology. Standard quantitative methods may be used, though the focus is not comparative. Thus indigenous psychology is akin to cultural psychology but may also serve as a base for cross-cultural psychology.

As noted above this study will assume that group founding is a universal activity and will adopt a comparative approach. This is akin to a cross-cultural psychological approach. One helpful concept from cross-cultural psychology which will be used is the cultural syndrome of collectivism-individualism.

1.3.2.2. Cultural Syndromes

In his seminal book, Culture’s Consequences, Geert Hofstede identified, through factor analysis of international surveys, four dimensions (to which a fifth was later added) of culture. Other researchers have expanded the number of dimensions. Most notably Triandis has employed his concept of “subjective culture” in order to provide a focused approach to the dimensions of

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66 Power distance, individualism, masculinity, uncertainty avoidance and, added later, long term orientation.
variation among cultures.\textsuperscript{68} Subjective culture is “shared beliefs, attitudes, norms, roles, and values found among speakers of a particular language who live during the same historical period in a specified geographic region.”\textsuperscript{69} These elements may become organized around a specific theme, which then may be labelled as a “cultural syndrome.” There are a number of these syndromes including: cultural complexity, tightness, vertical-horizontal cultures, active-passive cultures, instrumental-expressive, and individualism-collectivism. With respect to this last syndrome Triandis notes that for “individualism, the theme includes the idea that individuals are the units of analysis and are autonomous; in the case of collectivism, the theme incorporates the notion that groups are the units of analysis and individuals are tightly intertwined parts of these groups.”\textsuperscript{70} The individualism-collectivism dimension has been the most studied cultural syndrome and is the most salient for our study of group formation.

1.3.3. More on Method

How then can sociologically (for this study, social psychologically) relevant data be extracted from New Testament textual data? Two complementary perspectives on this question provide an answer. The first perspective builds analogically on form-critical analysis of texts. Taking up the procedures by which a text’s \textit{Sitz im Leben} may be construed, Gerd Theissen outlines a three-pronged process for sociological interpretation.\textsuperscript{71} The first element is the \textit{constructive} method, which


\textsuperscript{69}Triandis, \textit{Individualism and Collectivism}, 6.

\textsuperscript{70}Triandis, \textit{Individualism and Collectivism}, 6.

examine direct disclosures concerning social groups or individual experiences. These direct sociological elements of the text need to be analyzed with care given the problems of reliability, validity and, especially, representativeness of the texts. The second element is the *analytic* method, which draws sociological inferences from historical events, social norms or religious symbols. Here again cautions are noted: dealing with symbols is problematic, and, although hermeneutical conflict is to be expected, it should not be equated with reductionism. The third element is the *comparative* method which looks at characteristics shared with comparable movements, stressing primarily analogy, or which seeks differences with the surrounding culture, stressing primarily contrast.

A second perspective is illustrated in Duling’s article on small group research and New Testament study. He proposes that first an etic model be developed and then emic data be used to fill out the elements of the model. He provides the example of group leadership (and particularly group titles) in Matthew in which he uses constructive, analytic, and comparative methods to provide emic data to expand an etic model of small group leadership. Duling’s procedure follows a process similar to John Berry’s approach to cross-cultural psychology:

First was the notion of imposed etic . . . , which served as the starting point for comparative research, because it was obvious that all psychologists carry their own culturally based perspectives with them when studying other cultures; these perspectives were initial sources of bias (usually Euro-American), to be confronted and reduced as work progressed in the other culture(s). Second, was the emic exploration of psychological phenomena and their understanding in local cultural terms; this provided the important indigenous culturally based meanings that were most likely missed when making the initial imposed-etic approach to psychological phenomena in various cultures. Third was the derived-etic approach, which might

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72Hermeneutical conflict is seen in the results of a critical analysis diverging significantly from a text’s self-understanding. Theissen, “Sociological Interpretation of Religious Traditions,” 191.

73Duling, “Social-Scientific Small Group Research.” This is very reminiscent of Geertz’ approach as noted above.

possibly be discerned following extensive use of *emic* approaches in a number of cultures.\(^{75}\)

The dialectic of *imposed etic - emic - derived etic* amalgamated with the constructive, analytic and comparative methods will provide the basic framework for the following study. An initial outline of group founding will be proposed and, given the significance of and extensive research into collectivism, will be adjusted for collectivism (*imposed etic*). This will be followed by a examination of Greco-Roman small group founding using constructive and analytic methods (*emic*). A revised outline of group founding will be produced\(^{76}\) (*derived etic\(^{77}\)*) and this will be employed in examining group founding in Paul’s letters.

Having dealt with the social-scientific element, some further discussion of the comparative element is necessary.


\(^{76}\) Thus Judge’s trenchant observation will have been dealt with: “I should have thought there was no hope of securing historically valid conclusions from sociological exercises except by first thoroughly testing the models themselves for historical validity” (“The Social Identity of the First Christians,” 212).

\(^{77}\) The *derived etic*, however, will not fully match Berry’s description of “extensive use of *emic* approaches in a number of cultures” (“On the Unity of the Field of Culture and Psychology,” 9; emphasis added) given the limited data set available.
1.4. The Comparative Element

The comparative element of the dissertation will serve several purposes. As outlined above, as the emic element, it will assist in producing a more culturally sensitive small group founding model, that is, a derived-etic. Additionally, the data will be used for comparison. The purpose of this comparison is not to find genealogical connections (as is often seen in older religionsgeschichtliche investigations) nor to propose total disconnection (as seen in many traditional Christian approaches with a theological agenda). “Instead, analogy serves to highlight similarities and differences among a limited set of options. Through such a comparative method of emphasizing similarities and differences, the scholar gains a perspective on the material which leads to a more nuanced analysis of the material . . .”

Various Greco-Roman small groups have been used for analogical comparison with the early church: associations, synagogues, households, and philosophical schools. Associations and

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78 These fit the dual uses of comparative data – comparison and model reformulation – which L. Michael White and John T. Fitzgerald outline: “But upon reflection and with the collection of each new data set, one will begin to evaluate and analyze not only the data but also the previous theories themselves. Indeed, one of the problems in recent efforts to apply sociological or anthropological theories to the study of the ancient world, and early Christianity in particular, has been inflexibility in the use of theories and models. The process of comparison in the light of new data sets must also cause us to reformulate – or as Smith puts it, to deconstruct and reconstruct – the theories themselves.” L. Michael White and John T. Fitzgerald, “Quod est Comparandum: The Problem of Parallels,” in Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe (eds. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht and L. Michael White; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 13-39, here 36-37.

79 Richard S. Ascough, What Are They Saying About the Formation of the Pauline Churches? (New York: Paulist Press, 1998), 96-97. On this methodological approach see Jonathan Z. Smith, Drudgery Divine: On the Comparison of Early Christianities and the Religions of Late Antiquity (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990) and the discussions of Smith’s approach with respect to associations in Richard S. Ascough, Paul’s Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians (WUNT 2.161; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) and Philip A. Harland, Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003). Smith’s focus is on the comparison of religions but he does note concerning the comparison of social and literary settings, “we are further along in comparative studies in these areas than when we turn to the older topic of religious setting. For in matters other than religion, difference rather than identity governs the comparisons; the language of “uniqueness” is increasingly eschewed; and analogy rather than genealogy is the goal” (Drudgery Divine, 118).

philosophical and rhetorical schools will serve as the primary groups for comparison. The founding of these groups will be analyzed by examining the epigraphical and documentary sources for information concerning the founding of small groups. As well, an important element of the small group founding model is the social and physical ecology in which the group will be embedded and


The founding of households is significantly different from the founding of Pauline small groups and there is little information for the founding of diaspora synagogues. For the mysteries the focus would be on the founding of the cult association and so they may be included under associations.

Previous studies which include information on the founding of associations include Erich Ziebarth, Das Griechische Vereinswesen (Stuttgart: S. Hirzel Verlag, 1896); Franz Poland, Geschichte des Griechischen Vereinswesen (Leipzig: Teubner, 1909); Jean-Pierre Waltzing, Étude historique sur les corporations professionnelles chez les Romains: Depuis les origines jusqu’à la chute de l’Empire d’Occident (4 vols.; Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1895-1900); James C. Hanges, “Paul, Founder of Churches”, Carola Zimmermann, Handwerkvereine im griechischen Osten des Imperium Romanum (Mainz: Verlag des Römisch-Germanischen Zentralmuseums, 2002); and Richard S. Ascough, Paul’s Macedonian Associations.

so sociocultural factors, such as benefaction, loyalty and hospitality, will need to be examined in as far as they impact group founding.

1.5. Summary

Taking a cross-cultural social psychological perspective – that is, recognizing that at some level comparison between times and cultures is legitimate – this study will examine the founding of Paul’s small groups as described in his letters. This will involve several steps. First, chapter two will lay out a small group founding model. This will include an overview of small group theories and their perspectives on group founding. A detailed model of the small group founding process will be provided which will also be tuned to the cultural syndrome of collectivism. Next, chapter three will provide an insider’s view of founding small groups in the Roman and Hellenistic world which results from a global reading of Greco-Roman texts. This reading will be used to modify the small group founding model and for analogical comparison. Third, chapter four and five will apply the derived model to the founding of Pauline groups using data from Paul’s letters and will include three case studies. Finally, a conclusion will not only bring together the results of the dissertation but also point to future directions for research building on these results.
Chapter 2
Small Group Formation

2.1. Introduction

“People live in groups, work in groups, and play in groups. The study of groups has been a focus across the social and behavioral sciences for over 50 years in psychology, sociology, management, communication, education, social work, political science, public policy, urban planning, and information science.”

We will begin by using the extensive material on groups to provide an initial overview of small groups and then we will develop a model of small group founding. The primary goal of this chapter is to develop a model of small group founding – a model which will be an extension of current models tailored to our area of interest.

2.1.1. What is a Small Group?

In spite of the extensive study of groups and their ubiquity, questions still remain concerning basic concepts, including, what is a group? Addressing this question will aid us in narrowing our field of inquiry and so help to bring a focus to our examination of group founding.

Given the variety of academic disciplines which have investigated groups it is not surprising that a wide assortment of definitions of a group have been proffered. Each discipline brings with it an emphasis on a certain manifestation of a human collective, ranging from long term “natural”

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groupings to concocted experimental groups, and a focus on a different perspective, extending from examining individuals within groups to analyzing strictly group processes or groups within groups. Thus some group definitions emphasize individual behaviour, perception, purpose or meaning, while others move beyond the individual to see the group as an entity in itself, a living system. Not surprisingly no single definition is completely satisfactory.

Since we will be investigating small groups, a definition which narrows the field of inquiry to groups which are primary, small and interdependent, will suffice. Primary groups are groups in which members develop an attachment to one another (or the group) and which are viewed as significant for the member. The size of a group has obvious consequences for communication and specialization and so one may conceive of smaller groups being different than larger groups. While the division between a small group and a (large) group may not be clear, generally small groups may

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5Levine and Moreland go so far as to not define a group in their quest to be inclusive: “In any event, attempts to distinguish groups from nongroups (or to sort groups into categories using elaborate typologies) are probably misguided. Any definition must exclude some sets of people (who belong to ‘nongroups’) from further analysis, despite the potential relevance of their behavior for understanding groups. With so much left to learn about small groups, it seems wiser to be inclusive rather than exclusive, seeking evidence about social behavior wherever it can be found” (John M. Levine and Richard L. Moreland, “Small Groups,” in *The Handbook of Social Psychology* [4th ed.; vol. 2; eds. Daniel T. Gilbert, Susan T. Fiske and Gardner Lindzey; Boston: McGraw-Hill, 1998], 415-469, here 416). This is an appropriate approach for their purposes. However, given that we are dealing with definite types of small groups, it will be to our advantage to narrow the playing field.

6The concept and label were developed by Charles H. Cooley in *Social Organization: A Study of the Larger Mind* (1909; repr., New York: Schocken Books, 1962) (the equivalent social psychological label is dynamic or intimacy groups). In contrast to primary groups are secondary groups which are indirect, impersonal and formal. At the macrosociological level these would correspond to Tönnies’ *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft* societies (Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society* [trans. Charles P. Loomis; East Lansing: The Michigan State University Press, 1957]).
be placed at between three and thirty members.\textsuperscript{7} These first two elements are found in Bales’ classic (and oft-quoted\textsuperscript{8}) individual-centred definition:

\begin{quote}
A small group is defined as any number of persons engaged in interaction with each other in a single face-to-face meeting or series of meetings, in which each member receives some impression or perception of each other member distinct enough so that he can, either at the time or in later questioning, give some reaction to each of the others as an individual person, even though it may be only to recall that the other person was present.\textsuperscript{9}
\end{quote}

In addition, the element of interdependence may also be introduced: in contrast to an uncoordinated collection of individuals, an \textit{interdependent} group coordinates behaviour and resources, pursues common purposes and shares collective outcomes.\textsuperscript{10}

For our purposes then a small group may be defined as a collection of a limited number of individuals, who conceive of themselves as a group, relate face-to-face in coordinated patterned behaviour, pursue common purposes and share collective outcomes.

\textsuperscript{7}Hare et al. put it at two to thirty (A. Paul Hare, Herbert H. Blumberg, Martin F. Davies and Valerie M. Kent, \textit{Small Group Research: A Handbook} [Norwood, NJ: Ablex Publishing, 1994], 1). Given the unique features of the dyad (e.g., loss of one member dissolves the group, there can be no sub-groups or factions, etc.) it seems best to limit membership to three or more individuals. For an overview of the uniqueness of the dyad see: Richard L. Moreland, Michael A. Hogg and Sarah C. Hains, “Back to the Future: Social Psychological Research on Groups,” \textit{Journal of Experimental Social Psychology} 30 (1994): 527-555, here 531; Levine and Moreland “Small Groups,” 417.


\textsuperscript{10}See Hare et al., \textit{Small Group Research}, 1.
2.2. Group Founding and Small Group Theories

2.2.1. Small Group Perspectives and Group Formation

Some insight into group formation/founding may be gained through inquiry within the variety of interdisciplinary perspectives on small groups. No single theoretical perspective can encompass the thousands of pieces of scholarly work on groups. However, a basic classification of interdisciplinary theoretical perspectives can help to link together similar viewpoints.¹¹ Within the last decade a team of group researchers undertook “an assessment and evaluation of the current state of knowledge on small groups in an attempt to link disparate areas and foster integrative positions in groups theory and research.”¹² This led to identifying a variety of theoretical perspectives for comprehensive review.¹³ The results of their work were presented in 2004 in two issues of the journal *Small Group Research* and in 2005 in the book *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives.*¹⁴ In these publications each of the nine perspectives was described and the relevant research findings summarized. Of significance for our purposes is that the researchers dealing with each of the perspectives were asked to address several key questions, one of which was, “How does the group change over time (e.g., formation, development, dissolution)?”¹⁵ Thus each account

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¹¹For an earlier examples of classifying theoretical orientations see Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander, “Theoretical Orientations,” in *Group Dynamics: Research and Theory* (3rd ed.; eds. Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander; New York: Harper and Row, 1969), 26-31; and Mills, *Sociology of Small Groups*, 25-40. Duling refines Mills’ categorization (“Social-Scientific Small Group Research,” 184-186) and identifies nine different theoretical perspectives in group research: 1) the psychoanalytical perspective; 2) the organismic (evolutionary) perspective; 3) the symbolic interaction perspective; 4) the problem-solving perspective; 5) the equilibrium perspective; 6) the structural-functional perspective; 7) the conflict perspective; 8) the cybernetic-growth perspective; 9) the systems perspective.

¹²Poole et al., “Interdisciplinary Perspectives,” 5.

¹³Nine general theoretical perspectives on small groups were identified: the psychodynamic, functional, temporal, conflict-power-status, symbolic-interpretive, social identity, social-evolutionary, social network, and feminist perspectives.


¹⁵Marshall Scott Poole, Andrea B. Hollingshead, Joseph E. McGrath, Richard L. Moreland and John Rohrbaugh, “Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Small Groups” in *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (eds.
addresses formation of groups and in a final chapter the findings are summarized. Not surprisingly, the perspectives vary in the extent to which they deal with group formation; however, particularly helpful elements can be gleaned from a number of the perspectives.\textsuperscript{16}

The \textit{social identity perspective} looks at groups from the vantage point of member’s identification with groups and the social identity constructed on the basis of this identification. This social identity drives certain dynamics between in-groups and out-groups. The initial focus of social identity theory was intergroup relations. More recently it has proven useful in understanding intragroup dynamics.\textsuperscript{17} Although social identity theory specifically deals with \textit{existing} groups, work has been done on the formation of groups. For the social identity perspective, groups are formed by the process of categorization, which may be made by external people or by group members themselves. Categorizations can be relatively enduring and self-selected (e.g., occupation), or circumstantial (e.g., individuals at a bus stop).

The \textit{symbolic-interpretive}\textsuperscript{18} perspective views groups as socially constructed and focuses on theories involving interaction, language, symbols, and interpretative schemes. In group formation symbols are shared and interpreted in order to produce a “common consciousness” that serves to unite separate individuals into a sense of being a group. This perspective highlights a valuable

\textsuperscript{16}This is not to conflate the perspectives – they do come with contrasting assumptions – but rather to recognize that each perspective may be able to highlight elements which are underdeveloped in other perspectives. Yet it must also be recognized that the perspectives do have a significant amount of overlap. Berdahl and Henry call for an integration of the various perspectives and provide a foundational framework (groups as dynamic, open and complex) (Jennifer L. Berdahl and Kelly Bouas Henry, “Contemporary Issues in Group Research: The Need for Integrative Theory,” in \textit{The Handbook of Group Research and Practice} [ed. Susan A. Wheelan; Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005], 19-37).


\textsuperscript{18}Also categorized as the \textit{communication perspective}, though that is a broader view. See Lawrence R. Frey and Sunwolf, “The Communication Perspective on Group Life,” in \textit{The Handbook of Group Research and Practice} (ed. Susan A. Wheelan; Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2005), 159-186.
On the methodological issue see Joseph E. McGrath and Franziska Tschan, *Temporal Matters in Social insight: the importance of the use and interpretation of symbols. Specific forms of communication create symbolic processes and products such as group identity and group boundaries. Any model of group formation will need to give attention to communication.

The *social network perspective* addresses groups as interlinked structures within larger networks. Of central importance is the tie of individuals to individuals or groups to groups or individuals to groups. There is a broad range of ties – communication ties, formal ties, affective ties, material ties, proximity ties, cognitive ties – and networks are typically multiplex, sharing more than one tie. With respect to group formation, the importance of social networks for the coalescence of individuals into a group has been widely noted.

The *change or temporal perspective* focuses on the interaction of time and groups. For group formation this perspective argues, much like the network perspective, that during the formation stage, a group emerges from a network of social connections, and that groups are also influenced by the physical and social ecology in which they are embedded during the formation stage. Of special interest within this perspective are those theories which deal with group development.

### 2.2.2. Group Development Theories and Group Formation

The question of how small groups form and develop assumes a dynamic temporal element. In spite of the fact that the study of temporal processes in groups has been impeded by the very nature of the standard research paradigm in social psychology, which strongly favours laboratory experiments on concocted groups with minimal expectation of a past or a future, a large body of literature has taken shape dealing with group development.\(^\text{19}\) The numerous theories have been

\(^{19}\)On the methodological issue see Joseph E. McGrath and Franziska Tschan, *Temporal Matters in Social
conveniently consolidated into five categories by Holly Arrow, Kelly Bouas Henry, Marshall Scott Poole, Susan Wheelan and Richard Moreland.\textsuperscript{20} Although the distinguishing emphases for most of these models result in minimal theorizing on the formation of the group itself, the same models do provide helpful reminders of processes which need to be integrated into any discussion on group formation:

Robust equilibrium models emphasize the ongoing stability of selected group structures and so subordinate discussion of beginnings to the long term stability of the group. Yet they do point out the initial phase of self-organization in which a variety of possible norms and roles are explored. This initial unsettled period is an important element in group formation.

Repeating cycle models examine cycles within the lifetime of the group and so ignore formation. However, Stephen Worchel, Dawna Coutant-Sassic and Michele Grossman,\textsuperscript{21} building on research into the revolutionary process, recognize the need to address the issue of group formation in addition to group development and so incorporate into their model three stages which may be considered as the formation (or transformation) of a group: Stage 1: a period of discontent in which individuals feel they do not belong to a group; Stage 2: a precipitating event which galvanizes activity through clarifying areas of discontent, identifying like-minded individuals, and giving hope


for change; Stage 3: a stage which begins a new group through group identification, which includes identifying boundaries, norms and leadership. Here the issues of transformation of a group and the effect of dissatisfaction with other groups are significant for a discussion of group formation.

*Punctuated equilibrium models* emphasize ongoing stability, though it is punctuated with short periods of radical change. As with robust equilibrium models the group is seen as quickly establishing a stable structure initially.

*Adaptive response models* highlight the environmental context in group development and so for group formation an important element is the environmental opportunities and constraints.

The most developed models with respect to group formation are the *sequential stage models* which identify a fixed sequence of different stages through which a group passes – the most widely known model being Tuckman’s forming-storming-norming-performing-adjourning presentation.\(^{22}\) The initial stage has been variously categorized as forming,\(^{23}\) orientation,\(^{24}\) pregroup formation,\(^ {25}\) or pre-affiliation\(^{26}\) and deals with issues of inclusion and dependency.\(^ {27}\) Even within this initial stage several sub-stages have been identified\(^{28}\) including a pregrou stage of activities before the initial

\(^{22}\) Tuckman, “Developmental Sequence in Small Groups”; Tuckman and Jensen, “Stages in Small Group Development Revisited.” Tuckman abstracted from a number of previous studies four (then later a fifth) stages of development: *forming,* in which issues of testing and dependence are dealt with; *storming,* in which intergroup conflict evolved; *norming,* in which group cohesion developed; and *performing,* in which cooperation and insight predominated. A last stage, *adjourning,* in which the group dissolves, was later added.


\(^{27}\) See in particular Wheelan, *Group Processes,* 14-15, 47-65.

group contact and a pre-affiliation stage at the beginning of the group process in which members are introduced and interact with one another.

A coarse sifting of these group development theories provides a preliminary overview of group forming: through a pre-affiliation stage and initial contact and within the context of environmental opportunities and constraints, groups coalesce during a period dominated for the individual by the issues of dependence and inclusion and for the emerging group by the issues of boundaries and structure.

2.3. Small Group Founding Process

How then is a group formed? One small group model from the temporal perspective approach, found in Arrow et al., provides a very helpful overview of group formation forces and group prehistory – this will be used as a foundation for our presentation of group founding.29 As well, an awareness of the factors gleaned from the broader perspectives on groups will be kept in view such as categorization, communication and social networks.

The creation of a new group involves the assembly of the various components into a whole and is shaped by a combination of forces. These forces may be portrayed by a 2×2 factorial in which the dimensions are whether formation is due to forces external or internal to the group and whether formation is planned or emergent. A resulting group formation space delineates four categories of

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groups: A **concocted group** is formed according to some plan by the actions of people who will not be part of the group. Work groups within larger organizations or crews assembled for a task are concocted groups. A **founded group** is deliberately assembled by people who will themselves be part of the group and who link up with others. A small business start-up or a church plant is a founded group. A **self-organized group** arises more or less spontaneously from among people who are interacting with one another. Friendship groups fall within this category. A **circumstantial group** arises from the press of circumstances which induce interdependent action by people. People trapped together by a flood or stranded in a broken down bus form a circumstantial group. The categories are not mutually exclusive (except at the extremes) and group formation usually involves a mixture of these types.

The typology is useful for highlighting the primary issues involved in group formation. For groups arising when external forces predominate, a primary issue for the new members will be on how to conform to external demands. When internal forces are at play, issues of coordination and integration of their own intentions and expectations arise for members. Thus for the latter category of groups the member-group interchange will develop first, while for the former the group-context interchange will come to the fore at the beginning.
For planned groups issues related to assembly will dominate at the beginning – choosing, accessing, recruiting and combining components. For emergent groups, other forces that tend to bring people together will impact initial composition.

With these forces in mind we will look at the parameters for our investigation of group formation, then the pre-affiliation stage of group forming and finally the beginning of the group.

2.3.1. Parameters

Our pursuit is narrower than what normally would be involved in a general theory of group formation. The formation of a short term group such as a work crew or a circumstantial group such as a ship-wrecked crew or an externally concocted group such as a conscripted army unit do not fit with the small groups similar to those which Paul founded. As well, rather than the full formation process up to the stabilization of the group we will look at the process until the group beginning.

**Group Category.** While it is clear that the groups which Paul was involved with were not circumstantial nor concocted and that they might well have been founded by Paul, the possibility needs to be left open at this point that, although Paul may have had input into a coalescing group, the group might have arisen spontaneously among those who accepted Paul’s message. Thus using the above group categorization we will concentrate on *self-organized* and *founded groups*. Here internal forces will predominate.\(^{30}\)

\(^{30}\)These internal forces, whether through one individual (the founder of a founded group) or the individuals of the group (the founding individuals of a self-organized group), may be thought to bring about the *founding* of the group. Thus *group founding* and *group formation* will be used interchangeably without necessarily implying the formation of a *founded group* (as contrasted with a self-organized group).

We will also need to recognize that some portion of a new founded or self-organized group may be externally concocted (e.g., the slaves within a household involved in the formation of a new group).
Stage of Group Formation. Moreland in his article “The Formation of Small Groups” recognizes the difficulty of distinguishing a group from a non-group and so focuses on a dimension he labels “groupness.” He then approaches group formation as a continuous phenomenon along this dimension rather than as a discontinuous phenomenon involving the transformation of a non-group into a group. Thus, in general, one may not speak of a special event occurring which signals the formation of a group. Moreland summarizes his approach in this way: “Perhaps we should analyze the ‘forming’ of small groups rather than their formation and thereby acknowledge that group formation is a process that unfolds over time. What is that process? I believe that it involves ‘social integration,’ or a strengthening of the bonds among persons.” While we will follow Moreland’s suggestion that social integration is made up of a variety of factors we will modify his approach. First, in agreement with Moreland, we acknowledge that group formation is a process and that it is often impossible to identify the beginning point of a new group with precision. However, for the types of small groups we will be examining we are often able to give a point after which we can say a group is present. Thus we can identify the end of the founding process as the beginning of the small group, using, for our purposes, the definition of Arrow et al.: “a group begins when people who think of themselves as belonging to a new group interact with other new members and begin coordinating their actions for some collective purpose. Thus group formation is both a cognitive and a behavioral process. All groups form in some context, in which people and resources

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31 The term is later modified from ‘groupness’ to ‘groupiness’ (Levine and Moreland, “Small Groups,” 416).

32 Hogg rightly notes, however, that Moreland and his work on socialization in groups has not necessarily removed the transition point (i.e., a special event) from the formation of small groups (Michael A. Hogg, The Social Psychology of Group Cohesiveness: From Attraction to Social Identity [New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1992], 80). Hogg’s own approach moves beyond interpersonal bonds to attraction to the group itself.

are available, to serve one or more purposes via collective action.” The process, then, which we will be looking at, can be subdivided into two stages: pre-affiliation, and group beginning.

Second, Moreland uses the terminology of social integration, which he defines as the strengthening of bonds among persons, for the process underlying group formation. While the terminology is appropriate, we will modify it to group coalescence to emphasize several factors: first, we are truncating our examination of the process of forming ‘groupiness’ to just the portion of the process when the group is coming into being, that is, coalescing; second, social integration may be too easily associated with group cohesion based primarily on interpersonal attraction or taken solely as a network phenomenon – coalescence allows for the consideration of a broader range of coalescing forces. Thus we will define group coalescence as the process in which individuals are drawn together to form a group including the establishment and strengthening of ties between people and between individuals and a (potential) group.

In summary, we will limit ourselves to the examination of group coalescence during the pre-affiliation and beginning of self-organized and founded groups.

### 2.3.2. Pre-affiliation

We may examine the pre-affiliation stage under the headings: Context, Connection and Coalescence. These headings are not mutually exclusive and yet various areas of inquiry may be catalogued under the heading to which they primarily belong.

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34 Arrow et al., Small Groups as Complex Systems, 67. Moreland’s approach is actually not that different. He takes the beginning of the group as when environmental, behavioural, affective, and cognitive integration have taken place. The approach of Arrow et al., however, allows more precision.

35 Moreland does allow for other forces. However, the term itself may be simply reduced to personal attraction (see Hogg, Group Cohesiveness, on the association of cohesion with interpersonal attraction) or, with the emphasis on strengthening ties, it may be viewed only from a network perspective.
2.3.2.1. Pre-affiliation: Context

**Psychological Context of Coalescence.** Although the question of why individuals come together in groups would encompass all of the group founding process, one may approach it as a very general question: Why do humans rely on groups? What motivates people to join a group? Often the answer to these questions is given in terms of need satisfaction. Many needs which group formation can satisfy have been identified and associated theories have been developed to explain these needs and to extend them into other areas of group research. These needs may be organized into four main categories. First, groups satisfy **survival** needs by increasing protection, food provision and nurture. Second, groups satisfy **psychological** needs by providing intimate relations...
and allowing for exertion of influence and power. Third, groups satisfy informational needs by enabling social comparison and with that the evaluation of opinions, abilities, and outcomes and by providing clarification of the social and physical environment. Finally, groups satisfy identity needs by giving a social basis for beliefs about oneself. Although groups have the potential of satisfying a number of member needs, they do not always fulfill their potential. Yet the benefits of group membership are sufficient to ensure the participation in groups by most people.

In addition to the theories put forth by group researchers, research has been undertaken identifying the types of groups perceived by lay individuals and the functions which these groups are perceived to fill. Brian Lickel et al. studied how people perceived the groups they encountered in real life and the distinctions they made between groups. People distinguish between social categories (e.g., ethnic categories) and dynamic groups (i.e., interacting small groups) and classify dynamic groups as intimacy or task groups. Further Amy Johnson et al. have investigated perceptions of


40Associated with this category would be views such as Baumeister and Leary’s perspective on the need to belong which they have posited as “one of the most far reaching and integrative constructs currently available to understand human nature” and which they have linked to various cognitive processes, emotional patterns and behavioural responses (Roy F. Baumeister and Mark R. Leary, “The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachment as a Fundamental Human Motivation,” Psychological Bulletin 117 [1995]: 497-529, here 522). Balancing the need to belong is optimal distinctiveness theory which posits the basic human desire to be seen as a unique and special individual and which demonstrates how this impacts group processes (Marilynn B. Brewer, “The Social Self: On Being the Same and Different at the Same Time,” Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin 17 [1991]: 475-482).

41Associated with this category would be social comparison theory which suggests that humans feel strong pressure to have accurate information about their environment and abilities. This can be found through comparison with others (Leon Festinger, “A Theory of Social Comparison Processes,” Human Relations 7 [1954]: 117-140).


43Although intimacy and task groups have similar profiles for size and degree of interaction, they vary in terms in durability and permeability. As well, different social rules may be found in each: generosity and communal sharing found in intimacy groups and equity principles found in task groups (Brian Lickel, David L. Hamilton, Grazyna Wieczorkowska, Amy Lewis, Steven J. Sherman and A. Neville Uhles, “Varieties of Groups and the Perception of Group
these group types and the needs they are seen to fulfill.\textsuperscript{44} Intimacy groups are seen to fulful affiliation needs. Task groups are seen to fulful achievement needs. Interestingly, although social categories are seen to fulful identity needs, the functional relationship between social categories and identity needs is not clearly demonstrated – in fact, all three classes of groups are seen to serve identity needs equally well. Thus from a lay perspective groups are seen to fulfill affiliation, achievement and identity needs.

At the group level (i.e., from the perspective of the group rather than the individual), the fulfilling of member needs is not the only function which a group fulfills. Joseph McGrath proposes a triad of group functions: 1) the completion of group projects; 2) the fulfillment of member needs; and 3) arising subsequent to group formation, the maintenance of the group as an intact system.\textsuperscript{45} The relative priority given to the first two functions will influence the way in which the group forms.

\textit{Embedding Context of Coalescence.}\textsuperscript{46} All groups form in and are embedded in cultural, social and physical environments. Within these environments various factors provide opportunities

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Bales held that groups swing between satisfying socio-emotional needs and task requirements (Robert F. Bales, “The Equilibrium Problem in Small Groups,” in Working Papers in the Theory of Action [eds. Talcott Parsons, Robert F. Bales and Edward Shils; Glencoe, IL: Free Press, 1953], 111-161). This was also proposed for the individual level and related to group formation by Sherif and Sherif. In their summary of group research they suggest that group formation results from the common motives of individuals with these motives being either socio-emotional needs (affective orientation) or goals (task orientation) (Muzafer Sherif and Carolyn W. Sherif, \textit{Groups in Harmony and Tension} [New York: Harper, 1953]).

\textsuperscript{46}Moreland (“The Formation of Small Groups”) labels the tendency of these elements of the physical or social context to draw people into groups as \textit{environmental integration} and includes this as a variety of social integration (“Environmental integration occurs when the physical, social, and cultural environments provide resources [e.g., people, money, time] that are necessary for a group to form” [Levine and Moreland “Small Groups,” 446]). Arrow et al. (\textit{Small Groups as Complex Systems}) separate these off as the embedding context of the group and so view social integration as occurring within this environment which provides opportunities and incentives for people to connect.
(that is, the resources necessary for a group to form) or constraints to the coalescence of individuals into a group. These may be broken down into physical, social and cultural factors.

**Physical Environment.** Much research has focused on the physical environment and its effects on group formation. One noticeable factor is propinquity – people are more likely to form connections with people they encounter frequently.\(^{47}\) This may occur through living arrangement, work or gathering at special sites. Even factors such as temperature, noise level, and crowding will affect the pleasantness of a setting and with that the likelihood of forming bonds between people.

**Social Environment.** There are a number of social factors that may impact coalescence. Many studies have examined social networks, that is, the pattern of relationships among a person’s acquaintances.\(^{48}\) These social networks may be based on kinship, work, religious, ethnic or other ties. Moreland proposes two ways in which social networks impact group formation.\(^{49}\) First, they generate opportunities for contact among people. Short indirect ties within a social network or the overlap of the social networks of two individuals is suggestive of future direct contact.\(^{50}\) Second,


\(^{49}\)“The Formation of Small Groups,” 83.


Research has also shown that people sharing membership in multiple groups are more likely to form new groups (Russell L. Curtis and Louis A. Zurcher, "Stable Resources of Protest Movements: The Multi-Organizational Field," *Social Forces* 52 [1973]: 53-61).
social networks develop, communicate and enforce norms about interaction – the more social support for a group to form the more likely it will.

Stability or threat within the social environment also impact group coalescence. If existing groups are meeting the needs of their members, people will not be motivated to form or join new groups. Involvement in existing groups may also limit available time. As well, a stable embedding context leads to a higher saturation of groups in the sociocultural ecology. The higher the saturation of groups the less likely new groups will form, since the additional effort needed to form a new group will overshadow the effort needed to find or change an existing group to meet a need. In a more rapidly changing environment people may be loosened from their existing groups and desire to start new groups. However, threat within the environment may create both opportunity and constraint on new groups: threat may increase attachment to a current group as boundaries become more rigid; and yet for some the increased need for social support and protection may lead to initiating new groups.

Worchel, along with others,\textsuperscript{51} has developed a model of group formation and development which notes that for many groups their formation involves a period of discontent in which individuals feel their current groups are not meeting their needs and so they experience a sense of not belonging. At this point a precipitating event serves to initiate the coalescence of a new group. This distinct event, whether seemingly minor or dramatic, symbolizes the issues of dissatisfaction and, through the reactions of individuals, makes clear the elements that will be important for group

identity. At this point powerful individuals may be a factor in focusing these reactions and so in the formation of the group. In general, it is recognized that powerful individuals often provide the impetus for new groups by using the opportunity afforded by social instability to recruit potential members.

_Cultural Environment._ The cultural environment plays an important role in the formation of small groups. For example, it has been noted that urbanization leads to a greater number and variety of small groups, though the reasons for this are unclear. More significant is the collectivist-individualist dimension. One would suspect that, given the interdependence of individuals within a collectivist culture, they would be more likely to form and less likely to dissolve groups than those within individualist cultures. This, however, does not appear to be the case and the reason may be found in the nature of commitment to groups. Within individualist cultures group membership often involves weak commitment and so individuals may belong to many groups, though those groups may be unimportant to them. In collectivist cultures individuals may belong to few groups but those groups are important to them. The nature of commitment to a group would be expected to have a significant impact on the formation of groups.

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52Worchel et al. note that even for established groups “skillful leaders often ‘manufacture’ crises for the purpose of focusing member’s attention on group identity issues” (“A Developmental Approach to Group Dynamics,” 192). That is, they bring the cycle of group development back to the ‘precipitating event’ and ‘group identification’ stages.

53See for example, Arrow et al., _Small Groups as Complex Systems_, 69.

54See §2.4 for a fuller examination.


2.3.2.2. Pre-affiliation: Connection

The inclusion of the establishment and strengthening of ties between people in the definition of group coalescence reveals an indebtedness to network thinking. Explicitly acknowledging this, we may label one element of pre-affiliation as connection. Of course, in the section above on context (social environment), we have already acknowledged social networks as an antecedent to group formation and we will examine elements of the strengthening of networks as a component of group coalescence. Here we merely wish to state the importance of social networks57 and to reiterate several findings from network research concerning group formation.

*Networks and Group Formation: Strengthening Previous Ties and Initiating New Ties.*

For self-organized groups, a prior social network may be assumed in group formation, and so the emergence of the group may be portrayed as the cohering of connections between people into a new collective structure.58 If one were to take a step back from this into an idealized initial state in which a set of unconnected people are brought into contact, groups would emerge through initial interaction involving dyadic connections and then, as links proliferate and dyads chain together, groups would begin to crystallize. However, the idealized state is not what is encountered in the formation of many real world groups – (potential) group members often have already overlapping social networks or are in the same social network. Kay Deaux and Daniela Martin, in their integration of network theory and social identity theory approaches to identity processes, propose that ascribed group

57 We could also ask why people create and maintain network ties. The answers would in many ways match the discussion above on why people form groups – for example Katz et al. outline a number of perspectives ranging through theories of self interest, social exchange or dependency, mutual or collective interest, transactive memory, cognitive consistency and homophily (Nancy Katz, David Lazer, Holly Arrow, and Noshir Contractor, “The Network Perspective on Small Groups: Theory and Research,” in *Theories of Small Groups: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* [eds. Marshall Scott Poole and Andrea B. Hollingshead; Thousand Oak: Sage Publications, 2005], 277-312, here 283-287).

membership (e.g., ethnic or religious background, kinship) dictates the primary interpersonal networks in which an individual participates. Dependent upon support provided by a network, alternative social networks may be entered that are consistent with an achieved or chosen identity (e.g., occupation). It is from the strengthening of ties within these networks that groups tend to emerge.

Similar results would be expected for founded groups. Martin Ruef, Howard Aldrich and Nancy Carter, in examining the founding process of entrepreneurial teams, found that homophily with respect to both achieved and ascribed characteristics (in particular, gender, ethnicity and occupation) and also network constraints based on strong ties had the most pronounced effects on initial group composition – even at the loss of advantages that could be gained through a more diverse and functional composition. That is, trusted others were preferred as initial group members over strangers who could have brought fresh ideas and perspectives. What of group founders working in a new unconnected social context? One would expect initiation of ties with those in shared (achieved or ascribed) social categories and then the strengthening of ties in these new interpersonal networks before the emergence of a new group.

2.3.2.3. Pre-affiliation: Coalescence

Defining group coalescence as “the process in which individuals are drawn together to form a group including the establishment and strengthening of ties between people and between individuals and a (potential) group” leaves a broad field open for investigation. Several approaches

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have been taken in explaining how this coalescence (or formation) may occur. For those with an individual-centred perspective the group is no more or less than the individuals involved and so group formation occurs simply through the attraction of individuals to one another. This model has been labelled as the social cohesion model.\(^{61}\) A serious challenge to this conception has been given by social identity theorists. In studies on the minimal conditions for group formation\(^{62}\) they have shown that the most minimal of shared identities (even ones based on trivial or explicitly random criteria) suffice to generate in-group attachment and out-group discrimination. Recognition that both factors are dimensions of group definition and cohesion in real world groups led Deborah Prentice, Dale Miller and Jenifer Lightdale to define two types of groups: common-bond groups which are primarily based on attachments among group members (member attachment) and common-identity groups which are primarily based on attachment to the group identity (group attachment).\(^{63}\) They then went on to demonstrate the meaningfulness of the distinction between these two types of groups and to further suggest that although social categorization (and resultant group attachment) may be sufficient for group formation, it is not a necessary condition for group formation among common-bond groups. They conclude that “rather than competing accounts for group formation and cohesion, these perspectives might instead be viewed as describing two separable processes in the development and maintenance of groups, either of which might dominate under a given set of circumstances.”\(^{64}\)

Thus both attractive (inter-individual attraction) and cognitive (social categorization) factors appear

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\(^{64}\) Prentice et al., “Asymmetries in Attachments,” 490.
to be at play in group coalescence.\textsuperscript{65} In addition, the attractive portion may be further divided. Early group research fell into two camps concerning the attractive factor in social cohesion: whether it would best be characterized as behavioural (inter-individual interdependence – usually thought of as behaviour induced by mutual needs; for example, cooperation focused on common fate or a common goal) or affective (interpersonal attraction – usually thought of as shared feelings resulting from similarity).\textsuperscript{66} We see then three factors involved in group coalescence: cognitive, behavioural and affective. The importance of all three factors is directly seen in Moreland’s division of social integration into cognitive, affective and behavioural integration\textsuperscript{67} and indirectly seen in Kelly Bouas Henry, Holly Arrow and Barbara Carini’s tripartite model of group identification which posits cognitive, affective and behavioural sources for group identification.\textsuperscript{68} We will thus look at group

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\textsuperscript{65}Tom Postmes, S. Alexander Haslam and Roderick I. Swaab (“Social Influence in Small Groups: An Interactive Model of Social Identity Formation,” \textit{European Review of Social Psychology} 16 [2005]: 1-42) and Tom Postmes, Russell Spears, Antonia T. Lee and Rosemary J. Novak (“Individuality and Social Influence in Groups: Inductive and Deductive Routes to Group Identity,” \textit{Journal of Personality and Social Psychology} 89 [2005]: 747-763), in advancing a theory of group identity developing along inductive (i.e., interpersonal, intragroup discussion) and deductive (i.e., deduced from group properties) routes, also demonstrate how social identity theory and individualistic perspectives may be brought together. Their work adds further weight to theories suggesting the importance of both inter-personal factors and social categorization in group processes.

At the individual level group members may have different types of attachment to the group. For example, whether or not a group is a common-bond or a common-identity group, women tend to have member attachment to groups and men tend toward group attachment (Elizabeth A. Seeley, Wendi L. Gardner, Ginger Pennington and Shira Gabriel, “Circle of Friends or Members of a Group? Sex Differences in Relational And Collective Attachment to Groups,” \textit{Group Processes and Intergroup Relations} 6 [2003]: 251-263; for similar results concerning collectivism – male collectivism being derived from group membership and female collectivism derived from specific relationships – see Shira Gabriel and Wendi L. Gardner, “Are There ‘His’ and ‘Hers’ Types of Interdependence? The Implications of Gender Differences in Collective Versus Relational Interdependence for Affect, Behavior, and Cognition,” \textit{Journal of Personality and Social Psychology} 77 [1999]: 642-655).


\textsuperscript{67}Moreland, “The Formation of Small Groups.”

\textsuperscript{68}Kelly Bouas Henry, Holly Arrow and Barbara Carini, “A Tripartite Model of Group Identification: Theory and Measurement,” \textit{Small Group Research} 30 (1999): 558-581. Here the indirectness lies in the fact that group identification is defined as member identification with an interacting group and so presumes the presence of a group. However, the suggested cognitive, affective and behavioural sources for group identification will also be at play when groups are coalescing, given that once the group coalesces there will be group identification and so the sources will need to have been at work before that.
\end{flushleft}
coalescence under these three categories: behavioural coalescence, affective coalescence and cognitive coalescence.

**Behavioural Coalescence.** Under Pre-Affiliation: Context we noted a number of needs which groups have the potential of satisfying. These needs induce interdependent behaviour such as coordination of actions to meet a common goal, cooperation focused on common fate, or interaction on a joint task. Research has shown that from such interdependent behaviour groups emerge; for example, Muzafer Sherif found that well-defined group structure came out of the mutual pursuit of shared goals and Annette Flippen et al. demonstrated that interdependence based on perceived threat generated in-group formation.

Interdependent behaviour is also interconnected with both affective and cognitive coalescence. Interdependence combined with shared experiences has been shown to foster long-term liking (affective coalescence) and Flippen et al. propose that although people may form social categories on the basis of similarity (cognitive coalescence), these categories only become in-groups when there is perceived interdependence.

**Affective Coalescence.** Here we refer to the emotional forces which draw people together into groups. Research into the emotional attractants in dyadic relationships has found a number of factors at work and it has been proposed that the same components play a part in group formation. A variety of elements have been found to contribute to interpersonal attraction, including proximity,

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72 Flippen et al., “A Comparison of Similarity and Interdependence.”
competence, reciprocity, physical attractiveness and similarity. Similarity may include attitude similarity, personality similarity, economic similarity, racial similarity, and need similarity. How these work together to form groups is seen in Theodore Newcomb’s classic study which demonstrated how among originally unacquainted students dyadic relationships were formed and then became chained together to form friendship groups. We see that a variety of factors promote interpersonal attraction, which in turn leads to forming dyads and the chaining of dyads into small groups. This chaining process also accords with balance theory which, simplified for this case, implies people like to like those whom their friends like.

Hence, as Arrow et al. note, for self-organized groups it is likely that they will form from among people that know and like each other and for founded groups typically founders will favour as potential members those they already know and those positively linked to those they know.

**Cognitive Coalescence.** While similarity in and of itself may lead to liking others and so to group formation, the awareness of similarity, which is a different factor, may also lead to a group forming. In fact, group coalescence may be impacted by a number of cognitive processes.

Festinger’s social comparison theory suggests that people will be drawn to others who share their views in order to reinforce their own interpretation of ambiguous events and issues. In addition, similarity is both created by and creates this cognitive coalescence as people interacting frequently generate and reinforce common interpretations of information.

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74 The associated research is noted in Wheelan, *Group Processes*, 63.
76 Arrow et al., *Small Groups as Complex Systems*, 71.
As mentioned above, social identity theorists, while using minimal groups to study the intergroup phenomena of prejudice and discrimination, demonstrated that even random assignment to an arbitrary category can produce in-group and out-group distinction.\(^7\) This intergroup discrimination is felt to arise as a means of sustaining a positive social identity as a group member. To explain the way in which the self is transformed from individual to group member self-categorization theory was developed.\(^8\) According to this, identities of an individual are simply self-categorizations that operate at different levels. That is, in a specific context a person applies the categorization of her/himself that makes the most sense. Within a group, perceptions of group members and of the self become depersonalized and so group members (and the self as well) are perceived and referenced in terms of the group prototype and not as distinct individuals. As well, attraction to other group members may be strongly affected by the shared identity. This *social attraction* (as opposed to interpersonal attraction) is based on how salient the group is to the individual and how well the other person fits the group prototype.

Although social identity theory assumes the presence of a group, several points may be made concerning small group formation. First, the mere labelling of potential group members as group members can bring about group phenomena (e.g., in-group bias).\(^9\) Though this is not necessarily


\(^9\)This categorization may be made by external people or by group members themselves. However, as Moreland suggests, although external categorization may occur in the real world, people “more often become aware of group membership on their own” (“The Formation of Small Groups,” 101). Moreland goes on to note factors which impact this awareness: “[B]oth personal and situational factors can affect awareness of groups membership and thereby influence
the formation of small groups. Research on personal factors suggests that small groups will form when people (a) have acknowledged their shared characteristics before, or (b) have done so recently, or (c) have found it useful to think of themselves in that way. Research on situational factors suggests that small groups will form when (d) people are reminded of shared characteristics, or (e) their outcomes seem to depend on these characteristics, or (f) the characteristics that they share are unusual in some way” (p.103).

Second, Arrow et al. note that group formation by categorization “influences self-selection into relatively homogenous self-organized groups”82 – however, this is situational, depending on which elements of social identity are salient, which in turn is dependent on the embedding context. Third, for founded groups, it may be that even before the small group is founded social attraction is at work with the degree to which the founder fits the perceived group prototype serving to accelerate the coalescence of the small group.

Those studying groups from a symbolic-interpretive perspective view the formation stage of group life as revolving around “members coming together to develop a collective consciousness, a shared set of sentiments and beliefs about what they are doing as a group.”83 For self-organized groups frequent interaction and communication serve to develop shared interpretation of information. For a founded group the communication process may be similar to that proposed for recruitment of members into an established group. For this a central mechanism of frame alignment has been proposed. Frame analysis spans a number of disparate approaches, with its most visible use being found in social movement research and media studies.84 Given the variety of perspectives on framing it is helpful to first define several terms:

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82 Arrow et al., Small Groups as Complex Systems, 72.
Frames are metaphors, symbols, and cognitive cues that cast issues in a particular light and suggest possible ways to respond to these issues. Framing involves the strategic creation and manipulation of shared understandings and interpretations of the world, its problems, and viable courses of action.85

With respect to groups and recruitment of members, Frey and Sunwolf, presenting the symbolic-interpretive perspective, note that:

From [a symbolic-interpretive] perspective, groups symbolically construct and interpret the nature of their projects/tasks/goals. . . . Such interpretive work, of course, takes place via symbolic behavior engaged in by group members. The framing of group tasks is particularly important for recruiting new members. Snow, Zurcher, and Eckland-Olson (1980),86 investigating how individuals come to join cults, found that the central mechanism is frame alignment, the rhetorical process of persuading a recruit to see the world in the same way as the group. The creation of a shared ideology provided the basis for engagement between recruits and the groups.87

Thus, for the formation of a founded small group, frame alignment may be seen as the process whereby a prospective group member is persuaded to see the world in the same way as the founder.

Four types of frame alignment processes have been identified which link the potential member’s and the founder’s interpretive frameworks and which depend on the nature of the initial congruence between the interpretive frame of the potential member and the founder:88 1) frame bridging: linking two ideologically congruent but unconnected frames (i.e., the linking up of like minded individuals); 2) frame amplification: ambiguity, uncertainty or even misconstrual can
obscure the beliefs and values of the founder and so in order to connect the interpretive frames of the potential member and the founder (or potential group) clarification or reinvigoration of the interpretive frame of the founder may be required; 3) frame extension: the founder may need to extend the boundaries of the primary framework to include areas which may not be salient but may be of salience to the potential group member; 4) frame transformation: to bring potential members on board the founder may need to bring new values, reject old meanings and beliefs, and so bring a transformation of the potential member’s frame – this may involve redefining “activities, events, and biographies that are already meaningful from the standpoint of some primary framework, in terms of another framework, such that they are now ‘seen by the participants to be something quite else.’”

The actual viability or resonance of a frame is related to two interacting factors, the salience and credibility of the frame. Three dimensions have been identified for the salience of a frame to the targets of mobilization: centrality – how essential the beliefs, values and ideas of the group/founder are to the potential member; experiential commensurability – how closely the frame is to the personal, everyday experiences of the potential member; and narrative fidelity – the cultural resonance of the frame. For credibility three factors have been found: frame consistency – the consistency between articulated beliefs, claims and actions; empirical credibility – the apparent fit between the frame and the events in the world; and the credibility of the frame articulators. The resonance of a frame, its salience and credibility, play a part in the initial gathering of individuals

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89Snow et al., “Frame Alignment Processes,” 474.
90Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements,” 619-621.
91“The important point is not that the claimed connection has to be generally believable, but that it must be believable to some segment of prospective or actual adherents.” Benford and Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements,” 620.
into a founded small group: the first individuals to coalesce into a group would be those for whom there would have been immediately the greatest salience and credibility in what is presented.

2.3.3. Group Beginning

The pre-affiliation stage of group founding blends into the actual beginning of a group. Here, as mentioned above, we follow Arrow et al.’s sentiment and proposal: “Although it is often impossible to identify the starting point of a new group with precision, we propose that a group ‘begins’ when people who think of themselves as belonging to a new group interact with other new members and begin coordinating their actions for some collective purpose. Thus group formation is both a cognitive and a behavioral process. All groups form in some context, in which people and resources are available, to serve one or more purposes via collective action.”

There is imprecision not only concerning the place within the process of group formation where a group begins, but also concerning the interplay between the types of coalescence and group formation. Which is most significant? How do they interact? While some research has been done in this area, there is still much that is unknown.

We will also follow Arrow et al.’s outline (and details) in delineating the initial conditions at group beginning and some prototypical groups. One final topic relates to the fact that some new groups, which may be relevant to our study, are not self-organized or founded by individuals but rather are the result of an established group being transformed into a new group.

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92 Arrow et al., Small Groups as Complex Systems, 67. Given that they are examining a broader range of small groups (including concocted and circumstantial groups) they do not mention an affective component.

93 E.g., Flippen et al., “A Comparison of Similarity and Interdependence.”
2.3.3.1. Group Beginning: Initial Conditions

*Group Size.* The size of a group as it begins has several implications. The larger the size the greater the number of ties among members and coordination problems may develop. Coupled with this may be motivation losses and resulting loafing, conflict and exploitation of the group. However, self-organized and founded groups, tending to be voluntary in nature, will exercise self pruning as those who feel themselves to be redundant leave the group. For groups starting with larger numbers formal structures for coordination may be needed and the role of a leader in coordinating members will become important.

*Diversity.* As we have noted above for self-organized and founded groups, individuals with similar beliefs, values and attitudes will more readily form bonds than those who see one another as different. As well, common salient attributes of members at the beginning of a group are likely to be incorporated into the group identity. Although these attributes may be important to the purpose of the group, it is also possible that the attributes are irrelevant to the group’s purpose and so, being incorporated into the group identity, make it more difficult to assimilate new members who are different.

*Boundaries.* Physical, temporal and psychological boundaries exist for newly formed groups and serve as both barriers and channels between members, groups and the embedding context. The clarity of these boundaries will bring about more effective coordination and external relations. Temporal boundaries include the beginning and end points of the intended duration of the group (this would include whether the group is thought of as temporally limited or indefinite in duration). In addition, there are the temporal boundaries which mark the times and days the group meets. Physical
Physical and temporal boundaries are also labelled as observable boundaries. Psychological boundaries mark the group’s understanding of who is and who is not a member. The permeability of this last boundary, that is, how easily people (and resources) move in and out of the group, affects the viability of the group. Sufficient permeability is necessary for access to needed people and resources, while excessive permeability results in either the overwhelming of the group by outside resources and people or the draining of the group by the outflow of people and resources.

2.3.3.2. Group Beginning: Prototypical Groups

An additional initial condition will be the type of group which is formed. Two typologies may be outlined for prototypical initial groups, depending on whether one focuses on purpose or primary attachment.

**Purpose.** We have identified above two functions of groups at their formation: completing group projects and fulfilling member needs. The initial purpose of most groups will emphasize one of these functions over the other. Groups emphasizing the completion of group projects may be labelled as *work groups* and groups emphasizing the fulfillment of member needs as *clubs*.

*Work groups.* Depending on their temporal boundaries work groups may be further divided into crews (short-term groups assembled for a specialized task), task forces (groups assembled to complete an assigned task) and teams (a work group whose duration spans many projects). Typically crews and task forces will not be self-organized or founded groups. Teams, given their longevity
and the need for cohesiveness and flexibility among the members, put more emphasis on members, their interconnection and their roles than other work groups.

Clubs. Clubs are formed mainly by members to fulfill member needs. These groups are often self-organized or founded. The nature of the need determines several varieties of clubs: resource needs are fulfilled in economic clubs, affiliation and social power needs in social clubs, and activity needs in activity clubs. For economic clubs ties to resources are primary and so interpersonal ties do not necessarily need to be strong (e.g., a university housing co-op). Social clubs are most likely to form through the chaining of dyads among people who already know each other. Activity clubs focus on enjoyment of an activity and require at the least some basic knowledge of the activity.

Attachment. As we have seen above, groups differ in their basis for member attachment. This member preference will be present at the very beginning of the group and will follow from the relative significance of the various types of coalescence involved in the formation of the group. Groups may be classified as common-bond groups or common-identity groups.

Common-bond groups. These groups are based primarily on attachments among group members. The strength of this attachment depends on how well one likes, knows or feels similar to others in the group. Attachment to the group grows out of this attachment to other members. Common-bond groups may tend to operate on the principle of equity, rewarding members in proportion to their contributions.

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95 A group may change its type of attachment during its time span; for example, a common-bond group may be transformed into a common-identity group under the stress of external conflict (see Prentice et al., “Asymmetries in Attachments,” 485).
Common-identity groups. These groups are based primarily on direct attachment to the group identity and so the strength of attachment is dependent on commitment to the identity of the group. Given the shared attachment to the group, common-identity groups may tend to operate on the principle of equality, providing members with equal rewards.\textsuperscript{96}

\subsection*{2.3.3.3. Group Beginning: Transforming}

Not all groups form from individuals coalescing. Some are the result of groups being transformed. There are several ways in which this may take place. One mode of transformation is division: a large group may break into subgroups to perform special tasks or because of conflict. Although division has not been as widely studied as group formation and cohesion, there has been some research into group schism (or fission) resulting from conflict. Worchel's model of group formation and development would fit here for those cases in which discontent and a precipitating event result in a splintering of the original group (and not just a reinvigoration of the original group through revitalized group identification). Claire Hart and Mark Van Vugt found that for small work groups the presence of salient subgroups (and so the presence of fault lines within the group) and of conflict resulting from free-riders (group members who free-ride on the efforts of others with respect to sharing common resources or work) serves to initiate division along the subgroup line.\textsuperscript{97} Fabio Sani proposes that for common-identity groups when a change takes place which members feel

\textsuperscript{96}The difference between common-bond and common-identity groups in rules of fairness (i.e., principle of equity versus principle of equality) is proposed by Prentice et al. ("Asymmetries in Attachments," 491). Similarly Yuqing Ren, Robert Kraut and Sara Kiesler note differences in reciprocity with common-bond groups exhibiting direct reciprocity and common-identity groups exhibiting general reciprocity ("Applying Common Identity and Bond Theory to Design of Online Communities," \textit{Organization Studies} 28 [2007]: 377-408, here 391).

subverts the group identity there will be a drop in group identification and heightened emotional discomfort. These contribute to schismatic intentions and so to division (though their impact may be moderated through the perceived ability to voice dissent).98

Another mode of transformation is seen when the whole group transforms itself in such a way that members view it as a new group. There are several ways in which this may occur. One way would be the changing of a core element of group belief. An anthropological example is found in the adoption of Christianity in Melanesia: “The choice to innovate and adopt Christianity as advocated by the missionaries was of course made by individuals, but the response was frequently a multi-individual response, in contrast to a mass movement. That is, individuals established the new norm for the group which then led to whole groups choosing to become Christian [i.e., in essence becoming new groups].”99 Another way would be the merger of two (or more) groups in which there is sufficient change in members or beliefs or activities (or such) so that the group is thought of as a new group.


2.4. Collectivism and Small Group Formation

“Small groups cannot be adequately studied independently of their appropriate sociocultural influences.”

Sherif’s maxim was not a new perspective sixty years ago and yet even with the burgeoning interest in cultural or cross-cultural psychology beginning in the 1970's the study of small groups was and still is primarily a study of groups within a North American or European context. Mann provided an overview of cross-cultural work on small groups in 1980 and concluded concerning group formation, “[l]acking in the field at present is an understanding of how people come together in groups, . . . and the factors that underlie group change and transformation.”

Even up until now this deficit has not been made up.

We will examine one dimension of culture and see what can be noted concerning its impact on group founding. As mentioned above elements of subjective culture may be organized around specific themes, which are labelled “cultural syndromes.” The most studied cultural syndrome, and most salient for small group formation, is individualism-collectivism.

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101 Sherif references a number of anthropological and sociological studies including his own study of five Turkish villages.


103 §1.3.2.2.


While collectivism-individualism has become very popular in cross-cultural psychology, it should be noted that there are those who critique the construct. See, for example: Shalom H. Schwartz, “Individualism-Collectivism: Critique and Proposed Refinements,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 21 (1990): 139-157; Maxim Voronov and Jefferson...
2.4.1. Individualism and Collectivism: Cultural Level

Triandis provides one way of coming to grips with individualism and collectivism. He notes that, broadly speaking, collectivist cultures emphasize the interdependence of each individual and some collective, while individualist cultures emphasize the independence of individuals and their groups. In providing more detail, he finds four defining attributes of the constructs:

1. The definition of self. The individual in collectivist cultures typically views the self as interdependent with others in a group (whether family, tribe, co-workers, nation, religious group, etc.) and this is accompanied by sharing of resources. Collectivists use groups as the unit of analysis of social behaviour and often have in-groups which include ancestors and descendants, thus making them more likely to think of the long term. They are more concerned with group success than with individual success.

Individualists view the self as autonomous and independent from groups and this is accompanied with decisions made individually as to whether or not to share resources. Individualists use individuals as the unit of analysis of social behaviour and may be seen as having short-term thinking. They are more concerned with individual success than with group success.

In interpersonal situations collectivists sample relationships, norms and roles; individualists personality, ability and attitude.

2. The structure of goals. For the individual in collectivist cultures individual goals are typically compatible with in-group goals and when they are not compatible, the collectivist gives priority to the in-group goal.

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Individualists do not often correlate individual goals with in-group goals and when individual and in-group goals are not compatible they give priority to personal goals.

3. Emphasis on norms versus attitudes. For the individual in collectivist cultures typically the determinants of social behaviour are equally norms, duties and obligations and attitudes and personal needs. They also tend to be formal and to depend on rules for social behaviour. Collectivists also see less of a connection between attitudes and behaviour than individualists. Well-being for collectivists depends on fitting in and having positive relationships with the in-group which includes close attention to the norms of the in-group.

For individualists the determinants of social behaviour are primarily attitudes, personal needs, perceived rights and contracts. They are less formal and dependent on rules for social behaviour than collectivists. Well-being for individualists depends on self satisfaction and associated emotions.

4. Emphasis on relatedness versus rationality. Collectivists stay in their groups even when they dislike them. They emphasize unconditional relatedness, that is, they give priority to relationships and take the needs of others into account even when it is not advantageous to the individual.

Individualists emphasize rationality, that is, they compute the costs and benefits of relationships.

Although there are many kinds of collectivism and individualism, Triandis also proposes that two types of individualism and collectivism are of especial interest: vertical and horizontal.\(^{106}\)

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There is some correspondence between vertical and horizontal individualism-collectivism and Mary Douglas’ group/grid typology for social structures (where *group* refers to the degree of solidarity in the society and *grid* refers to the degree to which individual choice is circumscribed by position in society). Rather than seeing collectivism and individualism as bipolar, they may be viewed as two dimensions with *grid* as a dimension of individuation and *group*...
Vertical cultures emphasize hierarchy and horizontal cultures emphasize equality. There are then four types of cultures. Horizontal individualist cultures emphasize independence and uniqueness but not necessarily being better than others (cultures such as Sweden or Australia). Vertical individualist cultures emphasize both uniqueness and status differentiation (cultures such as America). Horizontal collectivist cultures emphasize equality and the individual is submerged in the group (cultures such as an Israeli kibbutz). Vertical collectivist cultures emphasize obedience and conformity to the group with the individual being relatively unimportant in relation to the group authorities (cultures such as the traditional cultures of China and India).

2.4.2. Individualism and Collectivism: Individual Level

Within each culture there are people who act and think like people in collectivist cultures—these Triandis labels as *allocentric*—and there are those who think and act like people in individualist cultures—labelled as *idiocentric*. These personality attributes are orthogonal to each other and it is possible for individuals to be both high or low on both allocentrism and idiocentrism. Triandis suggests that, although in all cultures there are both idiocentrics and allocentrics, there are broadly speaking about sixty percent allocentrics in collectivist cultures and about sixty percent idiocentrics in individualist cultures.

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107 This may depend on culture. Verkuyten and Masson found that within a collectivist culture allocentrism and idiocentrism are unrelated, while in a individualist culture they are negatively correlated (Maykel Verkuyten and Kees Masson, “Culture and Gender Differences in the Perception of Friendship by Adolescents,” *International Journal of Psychology* 31 [1996]: 207-217). On individual sampling of individualist and collectivist cognitions see Triandis, “Individualism and Collectivism: Past, Present, and Future,” 39-40.

Allocentrics and idiocentrics differ in a number of areas: allocentrics emphasize tradition and conformity, idiocentrics hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction; allocentrics tend to make external attributions, idiocentrics internal attributions; allocentrics tend to be modest, idiocentrics are self-enhancing and have positive opinions of themselves; allocentrics view more situations as requiring help for another person than idiocentrics; allocentrics value harmony and expect social situations to be pleasant more than idiocentrics do; with regard to social perception, allocentrics are most likely to perceive groups and relationships, idiocentrics to perceive individuals; allocentrics tend to be more sensitive to social rejection and higher in affiliation than idiocentrics; allocentrics change themselves to fit in rather than change their environment, idiocentrics try to change their environment; allocentrics tend to establish intimate and long-term relationships, idiocentrics non-intimate and short-term relationships; allocentrics prefer group-based compensation, idiocentrics prefer individual rewards; allocentrics use indirect and face-saving communication, idiocentrics are more direct and say what is on their mind even if it results in damage to the relationship; allocentrics accept paternalistic leadership and accentuate the importance of nurture by the leader, idiocentrics tend to be opposed to paternalism.

2.4.3. Collectivism and Small Group Formation

Although most research on small group formation has been carried out in individualist cultures, given the copious research into collectivism, we can, at the least, be sensitive to areas in

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109 These are taken from Triandis, “Individualism and Collectivism: Past, Present, and Future,” where the corresponding research is referenced. See also Triandis, *Individualism and Collectivism.*
which current views on group formation may need to be modified for collectivist cultures and allocentric individuals.

**Pre-affiliation: Context.** Within collectivist cultures attachment to groups is stronger than in individualist cultures\(^\text{110}\) and so it may be posited that within a stable environment individuals would be even less likely to be involved in the emergence of a new group. As well, within collectivist cultures the use of a cost-benefit calculation for determining social behaviour (e.g., the idea that a group may be joined if the costs do not out weigh the benefits) may not be applied in the same way as in individualist cultures.\(^\text{111}\) Although individuals in collectivist cultures are group oriented they are not involved in as many groups as those in individualist cultures and so they often do not develop good skills for *entering* new groups.\(^\text{112}\)

**Pre-affiliation: Connection.** For collectivists relatedness will be of paramount importance. Thus one would expect that for the formation of self-organized and founded groups in collectivist cultures, social networks would be of even greater importance than indicated in the current research taken from individualist cultures. The formation of these networks, however, may arise, in contrast to western individualist cultures, out of the social expectation of relationships being forged in behavioural settings.\(^\text{113}\) As well, for founders in new social situations one would expect that the

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\(^{111}\) As noted above collectivists emphasize relatedness over cost-benefit rationality. And as Pepitone and Triandis note “in cultures where fate is seen as determining their lot, people will bear costs that exceed benefits, while in cultures where individuals are seen to have control over their destinies, high cost results in a redirection of action” (Albert Pepitone and Harry C. Triandis, “On the Universality of Social Psychological Theories,” *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 18 [1987]: 471-498, here 490).

\(^{112}\) Triandis and Suh, “Cultural Influences on Personality,” 143.

initiation of new contacts would occur with others who share a social category such as ethnicity/religion, kinship, or occupation.

**Pre-affiliation: Coalescence.** If, as noted above, for many individuals in collectivist cultures networks arise in behavioural settings, behavioural coalescence may be a stronger force in the coalescence of small groups in collectivist cultures than in individualist ones. The focused awareness on others’ behaviours may also accelerate the naturally occurring mechanism of “entrainment” in which collective behaviour becomes coordinated through the mutual influence of behaviours on one another.\(^{114}\)

For affective coalescence western models of personal attraction based on similarity and balance seem to be also confirmed in collectivist cultures.\(^{115}\) However, the bases for the perception of similarity are different with collectivists not emphasizing attitudinal or belief similarity as much as individualists.\(^{116}\)

For cognitive coalescence, social comparison theory’s stress on social comparison for the evaluation of ambiguous beliefs, opinions and abilities may not be applicable to collectivist cultures.\(^{117}\) On the other hand, although social identity theory was developed in individualist cultures it appears to be applicable in collectivist cultures, and, in fact, it has been noted that social identities are more important in collectivist cultures.\(^{118}\) Thus, the tendency for self-organized groups to emerge

\(^{88-101, \text{here 96-98.}}\)


\(^{116}\)Triandis, *Individualism and Collectivism*, 118.


\(^{118}\)William B. Gudykunst and Michael Harris Bond, “Intergroup Relations across Cultures,” in *Social Behavior and Applications*, vol. 3 of *Handbook of Cross-Cultural Psychology* (2nd ed.; eds. John W. Berry, M. H. Segall and...
as homogenous and for the founder of an emerging founded group to be the prototypical member may be more pronounced in collectivist cultures. Further, given that collectivists are strongly influenced by the behaviours and thoughts of others, for successful frame alignment more emphasis may be laid on arguments involving social proof, which stress the behaviour and views of others, than on commitment or consistency arguments.119

*Group Beginning: Transformation.* Given the high loyalty to groups one might expect that there would be less group fission/schism in collectivist cultures. However, following Sani’s model for group schism, granted the heightened group identification in collectivist cultures one might find for common-identity groups with clear subgroups a greater potential for groups dividing along subgroup lines when group identity is felt to be at stake. The transformation of an entire group would also be more likely in collectivist cultures given the strong influence of others on thoughts and behaviour (thus lessening the likelihood of individuals splintering the group during the transformation) and the preference for consensual decision making.

2.5. Summary

The factors underlying the coming together of self-organized and founded groups have been outlined. Groups form as individuals coalesce into a collective. We have narrowed our groups to

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119Triandis and Suh, “Cultural Influences on Personality,” 143.
self-organizing and founded small groups – both of which have internal forces predominating in formation. These groups form within a given context internal and external to the individuals involved. For the individual, survival, psychological, informational or identity needs may compel interdependence leading to coalescence. Externally, an embedding context provides resources which favour coalescence. This includes the physical context in which, for example, proximity provides an enriched environment for forming connections. As well, the social context, including social networks, pre-existing groups, conflict, or powerful individuals, has a profound affect on group formation. Similarly the cultural context impacts the way in which groups form. These contexts shape the process of coalescence and must be kept in mind in any account of formation.

Although social networks are a context for group formation, subnetworks within them may also be viewed as coalescing proto-groups in which ties are being initiated or strengthened.

The actual coalescence of the group may be broken down into three overlapping components: behavioural, affective and cognitive. Differences in the relative significance of these components is one factor involved in the creation of different types of groups.

Of particular note is our attention to cultural forces and so we have provided initial modifications for collectivist cultural contexts.

The emphases of this model are:

1. The importance of context: Attention must be paid to the context to see what favours the coming together of individuals – a number of contextual elements have been identified.

2. The importance of social networks: Initiating and/or strengthening of ties will be involved in coalescence.
3. Any account of group formation for self-organized and founded groups must take into account all categories of coalescence. Groups are not formed by one type of coalescence alone; however, one type may predominate in formation.

3.1. Behavioural coalescence: The importance of interdependent behaviour directed toward common goals or common fate or joint tasks.

3.2. Affective coalescence: The importance of similarity. Similarity (and proximity, competence, reciprocity and physical attractiveness) contribute to interpersonal attraction.

3.3. Cognitive coalescence: The importance of categorization and attraction to the founder as representing the group prototype.


We now have a model for small group founding. We will use this to examine Paul’s groups but first we will study small group founding in the Greco-Roman world in order to hone our model and to provide analogies for the Pauline groups. The following chapter investigates the formation of Greco-Roman small groups.
Small Group Founding Model: Summary Chart

1. Parameters
   Group Category: self-organized and founded groups.
   Stage of Group Formation: pre-affiliation and group beginning.

2. Pre-affiliation
   2.1. Pre-affiliation: Context
       Psychological Context of Coalescence.
       Need satisfaction: survival needs; psychological needs; informational needs; identity needs.
       Embedding Context of Coalescence.
       Physical Environment.
       Propinquity: through living arrangement, work or gathering at special sites.
       Other physical factors: temperature, noise level, crowding and so on.
       Social Environment.
       Social networks: based on kinship, work, religious, ethnic or other ties.
       Stability or threat within the social environment.
       Powerful individuals.
       Cultural Environment.
       Collectivism-individualism dimension.

   2.2. Pre-affiliation: Connection
       Networks and Group Formation.
       For self-organized groups:
       Real world groups: overlapping social networks or in the same social network – groups emerge from strengthening of ties within these networks.
       Primary interpersonal networks: Ascribed group membership (e.g., ethnic or religious background, kinship).
       Alternative social networks may be entered that are consistent with an achieved or chosen identity (e.g., occupation).
       For founded groups:
       Within prior social network: Trusted alters preferred over strangers as initial group members.
       Unconnected social context: initiation of ties with those in shared (achieved or ascribed) social categories and then strengthening of ties.

2.3. Pre-affiliation: Coalescence
   Behavioural Coalescence.
   Needs induce interdependent behaviour such as coordination of actions to meet a common goal, cooperation focused on common fate, or interaction on a joint task.
   Affective Coalescence.
   Interpersonal attraction: proximity, competence, reciprocity, physical attractiveness and similarity.
   Similarity: attitude, personality, economic, racial, need.

Cognitive Coalescence.
   Social identity theory
   Self-categorization theory and social attraction
   Labelling: can bring about group phenomena.
   Self-categorization: results in relatively homogenous self-organized groups.
   Founded groups: before the small group is founded social attraction may be at work – founder as group prototype.
   Symbolic-interpretive perspective
   Frame alignment: the rhetorical process of creating a shared ideology through persuasion.
   Four types of frame alignment processes: frame bridging; frame amplification; frame extension; frame transformation.

3. Group Beginning
   3.1. Group Beginning: Initial Conditions
       Group Size.
       For self-organized and founded groups: exercise self pruning as those who feel themselves to be redundant leave the group.
       Groups starting with larger numbers: formal structures for coordination may be needed and the role of a leader in coordinating members will become important.

       Diversity.
       Individuals with similar beliefs, values and attitudes will more readily form bonds

       Boundaries.
       Temporal boundaries: meeting times, length; group duration.
       Physical boundaries: meeting place, set-up, items used.
       Psychological boundaries: who is and isn’t member.

   3.2. Group Beginning: Prototypical Groups
       Purpose.
       Work groups: [crews; task forces] teams.
       Clubs: economic clubs; social clubs; activity clubs.

       Attachment.
       Common-bond groups: attachment to members.
       Common-identity groups: attachment to group.

   3.3. Group Beginning: Transforming
       Division: Breaking into subgroups: for special tasks or from conflict.
       Whole group: transformed in such a way that members view it as a new group.
       Merger of groups: result viewed as new group.
Chapter 3
Founding of Analogous Small Groups in the Greco-Roman World

3.1. Introduction

*Painted on the walls of buildings in Pompeii*¹
Saturninus and his pupils urge you to elect Gaius Cuspius Pansa aedile. He is a worthy candidate for our government. *CIL 4.275*
All the late drinkers² urge you to elect Marcus Cerrinius Vatia aedile. Florus and Fructus wrote this. *CIL 4.581*
The bakers urge you: “Make Trebius aedile.” *CIL 4.667*
All the worshippers of Isis urge you to elect Gnaeus Helvius Sabinus aedile. *CIL 4.787*
His neighbours urge you to elect Marcus Lucretius Fronto aedile. *CIL 4.6625*

*Carved on the seats of the theatre in Miletos*
Place of goldsmiths *IMilet 940b*
Place of emperor-loving goldsmiths *IMilet 940d*

Throughout the Greco-Roman world groups were found everywhere. Workers, neighbours, worshippers, or families would join together in groups (often small groups) for inseparably entwined social and religious purposes.³ The residue of these once all-pervasive social units is found inscribed in stone, written on papyrus, recorded in literary documents, and revealed in building remains. From these remainders the place and nature of small groups in the Greco-Roman world can be partially explored. In this chapter information on Greco-Roman small groups will be narrowed down and used for a two-fold purpose: to hone the small group founding process outlined in the previous chapter and to provide data for analogical comparison with the founding of Pauline small groups.

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²Similarly groups labelled “late sleepers” (*CIL 4.575*) and “petty thieves” (*CIL 4.576*) urge Vatia’s election. These may be humourous names adopted by respectable clubs, and so may be legitimate endorsements, or they may be sham endorsements put up by Vatia’s opponents; the obviously fictitious names of the writers suggest a sham endorsement. See Frank M. Ausbüttel, *Untersuchungen zu den Vereinen im Westen des römischen Reiches* (Frankfurter Althistorische Studien 11; Kallünz: Lassleben, 1982), 20-21, 94-95.

3.1.1. Analogous Groups

To provide a framework for our investigation a brief examination of the social (group) models proposed for Pauline communities will be helpful. The social models most similar to early Christian communities that have been suggested are: households, synagogues, the mysteries, philosophical schools, and associations. While the search for social models (other than the synagogue) stretches back into the 1800's, and most notably to Heinrici and Hatch, only after a long pause has renewed interest in the social models for Pauline communities been sparked in the last twenty-five years.

**Households.** The extended household, ὀἶκος, was the basis for private life in antiquity and evidently served a significant role in Pauline communities. Under Roman law, the *paterfamilias*...
held authority over other members of the household, including children, grandchildren, slaves and even employees. Socially, the household was a place of solidarity in terms of both kinship ties and religious beliefs and so the mention of household conversions in the New Testament (for example, Stephanas [1 Cor 1:16] and Lydia [Acts 16:15]) is not surprising. Thus the household did stand as a basic building block in some Pauline communities and is helpful in understanding their structure.

However, although households may serve as the basic cells of the social organization, they do not exhaust the utility of other models for understanding Pauline communities and they are not mutually exclusive of other models. Ascough points out:

In fact, there is evidence from each of these models that in some cases the groups formed themselves using the household as a base, either in having entire households join or in using fictive kinship language to reflect a new household. We have evidence of households which were the basis for synagogues, the mysteries, and voluntary associations. Private households were also the locus for much philosophical teaching and even some philosophical schools. In addition, although the model of the household could provide an analogy for Pauline communities, it is inadequate for an examination of group founding given that the analogy between the founding of an actual household (emerging through death, marriage or age and expanding by marriage, birth, adoption or purchase) and the founding of a Pauline small group is weak and for

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9 Ascough, “Voluntary Associations and Community Formation,” 148-149.
10 For example, note the extensive use of (fictive) kinship terms in the Paul’s letters.
11 This, however, does not negate the possibility that households may have been significantly involved in the founding of some Pauline groups.
fictive kinship groups founding may be better examined under the rubric of the type of group involved (whether association, philosophical school, or synagogue).

**The Mysteries.** The influence of the ancient mysteries on early Christianity has been widely debated. The mysteries were initiation rituals which led the individual into the cult of a god with the intent to change the mind through the experience of the sacred. The most well known were the mysteries associated with Demeter, Dionysos, Isis, and Mithras. With respect to community formation, three forms of organization surrounding the ancient mysteries have been distinguished:13

1. *The itinerant practitioner.* This was an itinerant “craftsman of religion” who moved about as a priest and seer of the deity. The craft might be handed down by a master or a father figure through a fictive kinship model. The normal situation of these itinerants was a marginal existence.

2. *The sanctuary.* This could be characterized as the “public” religious association affiliated with the mystery. Here, often associated with the administration of the city, priest and priestesses with attendant sacred symbols and rites provided initiation into the mysteries and maintained the cult of the deity.

3. *The association of worshippers.* This was an association, usually labelled a thiasos or just a koinon, focused on the deity and the connected mysteries. This form could also be linked with a sanctuary and in these last two forms “the association of initiates could participate in

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12For the mysteries as a model for the Pauline communities see, for example, Hyam Maccoby, *Paul and Hellenism* (Valley Forge: Trinity Press, 1991).

a number of communal events, including meals and banquets, dances and ceremonies, especially initiation rites.”

The first two forms, itinerancy of an individual and public religious associations, do not conform with the Pauline communities. The third form, as a private religious association, provides a helpful analogy; however, this form may be subsumed under the heading of cult associations.

**Synagogues.** Given Paul’s background, the procedures mentioned in Acts, and the origins of Christianity, it is natural that diaspora synagogue communities have been proposed as models for Pauline communities. However, the nature and structure of first century diaspora synagogues are in much debate and the evidence we have is sparse. The synagogues themselves may be viewed as associations.

**Philosophical schools.** In antiquity, philosophical ‘school’ often applied to persons who followed the same founder and disseminated similar ideas and ethics. There are many similarities between Paul and the popular philosophers of his day, such as the Cynics, Stoics and Epicureans. Although, in terms of community structure, it has been noted that when the philosophical schools took on group characteristics (that is, moving beyond shared ideas to actual local group activities) “they resemble the Pauline communities just to the extent that they take the form of modified

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14 Ascough, *What Are They Saying?*, 53.


households or voluntary associations.”

**Associations.** Clubs, guilds, collegia, societies, or associations—coherent groups which were joined and had their own rules for membership, leadership and association—flourished in the Hellenistic and Roman imperial periods. Despite occasional official attempts at (local) suppression, these associations had spread to almost every city and town by the time of the Roman empire. Originally the terms used to designate these associations had differing meanings, although with time the nuances faded; in the Greek east we find the chief categories to be ὀργεώνες, θυσσόταται,
Meeks noted that the comparison between Christian groups and associations produced many parallels. Both include membership established by free decision rather than birth, an intimacy of membership, democratic governance, common meals and social activities, and respect for patrons and sponsors. He also noted a number of differences which convinced him of the inadequacy of associations as a social model for early Christian groups. Central among these differences were: Christian exclusivity towards other deities; Christian social heterogeneity; the lack of intersection in significant terminology; and the translocal links of Christian groups. These objections have been met by others who have shown Meeks’ reading of the evidence to be unsatisfactory. Kloppenborg has dealt with the questions of terminology and heterogeneity; Ascough with the issue of translocal links, and Harland with the sectarian label.

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Meeks asserts, “I can find no example of ekklesia . . . in the titulature of clubs” (The First Urban Christians, 79) and Klauck remarks that “So weit wir sehen, bleibt ekklesia ausgespart [from the names of associations]” (Hausgemeinde und Hauskirche, 33) and yet Ascough notes at least five instances of ἐκκλησία as a community designator from Samos, Delos and Asia Minor (“Greco-Roman Philosophic, Religious, and Voluntary Associations,” 14).


3.2. Group Founding

Although there is significant overlap between the last three social models for Pauline groups (that is, synagogues, philosophical [and rhetorical] schools and associations), particularly at the local level, we will examine the evidence for the founding of the last two models separately.\(^{26}\)

3.2.1. Founding Associations

Most of our information on associations is gleaned from epigraphical sources. Before examining these records, we must exclude cases which are sometimes included in discussions of the founding of associations but which fall outside of the parameters of our group formation process.\(^{27}\)

First, we will exclude those that do not involve the founding of groups. There are a number of inscriptions which refer to founders and yet do not necessarily refer to group founding. For example, a narrow greyish marble stele found in the western end of Salonica records honours for Aulus Papius Chilon, who could taken for the founder of the group: “For Aulus Papius Chilon, who established [καθίστημι] the οἶκος; (honoured by) the hieraphoroi and table-companions [. . . list of individuals]” (IG X/2 58 [Thessalonica; early second century CE]). However, although οἶκος

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\(^{26}\)Synagogues and Jewish associations will be covered under associations. Although philosophical and rhetorical schools, in some sense, may be viewed as associations, they will be examined separately because: 1) these have been examined separately in the literature as models analogous to Pauline churches; and 2) in their founding they may highlight elements of the founding process which could be overlooked if they were simply included in the broader category of associations (in particular the method of initial gathering of members in rhetorical schools and the significance of frame alignment for philosophical schools).

may be used to designate an association;\textsuperscript{28} here we have honours for the establishment of a meeting place and not for founding a group.\textsuperscript{29} Other inscriptions record the founding of cults but not cult-groups; for example, we have: the establishment of a sacred precinct with a freed slave dedicated to the service of the gods (\textit{LSCG} 171 [Isthmus, Cos; second century BCE]); a farmer’s establishment of a shrine with a priest (\textit{LSCG} 54 [\textit{IG II²} 1364] [Attica; first century CE]); an oracle instructing the foundation of a cult of Poseidon (\textit{ITrallleis} 1 [Tralles, Caria; mid third century CE]).\textsuperscript{30} These involve sacred places or certain rites and may imply the subsequent drawing together of individuals to sustain the cult activity, but they do not record the actual founding of a group.

Several more extensive inscriptions may be included with these. In the temple courtyard of Sarapeion A on Delos an inscription provided a dual record in a prose aretology and a hymn in hexameter verse of the arrival and growth of the cult of Sarapis on Delos (\textit{IG XI/4} 1299 [Delos; late third to early second century BCE]). An Egyptian priest, named Apollonios, brought a statue of the god from Egypt and set it up in his own accommodation. Here he and his son Demetrios and grandson Apollonios carried on the worship of Sarapis until the god led them to a new precinct for


\textsuperscript{29}Although it is clear Aulus Papius Chilon established a meeting place, as Ascough notes, the provision of a meeting place may well have coincided with the founding of the group (\textit{Paul's Macedonian Associations}, 32).

worship. At some point the family of Sarapis worshippers were joined by others – we find mention of a group of θεραπεζ (poetic form of θεράπευοντες): “he [Apollonios] left his son Demetrios in charge of your provisional sanctuary, in whom the therapeutēs wholly rejoiced” (ll. 43-44). However, how the group of worshippers was founded is not elaborated.

A copy in the Sarapeion of Thessalonica of an earlier inscription provides the story of the introduction of the cult of Sarapis and Isis to Opus (IG X/2 255 [Thessalonika; first or second century CE]). Xenainetos from Opus came to Thessalonica seeking advice. While sleeping in the temple Sarapis, in a dream, instructed him to bring a message to a rival concerning the introduction of the cult of Sarapis and Isis into Opus. Although perplexed he brought the message and the end result was the installation of Sarapis and Isis in the house of a certain Sosinike. Again we have information on the propagation of the cult but no information on the actual founding of a cult association.

In a similarly dream-inspired establishment of a cult, a certain Dionysios in Philadelphia was instructed by Zeus to found a household cult (or perhaps to expand the family cult through the

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31 The inscription deals with the triumph over evil men who opposed the new sanctuary.
33 Sokolowski suggests that “Sarapis was first accepted as a god of the family of Sosinike, then some time later outsiders also joined this cult” (Franciszek Sokolowski, “Propagation of the Cult of Sarapis and Isis in Greece,” Greek Roman and Byzantine Studies 15 [1974]: 441-448, here 444).
35 Stowers, following up on a proposal of L. Michael White (Building God’s House in the Roman World: Architectural Adaptation among Pagans, Jews, and Christians, [Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1990], 1:45), provides a convincing reading of the text which views the cult as a family cult rather than a widely-oriented association. He concludes, “Rather than being the kind of voluntary organization that sought members from the wider world, the cult primarily served a large and complex household, although friends and relatives of the household living outside may also have played a part” (“A Cult from Philadelphia,” 288).
inclusion of outsiders\(^{36}\) \textit{(ILydia} KP III 18 \([=SIG^3 985]\) [Philadelphia, Lydia; late second or early first century BCE]). Although the purpose of the inscription is to record the origin of the cult, including the introduction of new gods and the accompanying regular sacrifices, much of it deals with conduct for those partaking in the cult – “To this man [Dionysios] Zeus has given ordinances for the performing of the purifications, the cleansings and the mysteries, in accordance with ancestral custom and as now has been written” (ll. 12-14).\(^{37}\) In giving the composition of its members and criteria for their continuing membership, we are close to seeing the founding of a group though questions linger as to whether it is actually a new group or the continuance (and extension) of an ongoing household group.

Second, there are groups for which an annual or occasional reconstitution may seem similar to a transformation of the group. In Egypt we have the cult association of Suchos of Tebtynis, which reconstituted itself annually on the occasion of the festival to honour Suchos and his gods (P.Cairo 31178 [Tebtynis; 180/79 BCE]; P.Cairo 30606 [Tebtynis; 158/7 BCE]; P.Cairo 30605 [Tebtynis; 157/6 BCE]; P.Cairo 31179 [Tebtynis; 148/7 BCE]; P.Cairo 30619a,b [Tebtynis; 138/7 BCE]; P.Cairo 30618 [Tebtynis; 137/6 BCE]). However, there was a continuity of members, gods, and purpose which indicate an ongoing group.\(^{38}\) We may also include here the example of the Athenian Bacchic society. In a well preserved inscription \textit{(IG II^2} 1368 [Athens; last half second century CE]) we find the record of a reorganization meeting of a group of \textit{Iobakchoi}. After a long incumbency of the priest Nikomachos, a successor was appointed and new statutes were drawn up and

\(^{36}\)This is Barton and Horsley’s view (“A Hellenistic Cult Group”).

\(^{37}\)Barton and Horsley’s translation (“A Hellenistic Cult Group,” 9).

\(^{38}\)On the continuity of the association see Roberts, Skeat and Nock, “The Gild of Zeus Hypsistos,” 80-82. The yearly reconstitution of the association may well have had implications concerning property and such. However, that we have an ongoing group is likely.
enthusiastically approved by the group. Although the shift in leadership lent itself to a revised constitution, there is sufficient continuity\(^39\) to rule out the inscription as evidence of a transformed group.

Third, we exclude concocted groups. In the group formation process, in addition to differentiating emergent and planned forces in the formation of a small group (see §2.3.), we also differentiated internal and external forces and excluded from our consideration groups formed through external forces (that is, circumstantial and concocted groups). Thus, for example, the clear account of the founding of concocted groups in an explanation of a reconciliation process in Nakone, Sicily (\textit{SEG} 30.1119 [= \textit{NGSL} 26] [Nakone, Sicily; mid third century BCE])\(^40\) is not germane to our investigation. As well, age-related groups such as \textit{epheboi}, \textit{neoi} and \textit{gerousia} will not be considered since they were usually formed (or designated) by authorities or circumstances external to them. Here may also be included testamentary foundations in which a founder (who will not take part in the group) concocted an association to carry on the family’s memory through ongoing ceremonies. The most widely noted of these is the following triumvirate of family associations:\(^41\)

1) Epicteta of Thera established her foundation at the beginning of the second century BCE in honour of her husband, her deceased sons and herself. Having no legal male descendants she constructed an association of men (mostly kin) (l. 22), to which she added some others including a number of

\(^{39}\)In particular, the previous priest is maintained as vice-priest, the members are apparently the same, and the “new” rules are designated as a renewal of the former statutes (\textit{ἀνάκτησις} τὰ ἄδογματα [l. 14-15]).

\(^{40}\)The city of Nakone was experiencing unrest resulting from two opposing factions. A scheme for reconciliation was devised in which groups of five, consisting of members from each faction and the general populace, were concocted through ballot. These groups were then to live as “elective brothers with each other harmoniously in full justice and friendship” (Lupu’s translation; \textit{NGSL}, 350).

\(^{41}\)These are early discovered and extensive inscriptions which are most often cited together as examples of the founding of testamentary associations. For example: Poland, \textit{Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesen}, 87-88, 272-273; Mariano San Nicolò, \textit{Ägyptisches Vereinswesen}, 2:8 n. 4; Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 33; Lupu, \textit{NGSL}, 86-87.
women. The foundation encouraged not only the fulfilment of obligations to the dead, but also institutionalized family reunions centred around elaborate annual banquets. (*IG XII/3 330* [Thera; ca. 210-195 BCE]); 2) Poseidonios of Halicarnasus, in response to an answer from the oracle of Apollo, set up an endowment “for the sake of his family and his descendants and their husbands and wives and for those who would be given permission by them to sacrifice” (ll. 12-14). The revenue from dedicated lands, including those surrounding the family tomb, went toward annual festivities including sacrifices and a votive offering. The designated family participants in the sacrifices are referred to as part of a *thiasos* (l. 45), members of a cult association. (*SIG* 1044 [Halicarnasus, Caria; third cent BCE]); 3) Diomedon of Cos endowed a funerary foundation in honour of Heracles Diomedonteios, dedicating a plot of land, lodging facilities, and a slave (and his descendants). Libys, the slave, and his children were to remain free as long as they performed their related obligatory services. For Diomedon, Libys served functionally as a relative; this fits with the report of Polybius (20.6.5-6) that in Boeotia in the early second century BCE men would bequeath property to friends rather than kin, considering them to be more reliable in keeping the customary ministrations.  

42 (*SIG* 1106 [= *IKos* PH 36] [Cos; third or second century BCE]). A similar foundation was established near Ephesos by one Peplos, who, in order to ensure the ongoing commemorative rites, founded an association of *herostai* (*IEph* 3214 and 3334 [Tire, territory of Ephesos; end of first century CE]). 43 Jones’ translation of the reconstructed text clearly shows the concocted character of the association: “but if any of the aforementioned friends of Peplos, to whom the privilege of participation in the funerary cult (?) has been deeded, dies childless in the lifetime

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42 Sarah B. Pomeroy, *Families in Classical and Hellenistic Greece: Representations and Realities* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997), 113. As she notes, Polybius reports that, even for those with kin, property would be left to eating clubs as an enticement for them to carry out the proper ceremonies.

of Peplos, he (that is, Peplos) shall appoint another *herostes* from among his (that is, the deceased’s) relatives (?) in that man’s place” (ll.17-20).  

Given these exclusions we will examine the records for self-organized and founded groups. When adjusted for the exclusion of concocted groups, this fits with San Nicolò’s summary of the general findings on the founding of associations: “Es sind zwei Hauptfälle zu unterscheiden, erstens der freiwillige Zusammentritt der ersten Mitglieder ohne besonderes Hervorragen der Tätigkeit einer Hauptperson [self-organized groups] and zweitens der Zusammentritt unter Führung und Leitung einer Einzelperson [founded and concocted groups].”

3.2.1.1. Founding Associations: Founded Groups

In the epigraphical sources we find direct evidence for founding in: 1) the record of a group founding using, for example, κτίζω or συνάγω; or 2) the titles of individuals; or 3) the titles of associations incorporating the founder’s name.

**Record of Founding.** Several inscriptions mention the activity of founding an association. One from the first century CE tells the story of the much earlier (third century BCE) introduction of the Dionysian mysteries to Magnesia on the Meander (*IMagnMai* 215a [Magnesia on the Meander;
mid first century CE"). The story tells of a miraculous sign which led the people to inquire of the Delphic oracle. The response included the command to dedicate temples to Dionysos and to import from the holy plain of Thebes three maenads (women inspired to ritualized frenzy in their ecstatic worship of the Dionysios):

Go to the holy plain of Thebes to get maenads from the race of Cadmean Ino. They will bring you maenadic rites and noble customs and will establish cult associations (thiasoi)\(^{47}\) of Bacchus [θιάσους Βάκχοιο καθεδρύσουσιν] in your city. In accordance with the oracle, and through envoys, three maenads were brought from Thebes: Cosco, Baubo and Thettale. And Cosco gathered the thiasos named after the plane-tree [συνήγαγεν θιασόν τὸν Πλατανιστηνόν], Baubo the thiasos outside the city [τὸν πρὸ πόλεως], and Thettale the thiasos named after Cataebates [τὸν καταβατών].\(^{48}\) (ll. 24-36)

The rites of the cult were already established and the women were portrayed as gatherers (or gathering-points) of the cult associations.

A third century BCE thiasos in Athens consisting of about sixty θιασόταται honoured its founder and benefactor, Sophron (IG II\(^2\) 1297 [Athens; third century BCE]). In part he was honoured for “generously and diligently” organizing the thiasos (ἐπειδὴ Σώφρων καλῶς καὶ θ[υλ.]οτίμως συνήγαγε τὸν θιασὸν [ll. 3-4]). After the founding, Sophron remained as the ἄρχερανιστῆς (ll. 10, 15-16, 23-24).\(^{49}\)

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47 Marie-Françoise Baslez finds differing connotations for the terms thiasos and thiasitai with thiasos referring to a cult association gathered around a founding individual and thiasitai specifying a cult association organized by the deity (Marie-Françoise Baslez, “Les communautés d’orientaux dans la cité grecque: Formes de sociabilité et modes de sociabilité” in L’étranger dans le monde grec [ed. Raoul Lonis; Nancy: Presses universitaires de Nancy, 1988], 139-158, here 140-142. This would fit with the usage we find here. See also Bradley McLean for a further distinction between the terms (Bradley H. MacLean, “Hierarchically Organised Associations on Delos,” in Atti dell’ XI Congresso di Epigrafia Greca e Latina, Roma, 18-24 settembre 1997 [ed. S. Panciera; 2 vols.; Rome: Edizioni Quasar, 1999], 1:361-370).


49 The exact nature of the title in the Athenian context is not clear. Arnaoutoglou notes that in Athens ἄρχερανιστής appears mostly in groups which do not call themselves ἔρανισται, and there are doubts about his prominence in the associative context” (Ilia N. Arnaoutoglou, “ἈΡΧΕΡΑΝΙΣΤΗΣ and Its Meaning in Inscriptions,” ZPE 104 (1994): 107-110, here 109-110).
Similarly, in the first century BCE, an Athenian koinon of followers of Artemis Soteira passed a resolution to honour their founder and benefactor, Diodoros (IG II² 1343 [Athens; first century BCE]). He not only gathered the initial group but, remaining as leader, he provided a firm base for the association: “and having been also responsible for the earlier gathering and having himself founded the synodos he patiently remained as archeranistes and . . . he was leader resulting in the synodos being firmly founded” (γενηθεὶς διῆς | καὶ παραίτιος τῆς ἀνωθέν συλλογῆς καὶ | τὴν σύνοδον αὐτὸς κτίσας ἀρχερανιστῆς ὑπέμεινεν, . . . προεστάτησεν τοῦ θεμελιωθῆναι τὴν σύνοδον)⁵¹

An epigram for a certain Menophilos suggests a founding function in several cult associations (IMansiaMus 354 [unknown provenance (vicinity of Magnesia Sipylos); 180/1 CE or 234/5 CE]). “I, (who) formerly (was) the founder of cult association(s), lie here, I who first kept zeal and faith toward (each) cult association . . .” (Τὸν θειάσων ἀρχηγὸν Ἐ.ΕΝ τότε ἐνθάδε κείμαι | [δ]ὲς πρῶτος θειάσω σπουδήν | [π]είστιν δ’ ἐφύλαξα· . . . [ll. 1-4]).⁵² The chief characteristic portrayed of the founder is loyalty to the group.

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⁵¹Note that terminologically we have a θίμασος (l.4; cf. ll. 9, 15, 20, 22) with an ἀρχερανιστής (ll. 10, 15-16, 23) and of which part was (or perhaps all) a κοινόν (ll. 3, 6, 8).

⁵²Arnaoutoglou notes that in this inscription the position is of lesser importance than that of treasurer and priest and evidently is more closely tied to the accumulation of social capital than an actual authoritative role in the association (“ἈΡΧΕΡΑΝΙΣΤΗΣ,” 108-109).

⁵¹Note that terminologically we have a σύνοδος (ll. 10, 12, 15, 27, 34) which evidently was considered an ἔρανος (l. 26; ἀρχερανιστής in ll. 12-13, 33, 37) and of which part was (or perhaps all) a κοινόν (ll. [8], 32, 37-38).

⁵²Both Hasan Malay (Greek and Latin Inscriptions in the Manisa Museum, [Ergänzungsbände zu den Tituli Asiae Minoris 19; Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1994], 108) and Harland (Associations, Synagogues and Congregations, 86) take ἀρχηγὸς as a leader of the cult association(s). Given the reference to being the first to observe loyalty and that ἀρχηγὸς commonly refers to the one who establishes a group, it is better to take it here as founder.
**Title of Founder.** A number of inscriptions simply provide the description of or title of an individual as founder.\(^{53}\) An inscription from Melos provides the barest of information, merely describing an individual as the founder of a mystery association (IG XII/3 1098 [Melos]): Αγαθὴ Τύχη Μήλου εἰλεως Ἀλεξάνδρῳ κτίστη ἐιερῶν μυστῶν.

In Egypt, in a number of first century BCE inscriptions and papyri, the title *synagogos* apparently refers to the founder of an association (usually a *synodos*).\(^{54}\) In a dedication of the τόπος (meeting place, sanctuary, temple, or sacred land?) of a *synodos* of Isis Sonnonais in Arsinoite we find the high priest Onnophris also called *synagogos*: τόπος Ἔννοιατικῆς συνόδου δὲν συναγογός Ὀννώφρις ἀλεσόνης (IFayum 3.205 [Arsinoite, Fayum; 51 BCE]). In most records the *synagogos* is also the president of the association:

- *IGRR* I, 1095 [= SB 8795] (Egypt; 29/8 BCE): Συνίστωρ συναγ[ωγεύς] καὶ προστατήσας
- *SB* 639 (Egypt; 25 BCE): a dedication: Ἡ σωτίωνος τοῦ Ἀσιβάτος συ[να]γογοῦ προστατήσας

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\(^{53}\) Often κτίστης refers to city founding or it is used in honouring a benefaction. For example, an association of textile workers in Temenothyrai honoured a military commander as κτίστην καὶ φιλόπατριν, a reference to benefaction to the city or the group, rather than signifying founding of the group (MAMA VI, 167 [= BCH 19 (1895): 557, no. 3; SEG 6.167; AE (1977): 227-228, no. 802]).

\(^{54}\) However, as San Nicolò notes, συναγωγός, συναγωγεύς and ἀρχισυναγωγός could simply refer to the one who calls together the association for meetings (Ägyptisches Vereinswesen, 2:8 n.3). He proposes that in the cases where the individual with the title is the first listed or the title is the first in a list, then the title refers to the founder of the association. Given the possibility of rank ordering in the lists and the prominence of the founder of a group this is a reasonable, though not necessarily sure, proposal.

\(^{55}\) This perhaps should be συναγ[ωγίς] instead of συναγ[ωγεύς].
Two documents preserve decisions of the Alexandrian Sebaste synodos. In BGU IV 1137 (Alexandria; 6 BCE) this association of imperial slaves decided to take on the debts of the priest Lucundos. In addition to the priest, mention is made of the gymnasiarch Alexandros and of the synagogos and president Primos ήζ συναγωγευς και προστάτης Πρίμος Καίσαρος [ll. 3-4]). A further meeting six months later is recorded in SB 15460 [= P.Berol. Inv. Nr. 25159].

It appears that in the time between the documents the association had chosen a new executive and had placed Lucundos as president with Primos remaining as synagogos. The retention of the title synagogos fits with the term referring to the founding of the association. In addition, although the name of the member being honoured is not legible, it could well be that Primos was being honoured for his service as president. If so, his service from the beginning of the group might be touched on in lines 13-14, “during the entire time from the beginning he has conducted himself zealously and faithfully” (ἐν παντὶ τῷ τῆς ἀρχῆς χρόνῳ σπουδαίως καὶ π. [. ]ιως ἄνεστραπται). Here we find characteristics of a founder (σπουδή and πίστις) similar to IMansiaMus 354.

**Title of Association.** There are associations which are designated using a substantivalized prepositional phrase with συν, μετά or περί and a name. Whether this refers to a group

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57Guy Wagner and Jan Quaegebeur suggest συναγωγευς instead of συναγωγευς au dieu égyptien Mestasytmis de la part de son synode,” *BIAFO* [1973]: 104-108, here 107).

58A number of examples are found in Cos: *IKos* PH 155, 156, 157, 158, 159 (boundary markers of burial plots), and 407. See also *IG* XII/1 161, 937; *IG* XII/3 104; *BCH* 4 (1880): 164-167, no. 21.

59For example: οἱ Ἀπροδεσισταῖ οἱ μετὰ Αρχηστο <φ>άν (ll. 1-2) (*IKyme* 32 [Neonteichos]). Harland notes, concerning a series of tombs in the vicinity of Lamos in central Rough Cilicia, that for shared tombs many simply provide “a statement of the leader’s name followed by a list of ‘those with him’ (οἱ μετὰ αὐτοῦ; *IKilikiaBM* 1 34; *IKilikiaBM* 1 201)” (“Familial Dimensions of Group Identity I,” 497).

60For example: *BCH* 24 (1900): 317 [= *Dodone* (Ioannina) 18 (1989): 203-382, no. 125] has those around the benefactor; *CIRB* 987 and 988 have those around a priest; *EKM* 1. Beroia 371 [= *SEG* 27.267] has those around the
archisynagogos. See also IG IV 757; IG X/2.1 679; IG X/2.1 933; IGBulg 20.

61 “Ob sie Gründer, Reformer oder Vorstände der Kollegien waren, ist im einzelnen Falle nicht zu entscheiden; jedenfalls werden wenigstens im Dienste des Vereins tätige Persönlichkeiten auch in Rhodos, wie anderwärts, zunächst mit einer präpositionalen Wendung in Verbindung mit dem Vereinsnamen aufgeführt” (Poland, Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesen, 75).


64 There is uncertainty here which San Nicolò notes (Agyptisches Vereinswesen, 2:7 n. 3).

65 The name of the individual may well be someone who concocted the group (for example, Doryphoros’ association may well be individuals associated with his property in Egypt who have been drawn together by him without his actual participation in the group), or a benefactor who has significantly aided the group, or the actual founder of the group.

referred by a current leader or a group having originally gathered around an individual is difficult to determine, though it does appear that many do refer to current leaders (particularly for περί + name).

In Egypt we find associations labelled by σύνοδος plus a personal name (in the genitive case). In the inscription SB 15149 (Tebtynis, Egypt; second half of first century CE) we find Onnophris, president σύνοδος Δωρόφορος (l. 3). This is an association founded by (or in some manner significantly related to) Doryphoros the notorious freedman in the reign of Nero. In several listings of accounts in papyri we find similarly named associations: a beer-seller made note of a σύνοδος Αντωνιας (l. 35) (P.Teb. 401 [Tebtynis Egypt; beginning first century CE]); a fragment of accounts received lists σύνοδος Αμίης (l. 3) (P.Teb. 573 [Tebtynis Egypt; late first century BCE]); an extended account from the papers of Heroninos of receipts and expenditures on a property includes σύνοδος Ευιδάς (l. 70) and σύνοδος Σωτάτας (l. 122) (P. Lond. III p.193ff [ Egypt; 258/9 CE]). Whether these actually record the founder of a founded group is impossible to establish. If these do indicate the founder (and that may well be a reasonable assumption), then all that we are actually able to say about the founding is that the founder has had...
a significant impact on the self identity of the group – a not insignificant fact, in that it highlights the continuation of factors involved in the founding of the group into the life of the group.  

Moving outside of Egypt we find a similar phenomenon with associations being labelled by a personal name in the genitive. In Larissa we find an early example in the heading of an inscription listing members of an association, “The Heraclean koinon of Sounidaos” (Σουινίδαουν τὸ κοινὸν Ἐιρακλεί [ll. 1-2]) (IG IX/2 580 [Larissa, Thessaly; fourth or third century BCE]). A partially preserved law of a Dionysiac thiasos in Physkos is labelled νόμος θιάσου Ἀμανδου (ll. 1-2) (IG IX/2 3 670 [= LSCG 181][Physkos, Lokris; second century BCE]) and Sokolowski assumes “Amandos a été fondateur du thiase.”

Some references to founders take an adjectival form: the final lines of a decree from Kyme note that “this stele belonging to the members of the association of Menekleides is sacred to Dionysos” with the association being designated by τῶν θιάσωταν τῶν Μενεκλείδα (ll. 5-6) (IKyme 30 [Kyme; second century BCE]). A number of instances use an adjectival form of the personal name with the ending -είος. For example, we find in Chalcedon the sale of a priesthood of the twelve gods of a koinon of members of a thiasos founded by one Nicomachos: δισα κα τῷ [κοι]νῷ τῶι [κοι]νῷ τῶι

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66 Holly Arrow, Joseph E. McGrath, and Jennifer L. Berdahl, Small Groups as Complex Systems: Formation, Coordination, Development, and Adaptation (Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications, 2000), 79-80. We will take advantage of this feature of small groups to investigate areas in which Pauline groups were later impacted by factors occurring as they coalesced.

67 Poland notes that the unusual form of the name and suggests that it is genitive (Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesen, 74).


69 Horsleys’s translation. He notes, “We may infer from the way that the members of this thiasos call their group after Menekleides that he was its founder” (NewDocs 1 [1981]: 21 no. 2).
In addition to the examples below, one may add: *IG XII/1 701* (Camiros, Rhodes; first century BCE), an honourific inscription which lists contributions by several associations, including ὑπὸ Νακορείων (ll. 11-12); *IG XII/1 918* (Lindos, Rhodes; first or second century CE), has honours provided ὑπὸ Σύλλατταν Λολλείων παιδευτῶν τῶν | σὺν Σύλλαττα (ll. 2-4) – perhaps indicating the founder and a current official of the group; and *IRhod B 604* (Rhodian Peraia Idyma; first half of first century BCE) provides an example in an area of Rhodian influence listing the group honouring Athanagoras of Rhodes as τὸ κοινὸν τῶ[ν] | Σωσίτειον (ll. 3-4).

This form, however, is found most often on Rhodes and associated regions.⁷⁰

About two hundred associations from Rhodes are known dating from the third century BCE to the second century CE. Given the rich epigraphical record we are able to move beyond the minimal information found in the mere recording of the name of a founder. Vincent Gabrielsen has investigated the political and economic activities of Rhodian associations and in doing so has provided a portrait of a number of group founders.⁷¹

A selective epigraphical survey will illustrate Gabrielsen’s findings.

In *NSER* 18 [cf. *Gnomon* 2 (1926): 196-197] (Rhodos; after 88 BCE) we find a certain Polykles being honoured by a group founded by Antiochos,⁷² τιμαθέντα ὑπὸ Ἀπολλωνιαστάν Ἀντιοχείων συστρατευσαμένῳ (ll. 26-27). Polykles, the holder of important offices, is himself the founder of two further associations which also honour him in the same inscription: στεφανωθέντα χρυσέσις σταφάνοις δυσί . . . ὑπὸ Ἀφροδισιαστάν ἀλκιωτὰν Πολυβικείων κοινοῦ (ll. 23-24); τιμαθέντα ὑπὸ

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⁷⁰ In addition to the examples below, one may add: *IG XII/1 701* (Camiros, Rhodes; first century BCE), an honourific inscription which lists contributions by several associations, including ὑπὸ Νακορείων | [- - - - κοινοῦ] (ll.11-12); *IG XII/1 918* (Lindos, Rhodes; first or second century CE), has honours provided ὑπὸ Σύλλατταν Λολλείων παιδευτῶν τῶν | σὺν Σύλλαττα (ll. 2-4) – perhaps indicating the founder and a current official of the group; and *IRhod B 604* (Rhodian Peraia Idyma; first half of first century BCE) provides an example in an area of Rhodian influence listing the group honouring Athanagoras of Rhodes as τὸ κοινὸν τῶ(ν) | Σωσίτειον (ll. 3-4).


⁷² Perhaps the same man attested as the commander of a squadron in *IG XII/1 43* (ll. 7-8).

⁷³ Gabrielsen notes that associations in Rhodes were intimately connected to the military and naval establishment and so many possessed military and naval subsections including those referred to “as (syn)strateuomenoi (crews of naval vessels), syskanoi (soldiers sharing a tent or barracks), mesoneoi (rowers on warships), or finally as a dekas (a specific detachment of a naval crew, commanded by a dekarchos)” (“The Rhodian Associations,” 222).
Πολυκλέιων Βοσσᾶν κοινοῦ (l. 27). We find again the latter association honouring another Rhodian in IG XII/1 102 (ll. 1, 8) (Rhodos; early first century BCE).

In IG XII/1, 75b (Rhodos; early first century BCE) Theaidetos, son of Autokrates, is honoured by the *damos* and by the crew he founded, τιμα[θέντα] ὑπὸ Θεαδητείων συνστρατισμένων τοῦ κοινοῦ (ll. 7-8). Theaidetos served as *hierothytes* (86 BCE) and was priest of Athana Lindia (62 BCE).

A boundary stone, Λυσιμαχείων, (Pugliese-Carratelli 1939-1940, no. 9 [p.152] [= *ASAtene* 22:152, no. 9]; [Rhodos; first century BCE]) marked the property of an association probably founded by Lysimachos, son of Aristeidas, an officer on warships, *hagemon* over Rhodes, and a recipient of honours from the Panathenian crew *koinon* (*Clara Rhodos* 2 [1932]: 190, no. 19 [Rhodes; first century BCE]).

That the top echelon of Rhodian society was involved in founding associations is further seen in IG XII/1 163 (Peraia, Rhodes; first century BCE), which records in a wreath Ἀπολλωνιαστῶν Θεαί(α)δητείων Ἀστυμηδείων. The founders, Theaidetos and his son Astymedes both served as admirals and ambassadors to Rome. Theaidetos was priest of Halios and a representative negotiating the issue of the status of Lycia. Astymedes served as priest of Athana Lindia (154 BCE). In addition, Pugliese-Carratelli 1939-1940, no. 19 (p. 165) [= *ASAtene* 22:165, no. 19] (Rhodes; late third century BCE), an inscription in which the honours of 27 different bodies are recorded for one Hagetor (apparently), includes a group founded by the admiral Pausistratos (l. 4)

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74 Giovanni Pugliese-Carratelli ("Per la storia delle associazioni in Rodi antica," *ASAtene* 22 [1939-1940]: 165, no. 19 l. 37) records a further association which may have been begun by another member of the family.

75 As Gabrielsen notes this association provides a context for Livy’s (37.12.8) comment that young aristocrats were attracted to naval service by Pausistratos ("The Rhodian Associations," 224).
and two associations founded by Hagetor himself (ll. 14, 33). Numerous other inscriptions record the elite of Rhodes intimately connected with the founding of associations.76

We also find upwardly mobile migrants to Rhodes founding groups. Hermogenes, a native of Lycian Phaselis, founded and handled the property transactions of a group dedicated to Aphrodite whose benefactor was Zenon from Selge (Pugliese-Carratelli 1939-1940, no. 18A-B [p.156] [= ASAtene 22:156, no. 18] [ll. 37-38, 40, 48, 49-50, 52] [Rhodos; second century BCE]). The association also had a number of other foreigners, including among the officials a Galatian and an Arab. Around the same time Nikasion from Kyzikos founded77 an elaborately structured association, which with its three phylai mirrored the three phylai of Rhodes. These tribes were named after family members and included his extended family, other foreigners and some Rhodians. Nikasion’s sons were sculptors and may well have been responsible for attracting into the group several famous sculptors. Competitions between the phylai were organized, but the life of the group went far beyond that with the association coming to own, at the least, a meeting place, a cemetery and a vineyard.

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76Gabrielsen further records (The Naval Aristocracy, 2001):
ILindos II 251 (l. 9) (Lindos, Rhodos; 115 BCE): “Hermaistai Alkimedonteioi” (115 BCE), whose founder was stratagos Alkimedon son of Alkistratos, honoured Mkythos benefactor priest of Athana Lindia;
IG XII/1 101 (ll. 3, 7) (Rhodes; second or first century BCE): “Hermaistai Autonomoi” founded by Autonomos;
ILindos II 264 (l. 10,13) (Lindos, Rhodes; ca. 125-100 BCE): “Letodoreioi Pausistrateioi,” one of whose founders was Letodoros, priest of Athana Lindia (163 BCE) (the other founder may have been the admiral Pausistratos [who also founded the koinon Pausistrateioi]);
ILindos II 292 (ll. 5-6) (Lindos, Rhodes; 88-85 BCE): “Haliastai Haliadai Hesteioi,” founded by Hesteios, commander of a squadron of tetrereis (I Lindos 303.13), honoured (along with other groups) Timachidas author of Lindian Temple Chronicle;
IG XII/1 937 (ll. 3-4) (Lindos, Rhodes; third or second century BCE): “Dionysiastai Athanaistai Diosatabyriastai Euphranoriol,” founded by the father or son (more likely) of the admiral Damagoras.

77Attested by both the use of the adjectival form of his name used in the name of the association in one inscription (AM 25 [1900]: 109 no. 108 [Rhodos]) and, in another inscription, the direct statement, [Νι]κασίον ... κτίστας τοῦ ... κοινοῦ (l. 59) (IG XII/1 127 [Rhodes; second century BCE]).
Gabrielsen notes several features of the involvement of the Rhodian aristocracy in the founding of associations. The founding of these associations provided the aristocracy with control over the resources needed for the supply of manpower for the fleet and for other instruments used in furnishing the national commodity of ‘protection’ on the sea. The associations also supplied a local political following. As importantly, the associations provided a forum for the generation of honour of which founders not only received their own due amount but also received the reflected prestige of the activities of associations branded with their name.

**Summary.** Although the material on the actual founding of founded associations is sparse, it does contain some valuable information. The reasons for founding match the variety seen among associations – their founding may have been bound up with economic and political aims, as in Rhodes, or have been the outgrowth of cult activity, or have been related to need satisfaction in the areas of survival or belonging. The actual founding of a group is recognized as a distinct phase and it is distinguished from a further firm establishing of the group (IG II2 1343). The founders themselves are noted for their loyalty to the group with the use of such terms as σπουδή and πίστις (IMansiaMus 354; SB 15460). Concerning the ongoing position of the founder, we see that although the founder might remain in an executive position in the group, this need not be so (SB 15460).

### 3.2.1.2. Founding Associations: Self-Organized Groups

An Athenian second century CE group introduced their corporate laws with:

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79See below in the section on Prefiliation: Context in the chapter summary §3.3.
80A number of earlier lines have been lost; this is the last stanza before the laws of the group.
Judge’s translation, “Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?,” 522.

Arnaoutoglou claims that this is the only document showing the establishment of an association by the will of a group of individuals (“Between koinon and idion: Legal and Social Dimensions of Religious Associations in Ancient Athens” in Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens [eds. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 68-83, here 70).

Judge assumes that the prosta/thj (l. 34) is the patron who founded the club (“Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?,” 506).

Friends here appears to refer to members of the association. On ‘friends’ as association members see Marcus N. Tod, “A Statute of an Attic Thiasos,” The Annual of the British School at Athens 13 (1906-7): 328-338, here 332; Harland, Associations, Synagogues and Congregations, 500. Friends as members of an association are found in: IG II 1275 (Piraeus; late fourth or early third century BCE). Here the laws of the association regulate the procedures to follow after the death of a member. Notification of a death is to be given to relatives and ‘friends’ and the funeral is to be attended by members. As well the ‘friends’ are to render aid to one another when one is wronged and those acting contrary to the laws are to be punished. Unfortunately the first three lines are mutilated and so it is impossible to ascertain whether this inscription begins in

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81 Judge’s translation, “Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?,” 522.

82 Arnaoutoglou claims that this is the only document showing the establishment of an association by the will of a group of individuals (“Between koinon and idion: Legal and Social Dimensions of Religious Associations in Ancient Athens” in Kosmos: Essays in Order, Conflict and Community in Classical Athens [eds. Paul Cartledge, Paul Millett, and Sitta von Reden; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998], 68-83, here 70).

83 Judge assumes that the προστάτης (l. 34) is the patron who founded the club (“Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?,” 506).

84 Friends here appears to refer to members of the association. On ‘friends’ as association members see Marcus N. Tod, “A Statute of an Attic Thiasos,” The Annual of the British School at Athens 13 (1906-7): 328-338, here 332; Harland, Associations, Synagogues and Congregations, 500. Friends as members of an association are found in: IG III 1081; IG III 1089; IG III 1102 (ephebes; Athens; c. 120 C.E.); ISaittai 29 [= SEG 29.1188] (Saittai; 170-171 CE); ISaittai 31 [= SEG 29.1195] (Saittai; 194-195 CE); IPrusaOlymp 17 (Prusa; 2nd cent. C.E.); IPrusaOlymp 18 (Prusa; 2nd cent. C.E.); IPrusaOlymp 24 (Prusa; 1st cent. C.E.); ISymrna 720; IGLAM 798 (Kotiaion, Aezanatis Valley); IAsos 116; IMagnMai 502 (a Dionysiac group); IMylasa 571-575; TAM V 93 (Saittai; 225 C.E.); IPontos-Bithynia 57 (= SEG 35 [1985] 1337; Amastris, Pontus); Hicks 1891: 228-9, no. 5 (Olba, Cilicia); IAsMinLyk I 69 (Xanthos, Lycia); MAMA III 580, 780, 788 (Korykos).

While ‘friend’ may have had an affective component (see David Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997]) the emphasis for those in associations is upon loyalty.
a similar manner to *IG II*² 1369, which if it had, may have attested to it being a self-organized
group.⁸⁵

The reason for the paucity of self-organized group inscriptions in comparison to those for
founded groups is related to the public and honourific nature of the inscriptions – there are fewer
reasons to mention that a group has been self-organized than to mention a founder. However, a
cultural preference for founded groups is also at play here. Individuals in a vertical collectivist
culture would have found the guidance of a founder in establishing a group to be more comfortable
than negotiating the socially nebulous world of a proto-group without a founder.

### 3.2.1.3. Founding Associations: Diaspora Synagogues

In recent years a number of full scale studies of the ancient synagogue have appeared.⁸⁶
Several of these, along with other recent works, have examined first century Jewish diaspora
synagogues as a social model for the liturgy, development, architecture, or, above all, the
organization of early Christian communities.⁸⁷ Given the sparse evidence concerning ancient

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⁸⁵Ascough suggests: “It is possible that this inscription began with an enactment formula like that found in *IG II*² 1369. This enactment then becomes the ‘law of the subscribers’ and thus the foundational document for the association” (*Paul's Macedonian Associations*, 29-30).


synagogues and the varying approaches it is not surprising that debates have arisen concerning method, terminology, development, social location, function, and origins.

The recent discussions have highlighted some elements which indirectly impact our investigation of group founding. First, one must be clear about what is being investigated when referring to the synagogue in the diaspora: buildings, community, or gatherings? We are looking at groups which met regularly and voluntarily. Second, the Jewish community was integrated into the local city and yet retained a distinct identity. Thus the forms of organization will have taken on local flavours, while still maintaining similarities with other diaspora communities. Third, connected to the preceding point, the synagogues themselves were viewed as associations and

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93 Were synagogues used for worship or study? Was there Sabbath worship? For example, taking opposing views are McKay, “Ancient Synagogues,” and Pieter van den Horst, “Was the Synagogue a Place of Sabbath Worship before 70 C.E.?” in *Jews, Christians, and Polytheists in the Ancient Synagogue: Cultural Interaction during the Greco-Roman Period* (ed. Steven Fine; London: Routledge, 1999), 18-43.

94 Did diaspora synagogues develop as extensions of the Jerusalem temple, as substitution for the temple, as cult centres, as study places, as community centres, as outgrowths of household worship, etc.?

adopted elements of the structure of associations. These associations, as with all associations, would have included, at the least, religious and social elements.

It should also be noted that in addition to being similar to associations, the local Jewish customs (especially food and behavioural regulations) and gatherings (including study of an authoritative text) would have appeared to be like philosophical schools. In fact, we have the following: ancient sources label Jews as philosophers; Philo, for his own apologetic purposes, presents Sabbath practices as occupation with the philosophy of the fathers; Josephus likens the Jewish sects to philosophical schools; and the focus on study and moral improvement would have paralleled concerns of the philosophical schools.

**Founding Diaspora Synagogues.** What direct information is there which relates to the founding of these groups? A non-diaspora source (from Jerusalem), the pre-70 CE Theodotos

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inscription (CIJ 1404). does mention the founders of a synagogue: the ‘fathers’ of Theodotos, the elders and Simonides. While it is clear that Theodotos is involved in the construction of a building, the role of the founders is not clear: does provision of a foundation \( \theta \epsilon \mu \epsilon \mid \lambda [\omega] \sigma \alpha \nu \) (ll. 8-9)] refer to the actual creation of the group involved or does it refer to firmly establishing a group after its initial founding? The latter is more likely given the inter-generational nature of the founders and the use of the term in IG II² 1343. However, whether creators or later group members are mentioned, at the most we have names and social status of the synagogue founders.

In the diaspora only indirect information is available. Whether the result of deportation, military service, or trade, Jewish settlers were found in cities and towns throughout the Greco-Roman world. One may assume that, given ethnic connections, groups would have formed, including those which developed into diaspora synagogues. We have no records of the actual beginnings of these groups; however, in those cities in which multiple synagogue groups are found, we may find some information on the founding of the synagogue groups. While there is evidence of multiple synagogues in several cities, Rome provides the most useful information. Catacomb

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106See Kloppenborg, “Dating Theodotos.”
107Theodotos’ father, Vettenus, and his grandfather are mentioned in the inscription as archisynagogoi.
108Theodotos’ family, besides being priestly, was wealthy enough to undertake the building project and apparently enjoyed a long lasting connection with the aristocracy in Jerusalem . . . , a Roman family, and an otherwise unknown Simonides” (Kloppenborg, “Dating Theodotos,” 277).
109The meeting place of these original groups most likely accords with the suggestion of Fitzpatrick-McKinley: “In any given city where Jews lived, it is reasonable to suggest that the newer and smaller the community, the more likely it is that it met in the informal setting of houses . . . The meetings of Jews in neighbour’s houses were probably intended to encourage solidarity and to discuss common interests and concerns” (“Synagogue Communities,” 58-59).
110For example, Philo mentions proseuchai in Alexandria (Flacc. 53, 122, Legat. 132, 134); an inscription in Thessaloniki warns that placing a body in a sarcophagus will result in a fine payable “to the synagogues” (IJO 1.Mac15 [Thessaloniki; third century CE]) (see Pantelis M. Nigdelis, “Synagogue(n) und Gemeinde der Juden in Thessalonika: Fragen aufgrund einer neuen jüdischen Grabinschrift der Kaiserzeit,” ZPE 102 (1994): 297-306, and Irina Levinskaya, The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting [vol. 5 of The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1996], 155-156); in Side, in a later inscription, a “first synagogue” is mentioned, thus, perhaps, implying more than one (IJO 2.219 [Side; 220 CE or fourth or fifth century CE]).
inscriptions, some dating back to the first century, mention somewhere between ten and sixteen different synagogues. The names of these synagogues give glimpses of the originating context of the groups: several are named after prominent individuals (Augustus, Agrippa, Volumnius, and Herod[?]) and, while not necessarily referring to direct involvement of the individual in the beginning of the synagogue, the names do show that the Jewish community honoured the individual, presumably for some benefit (received or anticipated) to the community; there are those referring to the origins of the members of the earliest synagogues: the synagogue of the Hebrews and the synagogue of ‘Vernaclesians’ (native-born Jews); the names of later synagogues may have referred to the place of origin of original group members (Tripoli, Rhodes[?], Elaea[?], Secenia[?]).

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106 *JIWE* 2.96, 169?, 189, 194, 542, 547 [= *CIJ* 301, 338, 368, 416, 496, 284]

107 *JIWE* 2.130?, 170, 549, 562 [= *CIJ* 425, 365, 503, 733e]

108 *JIWE* 2.100, 163, 167, 577 [= *CIJ* 402, 417, 343, 523]

109 *JIWE* 2.292 [= *CIJ* 173]. The inscription is fragmentary and the name may refer to a synagogue of Herodians (Peter Richardson, “Augustan-Era Synagogues in Rome” in *Judaism and Christianity in First-Century Rome* [ed. Karl P. Donfried and Peter Richardson; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1998], 17-29, here 23-28), or to an individual name Rhodian (Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome*, 159-162) or Herodion (*JIWE* 2.292).

110 *JIWE* 2.2, 33, 578, 579 [= *CIJ* 317, 291, 510, 535, 543]. Leon suggests, “The first group of Jews to form a congregation at Rome would naturally have called itself the Congregation or Synagogue of the Hebrews, as different from other religious or ethnic groups . . . As more Jews came to Rome and formed congregations on their own, they adopted appropriate names, while the first congregation retained its original name” (*The Jews of Ancient Rome*, 149).

111 *JIWE* 2.106, 114, 117, 540 [= *CIJ* 398, 318, 383, 494]

112 *JIWE* 2.113?, 166 [= *CIJ* 408?, 390]. The reference in *JIWE* 2.113 may refer to the deceased being from Tripoli rather than a synagogue originally composed of members from Tripoli.

113 This has been suggested for *JIWE* 2.292 [= *CIJ* 173].

114 *JIWE* 2.406, 576 [= *CIJ* 281, 509]. The name is puzzling and a number of suggestions have been offered with the most probable being that it pertains to an olive tree or to a city Elaea. See Leon, *The Jews of Ancient Rome*, 145-147.

115 *JIWE* 2.436 [= *CIJ* 7]. This may refer to a city of origin for the first members; however, the meaning is uncertain.
Arca of Lebanon[?]116), members’ trades (Calcaresians117), or to the local district where the members were located (Campesians,118 Siburesians119). We see, then, groups arising, as other associations did, from ethnic, geographic, work120 and neighbourhood connections.

Other Jewish groups, such as the Therapeutae,121 the Essenes122 and the Qumran community,123 have obscure origins and little beyond conjectures of schism and conflict or that “likeminded people began to come together for study purposes”124 can be offered concerning their

116 JIWE 2.568 [= CIJ 501]. There are only copies of the inscription and it is likely that it refers to the city of Arca [Caesarea] Libani and not a synagogue. See Leon, The Jews of Ancient Rome, 163-165 and JIWE 2.568.

117 JIWE 2.1?, 69, 98, 165, 558, 584 [= CIJ 433?, 304, 316, 384, 504, 537]. This synagogue name may refer to lime-burners (individually known as calcariarii, CIL 4.93811, 10.3947), or it may refer to a locality in Rome, Calacaria. See Leon, The Jews of Ancient Rome, 142-144.

118 JIWE 2.288, 560, 577 [= CIJ 88, 319, 523]. The synagogue apparently takes its name from the Campus Martius, where original members were located, or where the building was found.

119 JIWE 2.338, 428, 451, 452, 527, 557 [= CIJ 140, 18, 22, 67, 35a, 380]. “It is practically certain that the congregation derived its name from the Subura, a thickly populated district occupying the valley between the Viminal, the Esquiline, and the Imperial Fora and continuing up the west slop of the Esquiline” (Leon, The Jews of Ancient Rome, 152)

120 Rabbinic material relates that within the grand Alexandrian synagogue, “they would not sit indiscriminately, but goldsmiths would sit by themselves, silversmiths by themselves, weavers by themselves, Tarsian weavers by themselves, and blacksmiths by themselves. And why to such an extent [that is, why the rigid division]? So that if a visitor comes he can [immediately] make contact with his trade, and thus he will be able to make a living.” (t. Sukkah 4:6 [see also y. Sukkah 5.1,55a-b; b. Sukkah 51b]; Levine’s translation, The Ancient Synagogue, 84). As Levine notes the differentiated seating arrangements reflect those found in theatres and auditoriums throughout the Greco-Roman world (The Ancient Synagogue, 87). If this is so, and it is likely, then the seating would also denote that the artisans were viewed as separate groups within the Jewish community, as did groups’ assigned seating in the theatres.


122 Josephus, Vita 10-11, B.J. 2.119-161, A.J. 18.18-22; Philo, Prob. 75-91, Hypoth. 11.1; Pliny, Nat. 5.73.


124 This is Runesson’s conclusion concerning the Therapeutae (The Origins of the Synagogue, 458).
initial formation as small groups. For example, the element of conflict was surely a factor in the the pre-Qumran history of the Qumran community. CD 1:5-11 indicates that at the beginning the movement existed for a period of time (the text designates this as 20 years) without guidance. During that time it appears to have been a subgroup within a larger community which only later crystalized into a group with the input of the ‘teacher of righteousness.’ We see then a group which coalesced when a founder appeared on the scene – this accords with the preference in collectivist cultures for founded groups. As well, the coalescence of the group, though having a strong cognitive component (focused on revelation from the teacher), also had a significant behavioural component found in the common actions brought about by the calendrical and legal views which differentiated the group from others (see, for example, 4QMMT [4Q394-399] and 4QCalendrical Document [4Q320; 4Q321; 4Q325; 4Q326; 4Q337]) and fostered by the internal and external threat to the nascent group.

There is also evidence of Jewish associations within Jewish communities, the most celebrated being the dekania group of “Lovers of Study, also called the All-Blessing” who honoured donors to an undecipherable cause at Aphrodisias (IJO 14A [Aphrodisias; third to fifth century CE]). Here again, though, no information is available concerning the founding of these groups.

125 Another interesting example is found in IJO 2.26 (Nysa; first to third century CE) in which an association named for Dositheos is named alongside the Jewish community (and seems to be an association within the community). The nature of the association or the origin are not given.

Some associations which have been suggested to be Jewish may well not be; for example, in IJO 2.196 [= IHierapMir 23] (Hierapolis; late second century or early third century CE) the associations of purple-dyers and carpet-weavers at Hierapolis, though involved with a Jew, are not Jewish associations – rather they reveal the level of integration of the Jews into the society of Hierapolis (see Philip A. Harland, “Acculturation and Identity in the Diaspora: A Jewish Family and ‘Pagan’ Guilds in Hierapolis,” JJS 57 [2006]: 222-244.).
3.2.1.4. Transforming Associations

A new group may emerge through the transformation of an existing group. This may involve division or reconfiguration of the group. Transformation through division is seen in the account of the schism within the Isthmian Dionysiac artisans. *FD III.2 70* (Delphi; 112 BCE) is part of a larger dossier of inscriptions related to a quarrel between the Athenian and Isthmian Dionysiac artisans and it records an overview of the quarrel, including the Isthmian view of the events of 118/117 BCE. At that time envoys from the Isthmian association had agreed to pay a ten talent fine to the Athenian association. Upon their return to Thebes the envoys were condemned for their actions. However, these emissaries won others to their side and made off with the association records and set up a separate association.126

Direct evidence for the reconfiguration of an association is not found. Yet there may be hints of such transformations. Hicks comments, concerning an inscription by an association of felt makers in Flaviopolis (*JHS* 11 [1890]: 236 [no.1] [Flaviopolis, Cilicia; fourth or fifth century CE]), that “it is interesting to see these trade guilds, so common under the Empire in Asia Minor, passing unchanged into the Christian Church.”127 The collective128 acceptance of the Christian god may well have resulted in a significant change for the group members.129 On Rhodes multiple personal names


127E. L. Hicks, “Inscriptions from Eastern Cilicia,” *JHS* 11 (1890): 236-254, here 236.


129Given the importance of worshipping the gods for associations, the acceptance of the exclusive god of the Christians would be a major change. A less significant change, would occur, for example, with the acceptance by a whole military unit of a new god, such as Iuppiter Dolichenus (Speidel notes that, “the number of corporate dedications to Iuppiter Dolichenus is quite sizable” [Michael P. Speidel, *The Religion of Iuppiter Dolichenus in the Roman Army*...]}
incorporated into the name of an association may well indicate a similar reformation or significant modification of the original group, as may be suggested by Σύλλειτοι Λόλλειτοι in IG XII/1 918 (Lindos, Rhodes; first or second century CE).

3.2.1.5. Secondary Information on the Founding of Associations

There are other sources which provide collateral information on the founding of associations.

Allowance for and Prohibition of Associations. First, there are sources which mention the possible founding of groups tangentially. Two inscriptions from Laurion provide insight into the founding of a cult sanctuary and an associated eranos. IG II² 1365 and 1366 (Laurion; first or second century CE) tell of the setting up of a sanctuary for the god Men by a slave Xanthos of Lycia. The texts are similar and provide the cult rules to be observed in the sanctuary. IG II² 1366 is a revised copy of IG II² 1365 and not only improves on the carving and language of the original inscription but also strengthens the authority of the founder of the sanctuary. The improvements include allowance for founding a club for the god Men Tyrannos (so long as Men – and so also Xanthos – received his portion): τούς δὲ βουλομένους ἔρανον συνάγειν Μηνὶ Τυράννωι, ἐπὶ ἄγαθην τυ[χὴ] ὑμῶν ἀμφότερος ἢ ἐρανισταὶ τὰ καθήκοντα τῶν θεῶν (ll. 21-22) – “those who wish may form a club for Men Tyrannos for good fortune. Likewise, the club members shall provide what is appropriate for the god.”

Here we see the cult infrastructure provided by Xanthos and permission for the founding of a group given by the cult founder, but the

(Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1978), 5]), given the inclusivity in the worship of the gods and that “Roman army religion did not require personal participation . . . Roman army religion was intended by and large to provide cohesion within units, not to display disunities. Particularities were accepted or winked at” (P.M. Brennen, “Jupiter Dolichenus and Religious Life in the Roman Army,” NewDocs 4 [1987]: 118-126, here 125).

actual formation of a convivial association left open to an individual or individuals taking the initiative to organize the group.

On the other hand, there are indications of the active discouragement of group founding. Some existing groups resisted the development of competing groups. In a decree concerning the responsibilities of the leadership of the Thesmophorion in Piraeus (IG II² 1177 [Piraeus; fourth century BCE]) one of the items appears to be a restriction on the founding of other cult groups:

μηδὲ θεία[σο]|ς] συνάγει (ll. 4-5) - “[the priestess and Demarchos are to take care that no one redeems dedicated animals] nor founds (or calls together) thiasoi nor . . .”

In addition there are several legal texts and the ongoing correspondence between the Pliny the Younger and

131 Roberts, Skeat, Nock see this as the convocation of cult groups and not necessarily the founding of groups (“The Gild of Zeus Hypsistos,” 76).

132 Here the restriction may be on the actual founding of competing cult groups. There are also records indicating restrictions on participation in other already existing cults (e.g., the exclusiveness of the Zeus cult at Sardis [Louis Robert, “Une nouvelle inscription greque de Sardes: Reglement de l'authorite perse relatif a un cult de Zeus,” CRAI (1975): 306-330; NewDocs 1 (1981): 32 no. 3; (Sardis; first or second century CE)]) and in other already existing groups (e.g., the restriction on joining other brotherhoods found in the law of the Egyptian association of Zeus Hypsistos [P.London VII 2193 I. 14; (Egypt; first century BCE)]; Roman legislation was enacted in the second century making it unlawful to belong to more than one collegia or association [Digest 47.22.1]). See also Philip A. Harland, “Spheres of Contention, Claims of Pre-eminence: Rivalries among Associations in Sardis and Smyrna,” in Religious Rivalries and the Struggle for Success in Sardis and Smyrna (ed. Richard S. Ascough; SCJ 14; Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005), 53-63, 259-262, here 59-61.

133a Associations and guilds and similar corporations are not allowed to be formed by all persons without discrimination; this is a thing which is kept within certain limits by statutes and decrees of the senate and imperial enactments” (Digest 3.4.1) (Monro’s translation, Charles Henry Monro, The Digest of Justinian [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1904], 172). In the west (Spain) restrictions on group founding/meeting were also found (e.g., Lex Irnitana ch. 74).


There was a diversity of responses throughout the Roman empire to the connection between associations and social unrest. On one hand associations could serve as loci for the internalization of the dominant social values and hierarchy, while on the other hand, as Arnaoutoglou notes, What comes clearly out of these inscriptions is not the fear of associations but the fear of the Roman emperors and governors for social unrest which could take an anti-Roman character. In such a case, it was not associations but mainly professional categories with little organization which were the principal locus of such attitudes and initiatives (“Roman Law and collegia,” 44).
After a devastating fire in Nikomedeia, Pliny suggested to Trajan (Ep. 10.33) that the foundation of an association of firefighters with limited membership (“as they will be so few, it will be easy enough to keep them under proper regulation” [Radice, LCL]) would be advantageous. Trajan refused permission on grounds of maintaining public order (Ep. 10.34). Pliny also reported to Trajan concerning the founding of an eranos in the confederate city of Amisos (Ep. 10.92). Trajan could not oppose the founding given the confederate status of the city and yet, showing his concern regarding “riot and faction,” he noted that “I would have all societies of this nature prohibited” (Ep. 10.93 [Radice, LCL]).

Connections. Second, one may examine associations for elements which may be retrograded to initial conditions. Given the importance of social networks for the coalescence of groups, an examination of the connections found in associations may give some indication of the networks which contributed to their formation and the forces at work in their formation.

‘Association’ is a broad label under which a number of types of groups may be gathered. A particularly suitable classification of associations which focuses on connections within the group (and notes the possibility of garnering information on founding from these connections) has been proposed by Harland:135

Relationships and interpersonal bonds established through social networks help to explain how persons come to associate with one another in particular group settings, as well as pointing toward sources for growth in membership. . . . [I]t is possible to distinguish five common types of associations according to their principal social network basis. There were groups that drew primarily on (1) household connections, (2) ethnic or geographic connections, (3) neighbourhood connections, (4) occupational connections, and (5) cult or temple connections.136

134After a devastating fire in Nikomedeia, Pliny suggested to Trajan (Ep. 10.33) that the foundation of an association of firefighters with limited membership (“as they will be so few, it will be easy enough to keep them under proper regulation” [Radice, LCL]) would be advantageous. Trajan refused permission on grounds of maintaining public order (Ep. 10.34). Pliny also reported to Trajan concerning the founding of an eranos in the confederate city of Amisos (Ep. 10.92). Trajan could not oppose the founding given the confederate status of the city and yet, showing his concern regarding “riot and faction,” he noted that “I would have all societies of this nature prohibited” (Ep. 10.93 [Radice, LCL]).


136Harland, Associations, Synagogues and Congregations, 29. Harland also provides examples of these groups with a focus on Asia (Associations, Synagogues and Congregations, 30-52):

1) Household connections: IGUR 160 (Torre Nova, Rome; c. 150 CE); IGBulg 1865 (Bizye, Thracia; XXX);
As Harland notes this taxonomy does not provide mutually exclusive categories and so there is some undidiness. For example, given the intrinsic connection between ethnicity and religion in the ancient world, it is not surprising that Jewish associations and synagogues may fall under both ethnic and cult categories and, given the structure of cities, that neighbourhood and occupational connections may overlap. As well, multiple layers of connections may be explicit. In addition,
there are further connections which could also be considered: 1) *ideological connections*: where the philosophical schools took on the characteristics of a small group a primary connection between members would have resulted from a common concern for, and agreement on the content of, practical ethics (not only right belief but also right behaviour); 2) *recreational connections*: whether linked as participants or as supporters individuals formed groups based on connections related to recreational activities; 3) *educational connections*: one could also include schools in which groups of students and a teacher formed on a voluntary basis for training; 4) *affective connections*: some inscriptions reveal groups with friendship connections – these friendship connections took on a variety of forms in the Greco-Roman world ranging from intimate acquaintance based on affection to more utilitarian ties. Though ‘friend’ may primarily signify

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For example: *IG X/2* 309, 480 and *IThess* 2 mention a *thiasos* of Asians in which both ethnic and cult connections are evident; *IDelos* 1520 is a decree of “the Association (*koinon*) of the Berytian Poseidoniastai, Merchants, Shippers and Wharehousemen [on Delos]” (ll. 1-3), who evidence cult, geographic and occupational connections.


142 “Ballplayers, I urge you, make Aulus Vettius Firmus aedile . . .” *CIL* 1147. See also the informal connections suggested in Plutarch, *Amic. Mult.* 94: “get the name of friend . . . by playing ball together.”

143 For example, groups that later formed around the support of various circus factions (see Charlotte Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Periods* [Journal of Roman Studies Monographs 6. London: Society for the Promotion of Roman Studies, 1993]).

144 Within cities there were groups for training connected with gymnasia which were concocted on the basis of age (*paides, ephebes, neoί*) – these could be thought of as educational; however, due to their concocted nature, we have ruled out these groups for consideration. Similarly, Harland does not include them as associations (Philip A. Harland, “Spheres of Contention,” 259 n. 1).

145 Note the emphasis on affection in Konstan, *Friendship in the Classical World.*
the value of loyalty to the group, there are occasions when it does seem to indicate that there was a solid affective element in post-founding group connections.

Hence, we may expand Harland’s taxonomy to include the following categories: 1) household connections; 2) ethnic or geographic connections; 3) neighbourhood connections; 4) occupational connections; 5) cult or temple connections; 6) ideological connections; 7) recreational connections; 8) educational connections; 9) affective connections. Leaving aside the relatively few groups with explicit affective connections and assuming a relationship between the makeup of a group and the connections involved in formation, several suggestions concerning formation may be put forward. Although there may be an overlapping of categories for some groups, the fact that most groups emphasize one category suggests that we are often dealing with common-identity groups. Certainly, given the proximity and similarity found within the groups, affective bonds may have developed; however, they do not appear to be what is usually portrayed as holding the groups together and so do not appear to have been what may have drawn the group together. If this is so, then social attraction to the group and not personal attraction would have been the significant force in the coalescence of many associations.

Supply of Resources: Money and Benefaction. When looking at the body of inscriptions concerning associations, mention of the resources needed for the ongoing life of the group is frequent; it may also be assumed that the formation of the group would likewise involve the supply

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147 Cicero notes that loyalty (fides) is one of the characteristic qualities of friendship (along with constancy and truth) (De Amicitia 18.65). Throughout Greco-Roman literature, loyalty serves as a prominent feature of friendship, for example: the model Pythagorean friends, Phintias and Damon (Iamblichus, Vit. Pyth. 234-236); Polycharmus, who is labelled as φίλος λειτυργος, “a loyal friend” (Chariton, Callirhoe 8.8.7-12); and Agamemnon in Euripides Orestes, whose action in recovering Helen for Menelaus is cast “not as a show of brotherly affection but rather as an example of the allegiance due to friends” (Konstan, Friendship in the Classical World, 59).

148 See Poland, Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesen, 453-498 on finances in associations.
of necessary resources. For example, *IG II*² 1366 notes one condition in allowing a club for Men Tyrannos: the members are to furnish what is needed for the god. Thus to begin the group certain resources would be needed to provide the appropriate sacrifices and ‘donation’ to the priest. The beginning of any association involved the use of resources which could be supplied through a founder/benefactor or by the founding members themselves. While these resources could be meeting space, wine, food, and so on, it most often involved money. As John Barclay has noted:

> Within the great diversity of social groups we call ‘associations,’ there is frequently some evidence of the gifting, collecting or distribution of money. In general, the ‘associations’ only came into existence by the donation of money – whether from a single benefactor (living or dead), by the subscription of a number of founder-members, or by the collection of membership-dues from those who made up the ‘associations.’ Financial arrangements could take on a great variety of forms, of course. Sometimes large-scale donors made the association and its meetings viable by loaning or financing property, providing materials for meals (food, wine, oil) or distributing other benefits for the members. In other cases, we know of regular (usually monthly) dues, payable by all members as contributions for the feasts or the communal ‘chest,’ which might be needed to hire communal facilities or guarantee payment of members’ burial expenses.

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3.2.2. Group Founding in Rhetorical and Philosophical Schools

As mentioned above schools have been taken as a (partial) social analog to early Christian groups. Nock, in his influential comparative study of the expansion of cult groups and philosophical schools, noted the similarity of the conversion experiences found in early Christianity and philosophy. Judge, in the initial issues of the *Journal of Religious History*, presented Paul as a wandering sophist/lecturer with a retinue similar to a broad class of philosophers ranging from the Cynics to Aelius Aristides. Robert Wilken examined Justin’s claim of the early Christians being a philosophical school and combined it with an examination of the local manifestation of Christian groups as associations. Each of these presentations wrestled with the difficulty of dealing with the local manifestation of the philosophical (or rhetorical) schools – a local expression which, when it existed, may be seen as an association. Of special interest for our purposes, and the reason for including these schools in a separate section, is the additional information available on the gathering of the groups through attraction to reputation, the use of social networks and the importance of social setting.

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150 Nock, *Conversion*.


Although throughout the Greco-Roman world training for a wide variety of professions existed, including law, medicine and engineering, we will narrow our examination to philosophical and rhetorical schools and in particular to the actual formation of small groups within them. For determining what small groups might be found within these schools, an examination of the nature of ancient schools provides some clarity. Loveday Alexander notes the ambiguity of the term ‘school’ and suggests that the nature of the schools may be viewed on four levels: 1) At the individual level lies the basic relationship between a teacher and an individual student. This one-to-one teaching relationship could also be extended metaphorically to include the following of the precepts of a teacher one has never met and to include chains of tradition in which the teaching relationship is extended through generations by individual students who become teachers. 2) At the other end of the spectrum for the use of ‘school’ is the idea of a movement, “an agglomeration of geographically scattered groups professing adherence to the same ideals and teaching tradition.” 3) Between the individual and movement levels lie two levels which include small groups. The secondary level is the social relationship between fellow students (and teacher). Loyalty to a teacher, social and personal attraction, combined with rivalry with other groups, could serve to foster the growth of a small group of students. 4) At the tertiary level are “groups of teachers and/or

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154 Meeks also observes the loose use of the term with reference to the ‘school of Paul’ (*The First Urban Christians*, 82). Dorandi notes that “... one must answer the question of what a philosophical school was. This is a difficult question, which has not found an answer that copes satisfactorily with all the problems it poses” (Tiziano Dorandi, “Organization and Structure of the Philosophical Schools,” in *The Cambridge History of Hellenistic Philosophy* [eds. Keimpe Algra, Jonathan Barnes, Jaap Mansfeld, and Malcolm Schofield; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 55-62, here 55).


Plato, *Protagoras* 318E - 319A.

As Plato develops the discussion in *Protagoras* the theme revolves around whether virtue can be taught and he has Protagoras, the sophist, admit that the most important part of the educational process is to become an authority on poetry (338E-339A). Thus the development of eloquence may be seen as an outgrowth of the sophisticated conversation involved in the study of literature. As Ford notes, “Stressing rhetoric as a common preoccupation of the [early] sophists, then, is at the least an oversimplification” (Andrew Ford, “Sophists without Rhetoric: The Arts of Speech in Fifth-Century Athens,” in *Education in Greek and Roman Antiquity* [ed. Yun Lee Too; Leiden: Brill, 2001], 85-109, here 86-87). Along the same lines, Lynch notes that at this time the schools of the sophists and the philosophers were similar: “The main contention underlying the account given in this chapter is that it falsifies the historical development to distinguish sharply between philosophical schools, such as the Academy and the Peripatos, and the schools of the sophists and the minor Socratics” (John Patrick Lynch, *Aristotle's School: A Study of a Greek Educational Institution* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972], 64).


Of course Philostratus claims that the *Second* Sophistic (so called because it would be improper, according to Philostratus, to label it the *New* Sophistic) reaches back to Aeschines (*Vit. Soph.* 481); however, the cultural and social phenomenon which Philostratus illustrates by his biographical sketches reaches back to the second half of the first century CE. Winter (*Philo and Paul among the Sophists*) has also shown precursors of the Second Sophistic movement in Alexandria and Corinth in the mid-first century and Bullmore outlines the similar nature of first century rhetorical

3.2.2.1. Group Founding in Rhetorical Schools

Rhetorical schools provided education for the elite. The initial founders of these schools, the sophists, in their earlier classical manifestation, proposed to make young men apt at politics and good citizens, for which eloquence was a necessary, though not the only, element. With time rhetoric became the central component in this higher education and by the time of Philodemus, in the first century BCE, sophists “no longer claimed to teach all the branches of learning but were instructors of oratory.”

researchers engaged in a common enterprise. A wide degree of variation is possible here, from the high-powered research organizations of the Theophrastus or the Alexandrian Museum to the religiously committed brotherhood of Pythagoras or Epicurus; both could rightly be called ‘schools.’” Thus we may have, at the secondary and tertiary levels, small groups consisting of students (with a founding teacher) and of teachers/researchers, respectively.
century precursors may be characterized as concerned with rhetorical style and pleasing presentation. Sophists were now those who gained public reputation as gifted orators. This reputation came from improvised public declamations on historical or fictitious themes. These demonstrations of rhetorical ability not only provided public entertainment but also could lead to honour-generating service to the city and would attract fee paying students of rhetoric.

The formation of small groups in rhetorical schools occurred at the secondary level. Sophists were noted for their mobility and would enter and found schools in cities. For those sophists having the greatest reputation, examples of their mode of launching into a new ‘market’ for teaching are found in the literature. Aristides’ visit to Smyrna in 176 CE provides an illustration of their method:

Before I even entered the city, there were people coming to meet me because they had heard about me, the most distinguished of the young men were giving themselves to me, and there was already a definite plan for a lecture. The invitation list was being arranged. Now there was a little Egyptian who had bounced into town, corrupted some of the councillors and given some of the ordinary people the impression that he would play a part in public affairs and spend his money on certain

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163 The latter activity was the usual occupation of a sophist. In defending Heracleides’ break down in a speech before the emperor, Philostratus notes that “a sophist spends the greater part of his day in teaching mere boys” (Vit. Soph. 614 [Wright, LCL]).

164 Lynch notes concerning the early sophists that although they taught in isolation from, if not in competition with, other sophists (that is, they did not form a school in the tertiary sense), we do have that “a sophist and his pupils formed a group which had collective, if not corporate, identity” (that is, they formed schools in the secondary sense) (Aristotle’s School, 40).

marvellous acts of public generosity. Well, into the theatre he runs, in no sort of order, and the whole town is disgraced. I knew nothing about this till later, because I was at home engaged in discussion with my friends. He was just about to enter the Odeion by the Harbour and was organizing a lecture there, either under the terms of a decree or in some other circumstances – I don’t know . . . I called those friends who were at hand, and told them the orders. An advertisement was put out (the time mentioned in the dream was approaching) and we were there hard on its heels. Despite the fact that my appearance was impromptu, and most people knew nothing about it, the Council Chamber was so full that you could see nothing but human faces – and you couldn’t have thrust your hand between. The noise and the good will, or rather (to tell the truth) the enthusiasm, were so universal that there was no-one to be seen sitting down either during my preliminary speech or when I stood up and declaimed. From the very first word they stood there, keyed up, joyful, amazed, . . . when I had left the Council Chamber and was in the bath, I was told that a certain person, having given two day’s notice, had got together in the Odeion on that day a total audience of – seventeen.

Here are found the essentials of their method: 1) *Entry*. After entering the city, through reputation, sponsorship or appeal to the appropriate authorities, a request for, or at least permission for, a demonstration speech, was issued. 2) *Organization*. An appropriate public location would be found, such as a council chamber, a theatre, or a lecture-hall, and invitations offered and advertisements publicized. 3) *Audience*. The audience could also include women and children and number up to a thousand. 4) *Performance*. The sophist’s presentation consisted of two parts.

166 Aristides, *Or.* 51.29-34 (Russell’s translation, *Greek Declamation*, 66-67). This is Russell’s example for the conventions followed by sophists (*Greek Declamation*, 76-77). See also Winter, “The Entries and Ethics,” 57-60; *Philo and Paul among the Sophists*, 145.

167 Stowers rightly notes that “The private home was a center of intellectual activity and the customary place for many types of speakers and teachers to do their work” and cites Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.23.23; Seneca *Ep.* 76.4; Pliny, *Ep.* 3.18; 5.3, 1-2, 11-12; 8.21.1f; 9.34; Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 77/78.34 (“Social Status,” 65-66). However, for the elite sophists, the private home was not the place for the initial declamation in a city. Further declamations, for teaching, maintaining reputation, or even just for practice, could take place in a number of locations (including homes): temples (Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 8.9; Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 620), festival competitions (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 618), and even wine-shops (“Aurelius was the sort of person who would declaim even in low wine-shops while the drinking was going on” [Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 627 (Wright, LCL)]).

168 Russell, *Greek Declamation*, 76

169 Dio Chrysostom, *Or.* 37.33

170 Epictetus, *Diatr.* 3.23.19; Note also Aristides’ large audience and the contrast with audience of seventeen for the Egyptian. The numbers may be conventional: 1000 denoting a large crowd and seventeen a derisory number (on the number seventeen, see Russell, *Greek Declamation*, 77 n. 16).
As well, as Aristides illustrates, a favourable reputation could attract students even before the declamation. The declamation would be given the same day or the next and would consist of an original extempore speech given with full oratorical display. 5) Results. If met with success, in addition to possible civic honours, the opportunity to serve the city and the chance for pecuniary gain through further rhetorical presentations, the sophist could also attract pupils. The formation then of the rhetorical school would result from reputation, publicity, public display, and perceived competence.

Aristides also furnishes an example of another important element in group formation, social networks. His friends, whom he met with and who aided him in advertising, had surely spread word of his reputation before he arrived. His social networks, both friends and others, played a significant role in paving the way for the declamation. Harold Remus supplies a detailed analysis of Aristides’ social networks in Pergamum and their significance. Although a similarly detailed analysis is not possible for Aristides’ time in Smyrna, we may assume that his social networks might likewise have provided a flow of support and resources (whether place, influence or students) and that Remus’ description of Aristides’ friends would apply: “tying the friends to one another and to Aristides is their upper-class status, and interests and concerns that attend it such as a common interest in literature, philosophy, and dreams.”

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171 As well, as Aristides illustrates, a favourable reputation could attract students even before the declamation.

172 Augustine provides a later Roman example of the importance of networks of friends and students. When he arrived in Rome to teach rhetoric he began by gathering at his residence some “to whom and through whom” he started to build a reputation (Augustine, Conf. 5.12.1). Raffaella Cribiore in The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007) devotes a chapter (“Chapter Three: The Network”) to the establishment and promotion of the Libanius’ school in which she places particular emphasis on the importance of the sophist’s network of friends and former pupils.

Not all teachers of rhetoric were from the upper ranks of the sophists and, rather than depending on sanctioned public declamations, they depended on advertising and social networks to draw in students for the establishment of a school and for ongoing recruitment. P.Oxy. 2190 provides the example of a letter from the student Neilus to his father, in which Neilus refers to Didymus who had recently opened a school in Alexandria and had enrolled students, including Philoxenus. Philoxenus was a friend of both Didymus and Neilus and in turn had also persuaded the sons of Apollonius to enrol. Didymus’ appeal to Nelius, in spite of his provincial origins, was his recommendation from a friend (Philoxenus), his basic competence and his ready availability. While the founder’s competence and reputation were of importance, a significant factor here was also the social networks of the founder and the initial members.

The social location of the formation of a rhetorical school was primarily dependent on the social status of the founder. Those with status had access to public venues and so could depend on reputation and public declamation for the initial gathering of students, while those without the

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174Here we are dealing with something akin to the contrast between rhetors and sophists. The distinction between a rhetor and a sophist is not clear – there is some distinction between the two and yet the there are texts that conflate the two. Several explanations of the distinction have been put forward with the most plausible being Bowersock’s explanation that “sophists represent a category within the general group of the rhetors, which will have been the broader term. The sense of sophist can perhaps best be had from the modern notion of professionalism. The sophist was a virtuoso rhetor with a big public reputation” (G. W. Bowersock, Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1969], 13).


176Nelius recognizes that he can make up for Didymus’ deficiencies by listening to orators declaiming: “I have Didymus always ready to spend his time on me and do everything within his capabilities, and by hearing the orators declaiming, of whom Posidonius is one, I shall, with the help of the gods, do well for myself.” (ll. 32-36, Winter’s translation, Philo and Paul among the Sophists, 260)

necessary status would rely on creating and using social networks and then subsequently meeting in homes or semi-public places such as rented shops, street sides or open places.\(^\text{178}\)

Furthermore, the founding of rhetorical schools took place in an atmosphere of intense competition. Not only was there the competition for reputation inherent within public declamations, but there was also intense competition among teachers for students. Philostratus provides numerous examples of rivalry between sophists, with the quarrels mirroring not only competition between individuals, but also, more significantly, reflecting factional divisions and the rivalry between great cities.\(^\text{179}\) Libanius in his autobiography gives a revealing picture of how, by his time, the rivalry would grow to include the students of the sophists in combat and kidnapping:

From my boyhood, gentlemen, I had heard tales of the fighting between the schools which took place in the heart of Athens: I had heard of the cudgels, the knives and stones they used and of the wounds they inflicted, of the resultant court cases, the pleas of defence and the verdicts upon the guilty, and of all those deeds of derring-do which students perform to raise the prestige of their teachers. I used to think them noble in their hardihood and no less justified than those who took up arms for their country: I used to pray heaven that it should be my lot to distinguish myself so, to go hot-foot to the Peiraeus or Sunium or other ports to kidnap students at their landing, and then go off hot-foot once more to Corinth to stand trial for the kidnapping,\(^\text{180}\) give a string of parties, run through all that I had, and then look to someone to make me a loan.\(^\text{181}\)

\(^{178}\)See Bonner on accommodation for education in Rome (Stanley F. Bonner, *Education in Ancient Rome: From Elder Cato to the Younger Pliny* [London: Metheun, 1977], 115-125). As Alexander notes, the distinction between public and private may be of less importance than imagined when dealing with the actual location of the school. Examples, such as Galen provides, show that teachers could hold their (private) classes in public places resulting in a "two-tier pattern of audience participation: the inner ring of disciples who will not question the master in public (though they may do so privately afterwards) and the outer ring, 'those present', who are either uncommitted, like Galen himself, or perhaps committed to a rival group. These will cheerfully listen, observe, and try to argue with the teacher; they may heckle or mock, depending on temperament" (Alexander, “Paul and the Hellenistic Schools,” 76).

\(^{179}\)Bowersock (*Greek Sophists*), in his chapter of the quarrels of sophists (Chapter 7), gives the following examples and notes the broader rivalries: Apollonius of Naukratis and Heracleides of Lycia (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 631); Favorinus and Polemo (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 490-491); Timocrates and Scopelian (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 536); Hadrian of Tyre and Chrestus of Byzantium (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 587-588); Aspasius of Ravenna and Pilostratus of Lemnos (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 627); and Herodes’ many quarrels (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph.* 549, 554-555, 578).

\(^{180}\)Eunapius also provides an example of the competition for students involving kidnapping (*Vit. Phil.* 485).

\(^{181}\)Libanius, *Or.* 1 [Autobiography], 19 (Norman, LCL).
Several elements of the small group formation process are highlighted in the founding of rhetorical schools. First, given the focus on reputation, founder focused social attraction\textsuperscript{182} is a significant force. Second, given the intense rivalry and so the importance of group labels, categorization plays an important role. Third, social networks of both the rhetor and the initial members are significant elements in the formation of these groups. Fourth, the physical location in which the formation of the school takes place is affected by the social status of the founder.

3.2.2.2. Group Founding in Philosophical Schools

Small groups are found within philosophical schools at both the secondary and tertiary level.

Secondary Level. At the secondary level (that is, groups of students with their teacher) group formation implies the founding of a local school for teaching philosophy. Marrou proposes that the teaching of philosophy in the Hellenistic age (and one may assume on into the Roman empire\textsuperscript{183}) had three main forms:\textsuperscript{184} 1) The teaching found within the established Athenian schools which originally were founded by one philosopher and then were continued through the generations by the successive scholarchs. 2) The teaching of individual teachers, who, working by themselves, would set up schools in the cities in which they settled. 3) The teaching of wandering philosophers, who, taking the world as their audience, would gather crowds in public places and give provocative, interactive speeches.

\textsuperscript{182}This is attraction to the reputation of the rhetor (and not necessarily to the rhetor personally) and with that the attraction to being a member of the rhetor’s group.

\textsuperscript{183}Marrou notes the close similarity between Hellenistic and Roman education (including higher education) (\textit{A History of Education}, 265).

\textsuperscript{184}Marrou, \textit{A History of Education}, 207.
Athenian Schools. There were the established schools centred in Athens which, originally founded by one master, carried on his teachings over the generations with a succession of heads being appointed by their predecessors. The actual formation of the group occurred with the original founder, whether Plato, Aristotle, Epicurus, or Zeno. The resulting groups may be similar to what we have seen for associations (though legally they may have been organized as associations only subsequent to their formation, if at all\textsuperscript{185}) yet, as noted above, investigation of their formation does provide additional information to what has been presented for associations.

Although it is impossible to know the details of the founding of these groups, the sources provide some characteristic features of their formation. Taking as an example Diogenes Laertius’ presentation of Epicurus, several of these features may be noted.\textsuperscript{186} Epicurus was an Athenian brought up in Samos who later returned to Athens (10.1). His first contact with philosophy came as an adolescent, though later he appears to have followed his father’s career as a teacher of boys (10.2-3). He did come to develop his own philosophical ideas and when he was thirty-two he formed a school of philosophy at Mitylene and Lampsacus, moving it five years later to Athens (10.14-15).

\textsuperscript{185}Wilamowitz proposed that the philosophical schools were legal thiasoi (Ulrich von Wilamowitz, Antigonos von Karystos [Berlin: Weidmann], 181-186, 194-197, 263-88). Dorandi notes: “There would seem to be no serious reason to oppose the recognition of thiasos characteristics in the Athenian philosophical schools. If anything, the need for the legal and religious device of an association (koinon) devoted to the Muses, developed with time in the case of the Academy: some think it might have become necessary in the second phase of the school’s history . . . As far as the Peripatos goes, the theory that it was a permanent foundation much like elementary schools or funeral associations seems to be the correct one. The Peripatos was created out of the legacy of Aristotle . . .” (emphasis added) (“Organization and Structure,” 56). Lynch, however, has provided a detailed refutation of Wilamowitz’s view of the schools as legal associations, arguing for a collective (not legal corporate) nature for the schools (Lynch, Aristotle’s School, 106-134).

\textsuperscript{186}Given the similarities between schools of the sophists and philosophical schools in classical Athens (as Lynch indicates, the differences between these schools at this time had more to do with individual differences between the founders, than with differences between sophists and philosophers [Aristotle’s School, 63-64]), Plato’s presentation of the sophist Micus setting up his school (Lysis 203a-204b) provides another perspective on the founding of a school. A newly erected palaestra provided the meeting place for a company of young men who apparently were well acquainted with one another. Their teacher, Micus, was well known and the time was spent pleasurably in discussion or recitation. Here we see what looks more like a social club providing leisurely entertainment for youth than a school. The founding was influenced by networks of friends and attraction to the group activities and initially (as far as the founding of the school was concerned) not primarily attraction to the other group members.
For the formation of the group, as with rhetorical schools, the importance of social networks is evident. From within his own family, Epicurus’ three brothers and his slaves joined him (10.3, 10). Other students came with siblings or spouses, most notably, Metrodorus of Lampsacus and his brother Timocrates (who later left the school) (10.6, 22), and Leonteus of Lampsacus and his wife Themista (10.5, 25). As well, as expected for a philosophical school, the attraction to the school had a strong element of social attraction to a group based on the ideology of the founder (and so also implying that frame alignment was a significant factor in the formation of the group) – Diogenes Laertius described Epicurus’ followers as “held fast as they were by the siren-charms of his doctrine” (10.9). Though Diogenes Laertius goes to some length to maintain Epicurus’ reputation as a peaceable man (10.9), his compilation of those opposed to Epicurus shows external conflict and competition from the very beginning of the school (10.3-8).

Granted the agonistic nature of the culture it would not be surprising that several of the Athenian schools arose out of (or are portrayed as arising out of) a schism or controversy in an earlier school. For example, after many years in association with the Academy, Aristotle, according to Diogenes Laertius’ account, founded his school in opposition to Xenocrates (5.2-3). Before this,

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187 Taking Frey and Sunwolf’s definition of frame alignment, “the rhetorical process of persuading a recruit to see the world in the same way as the group” (Lawrence R. Frey and Sunwolf, “The Symbolic-Interpretive Perspective on Group Dynamics,” Small Group Research 35 (2004): 277-306, here 293). They build on Snow et al.’s understanding of adherent recruitment into a social movement organization. They conflate Snow et al.’s frame alignment and micromobilization and give it a more ideological flavour (David A. Snow, E. Burke Rochford, Steven K. Worden, and Robert D. Benford, “Frame Alignment Processes, Micromobilization, and Movement Participation,” American Sociological Review 51 [1986]: 464-481).

188 He seceded from the Academy while Plato was still alive. Hence the remark attributed to the latter: ‘Aristotle spurns me, as colts kick out at the mother who bore them.’ Hermippus in his Lives mentions that he was absent as Athenian envoy at the court of Philip when Xenocrates became head of the Academy, and that on his return, when he saw the school under a new head, he made choice of a public walk in the Lyceum where he would walk up and down discussing philosophy with his pupils until it was time to rub themselves with oil. . . . In time the circle about him grew larger; he then sat down to lecture, remarking: It were base to keep silence and let Xenocrates speak.” (Diogenes Laertius 5.2-3 [Hicks, LCL]). Other sources insist that Aristotle’s school was a branch of the Academy (cf. Cicero, Academia 1, 4.17). On the difficulties in this section see Jan Bollansée, “Animadversiones in Diogenem Laertium,” Rheinisches Museum für Philologie 144 (2001): 64-106. See also Lynch, Aristotle's School, 73.
Menedemos had founded his school after he lost the vote for leadership of the Academy to Xenocrates. 189

**Individual Teachers.** There were individual teachers who set up their own schools in some city in which they had settled. Marrou gives the example of Epictetus, who after expulsion from Rome, settled in Nicopolis and opened a school there. 190 The actual formation of a group would be similar to the Athenian schools with several additional elements to be noted.

By the time of the first century CE, although there were large areas of overlap, there was a contrast between sophists (or using the wider label, rhetors) and philosophers and their schools. 191 The contrast was clearest at the stereotyped extremes where several elements relevant to the founding of local philosophical schools may be highlighted. One of these elements, and most

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189 Lynch, *Aristotle's School*, 60 n. 33. “The young men, voting on who should be their leader, elected Xenocrates of Chalkedon; for Aristotle was abroad in Macedonia and Menedemos of Phyrri and Herakleides of Heraklea were defeated by a few votes. As a result Herakleides went away to the Pontos and Menedemos founded another *peripatos* and *diatribê*.” (Lynch’s translation; *Academicorum Philosophorum Index Heraclanensis* [cols. VI-VII, pp. 38-39, Mekler]).

190 Dorandi provides a number of other examples of schisms within the philosophical schools, including, for example, the founding of the ‘Old Academy’ in contrast to the Academy of Philo of Larissa. (“Organization and Structure,” 59-60). Dennis C. Duling claims that “recruitment by philosophers does not take place in an obviously agonistic context, that is, *it is not explicitly political*” (“Recruitment to the Jesus Movement in Social-Scientific Perspective,” in *Social Scientific Models for Interpreting the Bible: Essays by the Context Group in Honor of Bruce J. Malina* [ed. John J. Pilch; Leiden: Brill, 2001], 132-175, here 153; emphasis in the original). This may be true to some extent, but the stereotyped view of the philosophers’ private nature and their non-involvement in the public arena (particularly the Epicureans) does not rule out actual rivalry between groups of philosophers or rivalry between subgroups involved in schisms.

191 Marrou, *A History of Education*, 207. Ronald F. Hock provides a network analysis of Epictetus’ relationships in Nicopolis (“‘By the gods, it’s my one desire to see an actual Stoic’: Epictetus’ Relations with Students and Visitors in His Personal Network,” *Semeia* 56 [1991]: 121-142).

192 Bowersock provides a number of examples in which the terms sophist/rhetor and philosopher overlap (*Greek Sophists*, 11-12). Philostratus recognized the difference in the use of the terms in comparison with the earlier sophists and philosophers and so implicitly acknowledged the contemporary contrast: “The men of former days applied the name ‘sophist,’ not only to orators whose surpassing eloquence won them a brilliant reputation, but also to philosophers who expounded their theories with ease and fluency. Of these latter, then, I must speak first, because, though they were not actually sophists, they seemed to be so, and hence came to be so called.” (Philostratus, *Vit. Soph*. 484). See also G. R. Stanton, “Sophists and Philosophers: Problems of Classification,” *AJP* 94 (1973): 350-64.
significant for group formation, was the contrast in initial recruitment/attraction. Additional stereotyped elements include the contrast between: the sophist’s public involvement and the philosopher’s private nature (though this is much disputed and there is as much variance among philosophers as among philosophers and sophists); the sophist’s crowd-pleasing eloquence and the philosopher’s crowd-repulsing demands and habits (though Philostratus notes a number of philosophers, including Dio Chrysostom and Favorinus, who possessed great oratory skills (Vit. Soph. 484ff)). Dio Chrysostom similarly writes of inducing a teacher, through rational or relational means, to come and set up a school (Or. 13.33).

In contrast to rhetors, who would draw the crowds to their exhibitions through advertisement or a reputation for display and entertainment, philosophers, who were to provide a solid path for life, should have the natural twin drawing power of instruction for a moral life and of a personal lifestyle demonstrating these teachings which would attract, not the baser element of society, the crowd or those only seeking the entertainment of a stirring display, but those truly seeking a way of life.

However, this idealized group formation, featuring social attraction to a group with a certain ideology, was not what was always met in the actual schools. Philosophical schooling served also as a component in the all-round education of the elite, without the necessity of commitment to

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194 As Lucian has Menippus declare, “Since I was in a dilemma, I resolved to go to the men whom they call philosophers and put myself into their hands, begging them to deal with me as they would, and to show me a plain, solid path in life.” (Menippus 4 [Harmon, LCL]) Menippus, however, proceeds in the dialogue to turn against philosophers because of their inability to agree on their teachings and because of their hypocrisy (Menippus 4-5).

195 And the founder embodying the ideology.
depth\textsuperscript{196} or fidelity.\textsuperscript{197} Thus, at the formation of a school, and for later recruitment, members could be found who were drawn to the specific group primarily by the reputation of the founder and by the connections found within their social networks and not by attraction to an ideology.

As with the rhetorical schools there was also an atmosphere of strong rivalry between the various schools (and between philosophers and rhetors) resulting in a polemical element in much of the literature.\textsuperscript{198}

We find then for these philosophical schools (at the secondary level) similar forces of coalescence to those found for rhetorical schools with somewhat less emphasis on external attraction and more on frame alignment.

\textit{Wandering Philosophers}. Philosophical instruction was also given by wandering philosophers. These would most notably be the Cynics who would teach in the streets, debating with all passers-by.\textsuperscript{199} Epictetus provides a description of their life-style, as a casual observer would find them:

\begin{quote}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
As Alexander notes “it is probable that, because of their non-elitist teaching methods, the Cynics would have been among the best-known philosophers in the Empire at large” (“Schools, Hellenistic,” 1009).
\end{quote}
So do you also think about the matter carefully [that is, becoming a Cynic]; it is not what you think it is. “I wear a rough coat even as it is, and I shall have one then; I have a hard bed even now, and so I shall then; I shall take to myself a wallet and a staff, and I shall begin to walk around and beg from those I meet, and revile them; . . .”

Although Cynics may have represented (or misrepresented) philosophy to the masses, their teaching activity, from the beginning, seems to have been of a casual nature with no formation of groups of students. Here a determined self-sufficiency (autárkeia), a vocation as universal educator of humankind and the fact that “Cynicism is essentially a practical ‘way of life’, rather

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200 Epictetus, Diatr. 3.22.9-10. Epictetus was advising an acquaintance on the calling of a Cynic and in desiring to provide a deeper overview (and somewhat idealized – as Stanton notes “Epictetus’ advice to the potential Cynic is largely a summary of his own teaching” [Stanton, “Sophists and Philosophers,” 362]), he gave the description provided, with the caveat that it was not describing the reality of the life of a Cynic. However, it does provide a description which outsiders would have found fit their observations of many Cynics.

201 Dio Chrysostom felt that Cynics gathered youths and sailors (in Alexandria) by vulgarity and jokes and so “they achieve no good at all, but rather the worst possible harm, for they accustom thoughtless people to deride philosophers in general.” (Or. 32.9 [Crosby, LCL]) He also observed that for most people “not only do they think Cynics to be no better than themselves and incompetent in practical affairs, but they consider them to be not even of sound mind to begin with, but a crazy, wretched lot.” (Or. 34.2 [Crosby, LCL]) Dio Chrysostom does go on to elaborate on a number of different types of Cynics – not all being the harsh variety of street corner performers.

202 “Like Socrates, Diogenes refused to commit his teaching to any place or time, and any followers that he had did not have a collective identity as a group of pupils” (Lynch, Aristotle’s School, 44).


204 Billerbeck describes the ideal Cynic of Epictetus: “He is a member of a universal society, a true cosmopolite, with responsibility for the welfare of all mankind. His duties pertain to everybody: being the friend of all, he cannot maintain individual friendships” (Margerethe Billerbeck, “Greek Cynicism in Imperial Rome,” in Die Kyniker in der modernen Forschung: Aufsätze mit Einführung und Bibliographie [ed. Margerethe Billerbeck; Amsterdam: B.R. Grüner, 1991], 147-181, here 165).

As Malherbe makes clear there is variety among Cynics with at least both a harsh and a more gentle version being found (Abraham J. Malherbe, “‘Gentle as a Nurse’: The Cynic Background to 1 Thess 2,” NovT 12 (1970): 203-217; Paul and the Thessalonians; Paul and the Popular Philosophers; see also Glad, Paul and Philemon, 89-98). It is not surprising then that there is variety in social connections. Some Cynics did have long lasting relationships with individuals interested in their views: Demetrius the Cynic apparently had a long-term association with the Roman Senator Publius Clodius Thrasea Paetus – he was with Thrasea in his last hours discussing the soul and its separation from the body at death (Tacitus, Ann. 16.34). Also Agathobulus seems to have had a school in Alexandria (Lucian, Demon. 3; Lucian, Peregr. 17).
than an intellectual discipline\textsuperscript{205} limited the connections necessary for secondary level group formation.

**Tertiary Level.** Philosophers were not only involved in groups composed of students and a teacher, but also in groups of philosophers. However, the distinction between these secondary and tertiary groups was not always clear cut. We read of social gatherings of students and teachers. Plutarch tells of a dinner given by his teacher Ammonius at Ammonius’ house\textsuperscript{206} and Gellius relates the genial discussion at Taurus’ house where the students brought a potluck of “neat but trifling problems.”\textsuperscript{207} Plutarch also records other social occasions attended by philosophers including one with a number of Epicureans hosted by the Boethus.\textsuperscript{208} Certainly the mixing\textsuperscript{209} of student and teacher came to blur the demarcation between philosopher and aspirant and all the more so with long term students and with students in Epicurean schools.\textsuperscript{210} There was, then, a blurring of secondary and tertiary groups, and it also appears that a secondary group could evolve into a tertiary group of associated philosophers.\textsuperscript{211}

That there were groupings of philosophers outside of the teaching setting is seen in a number of contexts: at an informal level Dio Chrysostom portrayed one of the misgivings which people had concerning philosophers as “they suspect that, though the philosophers do not laugh at them in public, privately among themselves they view them in that light” (emphasis added; *Or.* 72.7 [Crosby,

\textsuperscript{205}Downing, *Cynics, Paul and the Pauline Churches*, 43.
\textsuperscript{206}Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* 9
\textsuperscript{207}Aulus Gellius, *Noct. att.* 7.13.1-12
\textsuperscript{208}Plutarch, *Quaest. conv.* 5.1
\textsuperscript{209}The mixing of students and teachers was not only the result of social impulses but also part of the process of learning by association. See Marrou, *A History of Education*, 208-209.
\textsuperscript{210}Epicureans emphasized that they were a band of friends. See Cicero *Fin.* 1.65.
\textsuperscript{211}Diogenes Laertius 5.53; 10.11. Since these groups evolved into groups of philosophers the actual founding of the group should be seen to occur at the secondary level.
Vitruvius notes concerning exedra: “On the other three sides, spacious exedrae (apsidal recesses) are to be planned with seats where philosophers, teachers of rhetoric and other studious persons can sit and discuss” ([Arch. 5.11.2 [Granger, LCL]])

This group may also be represented in an Alexandrian inscription of a number of philosophers honouring a rhetor ([IGRR 1.1081 [= OGI 712; SB 8914; Alexandria; c.150-200 CE]].)


Dio Chrysostom Or. 8.6-11.


However, the references provided are inconclusive with respect to corporate groups of Cynics. The Cynic epistles, Crates, Ep. 28, 29, are letters to Hipparchia that indicate that she had “taken up the Cynic life with [her] husband” (Ep. 28) and mentions “our philosophy,” “they have called us Cynics” and “live the Cynic life with us” (Ep. 29). Here we have a collective consciousness but no indication of a corporate body. Dio Chrysostom in his oration to the Alexandrians mentions various types of philosophers including those that work privately, those that lecture and Cynics. These Cynics post themselves at diverse public places and ingratiate themselves with disreputable individuals (Or. 32.9). Again this is no indication of a corporate group of Cynics. Lucian’s The Passing of Peregrinus mentions Peregrinus’ disciples and Cynic associates at the pyre: “Moreover, it is not easy for him to withdraw now, for his Cynic associates are urging him on and pushing him into the fire and inflaming his resolution” (25); “He came forward, dressed in his usual fashion, and with him the leaders of the Cynics, in particular, the gentleman from Patras, with torch – no bad understudy” (36); “The Cynics stood about the pyre, not weeping, to be sure, but silently evincing a certain amount of grief as they gazed into the fire . . . Then, when I threatened to gather up a few of them and throw them into the fire, so that they might follow their master, they checked themselves and kept the peace” (37) (Harmon, LCL). Here we have disciples and other Cynics – whether these indicate an actual small group is not at all clear.

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Epicurus encouraged the growth of a community of friends within his own house and among subsequent Epicureans the ideal of a shared life arose.\textsuperscript{217} The Epicurean representative in Cicero’s \textit{De Finibus} states, “Yet Epicurus in a single house and that a small one maintained a whole company of friends, united by the closest sympathy and affection; and this still goes on in the Epicurean school” (\textit{Fin.} I.65 [Rackham, LCL]). Combined with their educational aims of friendship, kindliness and good will, they kept a number of common celebrations, including the birthday of Epicurus, and held a deep respect for Epicurus and his teachings\textsuperscript{218} – these led to a communal life which, from the beginning, moved beyond mere temporary and transitional education. Epicureans were successful in the spread of their philosophy with not only their own members commenting on their expansion but also their critics.\textsuperscript{219} On the actual founding of these groups we have little information and may assume they began similarly to schools at the secondary level. De Witt confidently states, “It goes without saying that any member of an Epicurean group who possessed the requisite self-confidence was at liberty to migrate elsewhere and undertake to organize a group of his own. In so doing, however, his relationship to prospective followers was predefined in a peculiar way, because Epicureanism was primarily a cult of the founder and his way of life and only secondarily a system of thought.”\textsuperscript{220}

\begin{enumerate}
\item\textsuperscript{217} Dorandi, “Organization and Structure,” 57. In Seneca’s words they were “many members of one body” (Seneca, \textit{Ep.} 33.4); he also notes, “It was not the class-room of Epicurus, but living together under the same roof, that made great men of Metrodorus, Hermarchus, and Polyaenus” (Seneca, \textit{Ep.} 6.6 [Gummere, LCL]).
\item\textsuperscript{218} On philosophical allegiance among all the philosophical schools and in particular the Epicureans see David Sedley, “Philosophical Allegiance in the Greco-Roman World,” in \textit{Philosophia Togata} (eds. Miriam Griffin and Jonathan Barnes; Oxford: Clarendon, 1989), 97-119.
\item\textsuperscript{219} Epicurean: Lucretius, 5.20-21; Critic: Cicero, \textit{Fin.} 2.49.
\item\textsuperscript{220} Norman W. de Witt, “Organization and Procedure in Epicurean Groups,” \textit{Classical Philology} 31 (1936): 205-211, here 205. De Witt, however, gives no indication of how the organization of a group would have actually been achieved.
\end{enumerate}
Pythagoreanism first blossomed in the Greek colony of Croton in southern Italy in the sixth century BCE. Pythagoras, an amiable recruiter, drew together a number of followers221 who not only adopted a number of lifestyle regulations (including vegetarianism, avoiding beans and wearing linen cloth) and self disciplines (including a period of imposed silence and daily self-examination), but also met together daily for reading and discussion – or so the sources, chiefly Iamblichus, Diogenes Laertius and Porphyry, state. The details of the communal life may be the anachronistic presentation of later practices of ascetic communities,222 however: “the existence of Pythagorean communities may never be proved to everyone’s satisfaction, and yet the vividness and detail with which Iamblichus or his sources portray the Pythagorean way of life suggests that it once flourished among a chosen few.”223 Nevertheless, even if the community did flourish as presented, we have no information on the actual founding of the group beyond stories of mass conversion224 and suggestions of Pythagoras’ employment of friendliness,225 and fear-inducing deception.226

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221Diogenes Laertius suggests numbers of nearly 300 (Diogenes Laertius, 8.3), though he also records that they numbered about thirty-five or forty after Pythagoras’ death (Diogenes Laertius, 8.39-40).


225“He [Pythagoras] had a great gift for friendship, and especially, when he found his own watchwords adopted by anyone, he would immediately take to that man and make a friend of him” (Diogenes Laertius, 8.16 [Hicks, LCL]).

226Hermippus tells the story that while Pythagoras dwelt in a cave, he had surface events recorded for him. After some time he emerged, pale and emaciated, and related that he had been to Hades and still was able to tell what had happened above. In awe and fear the people sent their women to be taught by him (Diogenes Laertius, 8.41).
Pythagoreanism was reanimated in the first century BCE, according to Cicero, by his contemporary Nigidius Figulus (Tim. 1). An assortment of Pythagorean teachers were active with the most notable adherent being the wandering wonder worker, Apollonius of Tyana, who gathered around him a number of followers. Apollonius’ attraction arose from “admiration of his wisdom, his appearance, his diet, or all at once,” as well as his wonders. Evidence for actual Pythagorean communities or local schools during this time is not found.

Philosophical groups at the tertiary level either grew out of secondary level groups or began as collectives of philosophers in a manner akin to a professional associations. In either case certain individuals, founders, may have gathered the group together. At both the secondary and tertiary levels, philosophical groups in general began in contexts less ostentatious than those encountered in the beginning of the elite rhetorical schools. As well, for philosophical groups frame alignment was of greater importance than in rhetorical schools, though the participation of those trying out a variety of schools should also be noted at the secondary level. For both rhetorical and philosophical groups social networks were significant and, with the competition, categorization would also have played a significant role for both.

3.3. Small Group Founding Process in the Greco-Roman Context

We have examined the founding of a number of small groups in the Greco-Roman world. These were founded (and perhaps only occasionally self-organized) small groups which may be

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227 Sotion (Seneca, Ep. 108.17); Lucius from Etruria and Lucius’ teacher Moderatus from Spain (Plutarch, Mor. 727b); Euxenus from Heraclea (teacher of Apollonius of Tyana) (Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 1.7.2).

228 The reported number ranges from seven at the beginning to thirty-four, who were then pared down to just eight at the thought of persecution from Nero. The numbers again rose to around thirty but were once more reduced when Apollonius traveled to Egypt and Ethiopia (Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 1.18.1; 4.37.2; 5.43.3).

229 Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 4.1.1 (Jones, LCL).
broadly gathered under the label ‘associations.’ As with the Pauline groups, the groups we have examined lie within the urban context. From these examples (and other associated work on groups in the Greco-Roman world) we may add some further elements to our group founding model. Looming large in the background will be the assumption that we are dealing with a collectivist culture.\textsuperscript{230}

\textbf{Pre-affiliation: Context.} Though a number of local forces provided the psychological context for coalescence, several broad needs that these groups satisfied have been suggested. Andreas Bendlin has proposed that the migration of young unmarried men into urban areas and the resultant loss of connections to natural groups (family, etc.) made the establishment of social networks and groups necessary for \textit{survival}.\textsuperscript{231} Marcus Tod points to the (social) breakdown of a

\textsuperscript{230}This will be assumed (the burden of proof lies with those who would contend that the ancient world was an individualist culture). Collectivism, however, does not mean that there were no idiocentric individuals, or no philosophies or groups focused on the individual (one thinks of the anti-conventionalism and resultant stress on the individual of the Cynics) or that ancient persons did not think of themselves as individuals. For a recent defense of the first century Greco-Roman world as a collectivist culture, with a sensitivity to possible idiocentrism of members of that culture, see Gary W. Burnett, \textit{Paul and the Salvation of the Individual} (Leiden: Brill, 2001), 23-57. Craig Steven de Vos also provides evidence for the Greco-Roman world as collectivist in his defense of Greco-Roman cities exhibiting a Gemeinschaft-type society (\textit{Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationships of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities} [SBLDS 187; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999]).

There are those that would downplay or deny the collectivism of the Greco-Roman world. Often their objections focus on occurrences of idiocentrism or reveal an unrefined version of collectivism-individualism. For example, Louise Lawrence in \textit{An Ethnography of the Gospel of Matthew: A Critical Assessment of the Use of the Honour and Shame Model in New Testament Studies} (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003) intermingles individual allocentrism-idiocentrism and cultural collectivism-individualism. Her conclusion that “all in all, it seems that individualist traits [individual level] are observable within the assumed collectivist ancient world [cultural level]” (p.256), does not, as she assumes, weaken the case for collectivism but rather accords with the current social psychological perspective on collectivism-individualism as we have presented it in §2.4. She apparently views attention to the individual (for example, in worship of heroes, or striving for personal fame [p.253-255]), and multiple social identities (for example, both kin and city [p.255]) as incompatible with a collectivist culture. This view, however, confuses idiocentrism with individualism and does not fit with collectivism as seen in terms of interdependence (contrasting independence), with allocentrism and idiocentrism being orthogonal, and with current theories of social identity. See also Zeba Crook’s detailed critique of Lawrence’s view of collectivism (“Structure versus Agency in Studies of the Biblical Social World: Engaging with Louise Lawrence,” JSNT 29 [2007]: 251-275, here 258-259, 264-270); Lawrence’s response to Crook on this issue is ineffective (“Structure, Agency and Ideology: A Response to Zeba Crook,” JSNT 29 [2007]: 277-286, here 281, 283-284).

simpler life with urbanization and migration leading to the rise of voluntary groups.\textsuperscript{232} Brashear, for Egypt, similarly proposes that the large number of uprooted young men needed the male \textit{companionship} of groups.\textsuperscript{233} As Gabrielsen notes, for the elite of Rhodes, group founding was an \textit{economic} activity, providing both collective political and honour capital.\textsuperscript{234} Malina also points out the collective element in the founding of groups: groups were joined for the \textit{social benefits} which would accrue to a larger group category (that is, not just for individual benefit) and these benefits responded to a disadvantaged social situation.\textsuperscript{235}

In the social and cultural embedding context several factors are evident. These have been well documented in the ancient world and are taken as givens by many. Here we want, in particular, to highlight those factors which were salient to \textit{group founding} in the collectivist ancient Greco-Roman world – a perspective on these well known factors which has not been previously explored. These cultural factors are: 1) \textit{Benefaction}: the founding of groups required the input of resources, often met by benefaction. Benefactors played an important role in the founding of founded groups.\textsuperscript{236} 2) \textit{Honour}: honour, being a significant value in the ancient Mediterranean world and a primary means of social control, was intertwined with the founding of small groups:\textsuperscript{237} groups

\textsuperscript{232}Marcus N. Tod, \textit{Sidelights on Greek History: Three Lectures on the Light Thrown by Greek Inscriptions on the Life and Thought of the Ancient World} (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1932), 73-75.
\textsuperscript{233}Brashear, \textit{Vereine in griechisch-römischen Ägypten}, 19-25.
\textsuperscript{234}Gabrielsen, “The Rhodian Associations,” 225-228, 236-237.
\textsuperscript{235}“Early Christian Groups,” 109. Malina also indicates that early Christian groups arose to serve social, informational and support needs.

\textsuperscript{236}\textit{IG} II\textsuperscript{2} 1297; \textit{IG} II\textsuperscript{2} 1343; possibly \textit{IG} X/2 58. On the general topic of associations and benefactors see the examples in Frederick W. Danker, \textit{Benefactor: Epigraphic Study of a Graeco-Roman and New Testament Semantic Field} (St Louis: Clayton Publishing House, 1982). See also Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 61-63.

\textsuperscript{237}Honour discourse has been explored as a device for \textit{maintaining} group cohesion (for example, David A. DeSilva, \textit{Despising Shame: Honor Discourse and Community Maintenance in Hebrews} [SBLDS 152; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1995]). Here we are, however, looking at the phase before \textit{maintaining} group cohesion comes to the fore.
honoured their founders and benefactors; the reputation (an element of the honour complex) of a founder was an important component in the founding of the group; the potential honour of the group itself could influence group founding. 3) **Loyalty**: in collectivist cultures most individuals highly value loyalty to the groups in which they are involved. It is not surprising then that founders of groups were honoured for their loyalty to the group. This emphasis on solidarity, however, does not necessarily equate to affection or even an absence of tensions.

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238 IG II² 1297; IG II² 1343
239 Note especially the rhetorical and philosophical schools.
240 As Gabrielsen notes concerning the founding of Rhodian associations, “Human potential, suitably organized within the polis-format, also proved immensely valuable to the power structure for another of its productive capabilities: namely that of generating honour – with all the verbal and visual paraphernalia required for it to make its expected impact on the highly competitive market of acclaim” (“The Rhodian Associations,” 226).
241 On the high commitment to (or loyalty to or high identification with) groups in collectivist cultures see: Triandis, “Cross-Cultural Psychology,” 129; Triandis, “Individualism and Collectivism: Past, Present, and Future,” 38; Abrams et al., “The Social Identity Perspective on Small Groups,” 123.
242 IMansiaMus 354; SB 15460. Although we have noted that not all members in secondary level groups in philosophical schools were loyal (following ‘the adolescent quest for truth’), at the tertiary level philosophical schools provide a good example of loyalty to the founder and the group; see Sedley, “Philosophical Allegiance,” and Alexander, “Paul and the Hellenistic Schools.”
244 Even the evocation of family need not correspond to affection: 1) in Mediterranean cultures, while family solidarity may be the ideal, there is no lack of actual (and acknowledged) sibling animosity and father-son conflict (David D. Gilmore, “Anthropology of the Mediterranean Area,” *Annual Review of Anthropology* 11 [1982]: 175-205, here 190-191); 2) Tertullian (*Apol. 39*) noted the adoption of family terminology by groups which did not exhibit affection among their members.


244 Associations had provisions to deal with quarreling. For example, we find in *IG II² 1368*: Raucoous and disruptive behaviour at the meetings is not to be tolerated . . . If anyone starts a quarrel, is found to be uncivil, takes someone else’s place, insults or demeans another, the victim of such treatment shall present two lobakchoi, who shall under oath declare that they heard the insult or derision to which the plaintiff was subjected . . . Similar punishment is to be imposed on the sargeant-at-arms if he fails to eject participants in a brawl. (ll. 64, 74-79, 94-95) (Danker’s translation, *Benefactors*, 158-159).

**Competition**: Greco-Roman groups arose in a highly agonistic context and so competition, as seen, for example, in the formation of rhetorical schools, was not unexpected.\(^{245}\)

**Pre-affiliation: Connection.** As has already been noted social networks served as the framework on which small groups were built. In the Greco-Roman world the context for the formation of these networks is not found in a generalized trust of others (that is, the feeling that *in general* other people may be trusted – which results in relationships forming in a seemingly casual manner); we know, however, that “social institutions . . . provide a normative expectation that those who belong to the same *social setting* form social relationships.”\(^{246}\) Thus networks would be expected to form among those sharing ethnicity, occupation, location, and so on, and out of these networks groups would emerge.\(^{247}\)

**Pre-affiliation: Coalescence.** Given the social expectation for network building within social/behavioural settings and the interdependent orientation of individuals, it is not unexpected that cognitive coalescence (specifically, social attraction) and behavioural coalescence were more prominent than affective coalescence for group formation. For philosophical groups frame alignment, adoption of a common way of viewing the world, preceded the formation of the group.


\(^{246}\)This is the conclusion of Tasuku Igarashi et al. concerning the formation of social networks in East Asia (“Culture, Trust, and Social Networks,” *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 11 [2008]: 88-101, here 96-98; emphasis added). They also highlight the behavioural element of the social setting. Their conclusions accord with: 1) our taxonomy of associations; 2) the occupational groups within synagogues; and 3) the collectivist nature of the ancient world.

\(^{247}\)This has been noted above among the associations (including Jewish synagogues) and schools (e.g., the schools involving Aristides, Libanius, and Augustine).
**Group Beginning: Initial Conditions.** The groups at founding varied in size, were usually homogenous, and had meeting places which depended on the status of the founder, benefactor or emerging group. Typical groups which we surveyed often began as common-identity groups. There were also groups which arose from division or transformation.

3.4. Summary

In this chapter we have undertaken a comprehensive review of the available primary source material on the actual formation of small groups in the Greco-Roman world. The formation stage of small group life was not a matter for intentional reflection or for direct recording in the ancient world and so the pool of material is not large. In spite of this we have been able to accomplish three purposes. First, we have demonstrated the feasibility of applying the small group formation model to ancient groups by the actual application of the model with its holistic focus on context, networks and coalescence. The model provides a full outline of the formation process and allows for various streams of research (whether focusing on culture, socialization, networks, form, content or other facets of the process) to be integrated into one overview. Though much has been assumed

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248 A general upper bound for the size of a group at founding is seen in the eventual membership size. John S. Kloppenborg provides an in-depth discussion of membership size of ancient associations (along with a list of select associations and their sizes). He notes the variability of size, ranging from very few to hundreds of members, and the limitations on size, which would have included available meeting space and the availability of potential members (“Membership Practices in Pauline Christ Groups,” *Early Christianity* 4, no. 2 [Forthcoming 2013]).

249 *FD III.2 70; HJS 11 (1890): 236 (no.1).*

250 Less comprehensive reviews of the Greco-Roman material are found in, for example, Poland, *Geschichte des griechischen Vereinswesen*, 271-275; San Nicolò, *Ägyptisches Vereinswesen*, 2:6-17; Ascough, *Paul’s Macedonian Associations*, 28-42.

251 Theoretical work on small group formation is tangentially encountered in the primary sources, for example, in the sociological reflections in Aristotle’s *Politics*, 1252a-1253a.
in this area in the past, the process of group founding has been made explicit through using the model on ancient groups.

Second, we have refined the small group model for the Greco-Roman world. We saw, for example, that emerging groups appear more often to form around a founder than to be self-organized. We also have found that there are several points at which strong pressures toward homogeneity are evident. This suggests that, given the extreme pressures on a homogenous group to remain homogenous and so the unlikelihood of a homogenous group being transformed into a heterogenous group, if a heterogeneous group is encountered, then the proto-group or network from which it emerged would have been heterogeneous (for example, a heterogeneous household). We have highlighted both the collectivist cultural context, as well as, given their importance in group formation, the well-attested Mediterranean cultural values of benefaction, honour, loyalty, and competition. Concerning the connections out of which groups arise, the emphasis in the Greco-Roman world would have been on associations arising from within social institutions – hence, generalized trust and personal attraction should be downplayed in the description of the formation of these groups. Thus, for coalescence it is not surprising that the behavioural and cognitive categories are of greater significance than the affective category.

Third, we have encountered material which will provide analogies and contrasts for the formation of Pauline groups. In the schools we encountered a number of elements which will find their counterpart in Pauline group formation: the creation and use of networks to provide a framework on which the group would then coalesce; the significance of social attraction and

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252 Often falling into a form of the fundamental attribution error in which situational elements are downplayed and where, for example, affective and cognitive elements are individually overplayed.

253 See the revised model summary at the end of this section.
categorization; intense competition and frequent division; and, for philosophical groups in particular, the importance of frame alignment. On the other hand, the schools also highlighted the conventions involved in the highly visible entrance into a new location for prominent rhetoricians – behaviour which Paul contrasts to his own approach in 1 Corinthians (see also 1 Thess 2). As well, the formation of synagogues spotlights the importance of ethnic/geographic, work and neighbourhood connections for the founding of groups – interaction within the social institutions associated with these areas provided the arena for the development of proto-group networks. Observations from the formation of other associations show the value of loyalty and the importance of a founder to the origin of groups.

Paul’s small groups emerged within the Greco-Roman world and so the portrayal of the founding of groups in the Greco-Roman world provides a relevant backdrop to the founding of Pauline groups by not only providing a picture of analogous group founding but also illustrating the use of our small group model in an ancient setting. We now turn to the letters of Paul in order to examine the founding of Pauline small groups.
Small Group Founding Model: Summary Chart

[Items highlighted in the examination of the Greco-Roman world are underlined.]

1. Parameters
   - **Group Category**: self-organized and founded groups.
   - **Stage of Group Formation**: pre-affiliation and group beginning.

2. Pre-affiliation
   2.1. Pre-affiliation: Context
       - **Psychological Context of Coalescence**.
         - Need satisfaction in the midst of a period of urbanization and migration: survival needs; psychological needs; informational needs; identity needs.
       - **Embedding Context of Coalescence**.
         - **Physical Environment**.
           - Propinquity: through living arrangement, work or gathering at special sites (including cult sites and marketplace).
         - **Social Environment**.
           - Social networks: based on kinship, work, religious, ethnic or other ties.
           - Stability or threat within the social environment.
           - Threat leads to centralized communication.
         - **Cultural Environment**.
           - Collectivism-individualism dimension.
           - Importance of: benefaction; honour; loyalty; competition.
   2.2. Pre-affiliation: Connection
       - **Networks and Group Formation**.
         - For self-organized groups:
           - Real world groups: in the same social network – groups emerge from strengthening of ties within these networks.
         - For founded groups (preferred option):
           - Within prior social network: Trusted alters preferred over strangers as initial group members.
           - Unconnected social context: initiation of ties with those in shared social settings and then strengthening of ties.

2.3. Pre-affiliation: Coalescence
   - **Behavioural Coalescence**.
     - Needs induce interdependent behaviour such as coordination of actions to meet a common goal, cooperation focused on common fate, or interaction on a joint task.
     - Ties initiated and strengthened with those in shared social institutions – often having behavioural component.

   **Affective Coalescence** (lesser importance).
   - Interpersonal attraction: proximity, competence, reciprocity, physical attractiveness and similarity.
   - Similarity: attitude, personality, economic, racial, need.

   **Cognitive Coalescence**.
   - Social identity theory
     - Self-categorization theory and social attraction
       - Labelling: can bring about group phenomena.
       - Self-categorization: results in relatively homogenous self-organized groups.
       - Founded groups: before the small group is founded social attraction is at work – founder as group prototype.
   - Symbolic-interpretive perspective
     - Frame alignment (significant): the rhetorical process of creating a shared ideology through persuasion.
     - Four types of frame alignment processes: frame bridging; frame amplification; frame extension; frame transformation.

3. Group Beginning
   3.1. Group Beginning: Initial Conditions
       - **Group Size**.
         - Groups starting with larger numbers: formal structures for coordination may be needed and the role of a leader in coordinating members will become important.
       - **Diversity**.
         - Usually homogenous. Heterogeneity arising from transformation of heterogeneous proto-group.
       - **Boundaries**.
         - Temporal boundaries: meeting times, length; group duration.
         - Physical boundaries: meeting place, set-up, items used.
         - Psychological boundaries: who is and isn’t member.
   3.2. Group Beginning: Prototypical Groups
       - **Attachment**.
         - Usually common-identity groups: attachment to group.
   3.3. Group Beginning: Transforming
       - Division: Breaking into subgroups as result of conflict.
       - Transformation: Whole group transformed in such a way that members view it as a new group.
Chapter 4
Pauline Small Group Founding:
An Overview of Model-Based Expectations and the Pauline Data

4.1. Introduction

When Paul would arrive at a new city to preach the crucified one and to proclaim a teaching never heard before, he had to meet many persons. For this he needed before anything an appropriate place in the city where all could gather, a place without disturbances, large in order to receive many listeners, not near places of spectacles nor with disturbing neighbours. (Jerome, Comm. Phlm. vers. 22)

Centuries after Paul’s group founding activity, Jerome’s intuition that Paul would need to first establish contacts in order to form a group is certainly correct. However, Jerome had several misperceptions: reflecting the activities of his own time, he places Paul’s activity in a large hall; and reflecting Paul’s own portrayal, he does not pursue the link between declamation and actually gathering a group. Following up on this latter observation, we will begin our look at the founding of Pauline small groups with Paul’s portrayal of his part in group founding and how that accords with the expectations produced by our model. Then we will turn to the heart of this chapter – an overview of our group founding model applied to Pauline group founding in which we relate the expectations of the model to the data found in Paul’s letters. This coarsely textured overview: 1) stands on its own as a broad outline of how Pauline groups may have been founded; 2) illustrates the areas in which we have only the expectations of the model and those areas in which the data of the letters of Paul fill out the picture of group founding; 3) in conjunction with this, serves as a springboard for future examination of Pauline group founding in that this broad application of the model may act as a generative tool, proposing possibilities, eliminating misguided suggestions (such

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1Here it must be reiterated that we are focusing on Paul as a small group founder and not as a founder of a movement (for example, as seen in the in the discussion of contrast of Jesus and Paul as the founder of Christianity) nor as a founder of an ongoing tradition (for example, as seen in the discussion of the “school” of Paul).
as Jerome’s location for Paul’s activity), and posing questions; and 4) functions as background to the more finely textured use of the model in Chapter 5.

4.1.1. Paul’s Perspective on Group Founding

What did Paul depict his part to be in the origin of these groups? Did Paul picture himself as a founder of groups?

Paul portrayed his overall objective as “to bring about the obedience of faith among all the nations” (Rom 1:5), “winning obedience from the nations” (Rom 15:18), which included the initial work, at a local level, of laying “a foundation . . . which is Jesus Christ” (1 Cor 3:10-11), announcing good news that had come “through a revelation of Jesus Christ” (Gal 1:11-12; but also see 1 Cor 15:2) and “declaring the good news of God” (1 Thess 2:2, 9), with the recipients “receiving the word of God” (1 Thess 2:13) and with Paul himself being a “servant through whom you believed” (1 Cor 3:5), and the one who “fathered you in Christ Jesus through the gospel” (1 Cor 4:15). Paul’s apparent view of his place in the origin of the groups with which he dealt was that he was a communicator bringing a message which was responded to.² We have then a depiction by Paul of his function in group founding which would fit under the rubric of cognitive coalescence, specifically framing and frame alignment.³

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³From a sociological viewpoint this may be seen as creating a symbolic universe, though this reaches beyond group founding/beginning into a longer phase of group formation. On Paul as a mediator of a symbolic universe see Regina Börschel, Die Konstruktion einer christlichen Identität: Paulus und die Gemeinde von Thessalonik in ihrer hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt (BBB 128; Berlin: Philo, 2001).
There are problems, however, with this portrayal. Although Paul’s predominant description of his activity was communicative, including a broad view of communication made up of verbal and non-verbal components – “by word and by deed, by the power of signs and wonders, by the power of the Holy Spirit” (Rom 15:18-19), “not only in word, but also in power and in the Holy Spirit” (1 Thess 1:5) – he did, perhaps unknowingly, reveal that other components of group coalescence were involved in his (or other’s) activities. He wrote of a readiness to share not only the gospel but also “our own selves, because you became very dear to us” (1 Thess 2:8) and related how threat and weakness had brought the group together (1 Thess 1:6, 2:2, 14; Gal 4:13-14) – factors in behavioural coalescence. We know also of social networks drawn into the groups (for example, the households in Corinth). Paul’s general presentation of his part in group formation, then, was tendentious, emphasizing only one component of group founding: the need for a collective consciousness, a shared symbolic universe, common frames.

A second difficulty arises out of this central component: in emphasizing communication Paul seemingly places his work of founding groups as secondary to that of individual persuasion. Paul’s perspective was reminiscent of the position of the philosophers: they were seeking to persuade their listeners to accept their view of the world and to live accordingly – that is, they sought conversion of the individual and not primarily the formation of a group. Paul’s presentation then, like that of

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4While this may indicate affection between Paul and potential group members and point toward social attraction, it does not necessarily indicate strong affective coalescence.

5See Arthur Darby Nock, Conversion: The Old and New in Religion from Alexander the Great to Augustine of Hippo (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1933). Zeba Crook notes this as he emphasizes the necessity of rhetoric for philosophers: “The importance, of course, of attracting one to the ‘study of philosophy’ is in persuading them of the truth of one’s position, not simply in persuading them to study it for the sake of study. What philosophers were most frequently involved in persuading others of was the necessity to secure their own happiness, the health of their souls, salvation from ignorance, and the like. In this way, the philosophers offered benefactions to people in the form of teachings that would save them, but this of course required more work (hence the use of rhetoric) than was typical among patrons or benefactors . . .” (emphasis added; Zeba A. Crook, Reconceptualising Conversion: Patronage, Loyalty, and Conversion in the Religions of the Ancient Mediterranean [BZNW 130; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004], 104).
the philosophers, focused on individual response and not on group founding. Thus, given that when dealing with group founding he emphasized components such as reception of his message, trust, obedience and so on – elements which adhere to the *individual* – we see Paul concentrating on the individual within the emerging group.⁶

Yet Paul viewed, in some sense, the *groups* that emerged as his: “Are you not my workmanship in the Lord?” (1 Cor 9:1); “You yourselves are our letter of recommendation . . . a letter from Christ delivered by us” (2 Cor 3:2, 3); “For what is our hope or joy or crown of boasting before our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? Is it not you? For you are our glory and joy” (1 Thess 2:19-20). We have then that Paul saw himself as a communicator, seeking change in individuals, and that groups resulted which he viewed as his own. There is, however, a missing link between persuasion of individuals and group founding. As Reck notes in his examination of Pauline churches from a communication theory perspective, “Allein das Auftreten einer Lehre führt allerdings noch nicht zwangsläufig zum Zusammenschluß ihrer Anhänger; z.B. die philosophischen Schulen.”⁷ How do we move then from Paul’s presentation of his activity as communication with individuals to the reality of the resultant groups?

Though the question has often gone unrecognized, there have been those who have proposed answers. Reck proposes a *theological/communications solution*.⁸ Inherent in the message of Paul

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⁶This is reinforced in 1 Cor 4:15 by mention of begetting “in Jesus Christ *through the gospel*”, which may be taken to indicate the communicative element of his activity which transformed individuals. As well, we have Paul’s own statement that he was not sent “to baptize [a group entrance ritual] but to preach the gospel” (1 Cor 1:17).


This, then, would be analogous to the founding of Epicurean groups (in contrast to, for example, Stoics) where an essential part of the content of the teaching was that of a community of friends, and so groups naturally arose. Martin Goodman comes to a contrary position for early Christianity in his view that the church developed a concept of universal mission and yet few if any Christians expected converts to join a group (“So far as I know, no early Christian text states explicitly that it is desirable to turn non-Christians into Christians by converting them and enrolling them as members of their local churches . . . Christians thus sought new members for the wider Church, but they did not necessarily therefore also expect them to become part of a local Christian community.” [Mission and Conversion: Proselytizing in the Religious History of the Roman Empire (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 94, 103]). However, as Jack Sanders notes, “That early Christians did not think as Goodman proposes is seen in the fact that all early Christians known to us, except for the itinerant apostles and similar itinerant leaders of the church, belonged to local congregations” (Charisma, Converts, Competitors: Societal and Sociological Factors in the Success of Early Christianity [London: SCM Press, 2000], 77).

Though Reck’s version puts too much stress on an early view of the church as the true Israel.

Klaiber, Rechtfertigung, 74.
communication. Certainly, Paul’s presentation of his part in group formation in his situational letters had a rhetorical element. However, there may be more at work here.

One could also look at group formation. This social psychological solution would first acknowledge that we have only limited knowledge of the groups begun by Paul and that his message did not always lead to group founding (this is hinted at by the rejection pictured in the peristasis catalogue of 2 Cor 11). When Paul’s communication did lead to group formation, at the centre would be: 1) social networks which would provide for a natural coalescence; and 2) (most often) allocentric individuals whose natural outlook on the practice of the Pauline message would be to do it in groups. Thus, when Paul wrote of proclamation of the gospel and of conversion of individuals, his focus on communication and conversion was not centred merely on communication with isolated individuals, but on communication with allocentric individuals who were embedded in social networks. In addition, Paul may have maintained a hands-off approach to other factors involved in the forming of the group and others (whether the members of the coalescing group or his fellow

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12This would be similar to Hanges' view of Paul appropriating Hellenistic cult (and city) founding models. The use of the founder-figure model is seen in Paul's utilization of his call story to defend his mission and is further observed in Paul assuming responsibility over specific areas in both the operation of the cult and directing the relations between cult participants. Rooted in the founder model, accompanying this sense of responsibility, was a consciousness of authority. (James C. Hanges, “Paul, Founder of Churches: A Study in Light of the Evidence for the Role of ‘Founder-Figures’ in the Hellenistic-Roman Period” (Ph.D. diss., University of Chicago, 1999); see also Hans Dieter Betz, “Transferring a Ritual: Paul’s Interpretation of Baptism in Romans 6,” in Paul in His Hellenistic Context (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 84-118.

Hanges' view of founding, though, is much broader than what we are using, including elements well beyond the beginning of the group. As well, his focus on cult transferral: 1) leaves untouched how cult participants are drawn together into a group, and 2) may not be the most appropriate model for the beginning of Pauline groups (see Edwin Arthur Judge, “Did the Churches Compete with Cult Groups?” in Early Christianity and Classical Culture: Comparative Studies in Honor of Abraham J. Malherbe [eds. John T. Fitzgerald, Thomas H. Olbricht, and L. Michael White; Leiden: Brill, 2003], 501-24).

workers) may have had the primary input in those areas (this may reflect the same attitude seen in Paul’s statement that he was not sent “to baptize but to preach the gospel” [1 Cor 1:17]). Paul viewed cognitive coalescence as the primary element in group formation and so, with his involvement in that area, he could claim the group as his own – he laid the foundation and so the group was his.  

4.2. Founding Pauline Groups: Applying the Small Group Model

We now turn from Paul's own presentation of his work to look at features common to the founding of all Pauline groups and the expectations of the group founding model. We will use the group founding model to examine the general contours of the formation of a Pauline group – this will then be contextualized in the following chapter as we look at three individual cases. The founding of any specific Pauline group may be approached by working down through encapsulating layers. We began with small groups in general and then small groups in the Greco-Roman world. With the information we have gleaned from these we will now examine the possible features found in the formation of a Pauline small group.

As we turn to applying the group founding model we encounter two interrelated perspectives. The first focuses on the question of how specific Pauline groups may have actually been founded (a sociological focus). The second on how our model accords with and enriches the data we have (a textual focus). For both of these perspectives we have in our overview results varying in fruitfulness.

\[13\] Thus he is also interested and involved in their further formation as groups – hence Paul’s extensive ongoing engagement with the groups: while he was present, through ongoing teaching, and once he had left, through visits, envoys and letters.
From the sociological side, when we seek to bring clarity to the question of how Paul actually founded certain groups, we must recognize the diversity of the connections between elements of our model, our overview of Pauline group founding and the concrete data we possess. For example, do we know Paul’s original place of lodging, or the exact ethnic and occupational makeup of early adherents? Of course our answer is no, but the degree to which we do not know varies: we may not know on the one hand the original lodgings, but we do have on the other hand a more reasonable assurance of the Jewish or hypsisterian nature of early contacts.

Applying the group founding model to the primary textual material on the founding of Pauline groups, we encounter as well varied levels of direct applicability to the material for specific locations. For example, the embedding psychological factor of needs satisfaction in an urban environment may serve to explain some general observations on certain texts, whereas the embedding cultural factors, such as benefaction, have found a more detailed place in the study of the origins of Paul’s groups. 14 Or, though we have some hints of the initial contacts for specific groups (e.g., 1 Cor 16:15) and our examination of pre-arrival contacts adds some focus to a picture of the nascent group, the social context of Paul’s activity provides more definition to a portrait of these initial contacts and nascent group adherents and the texts dealing with them.

With this in mind our exploration in this chapter of how Pauline groups were founded should be seen as a portrait in broad brush strokes of the expectations of our model correlated to the data we possess.

14 For example, Crook, *Reconceptualising Conversion.*
4.2.1 Pre-Affiliation: Context

The factors we encountered in the formation of small groups in the Greco-Roman world are significant in the formation of Pauline groups. These would include: the psychological context of needs satisfaction in a time of urbanization and migration; the embedding physical context of contact within common market or cult locations; the embedding social context of threat or harmony; and the cultural context of collectivism and common Mediterranean values. Four of these cultural values have been highlighted: 1) Benefaction: the founding of groups required the input of resources, often met by benefaction. The nature of this benefaction for Pauline groups was dependent on local situational factors, not only directly (e.g., connected to the social location of the individuals in the proto group) but also indirectly (e.g., connected to Paul’s attitude to receiving aid which in turn was contingent on local factors [note the differences between Thessalonica and Corinth]; or connected to the pressures toward homogeneity which would have eliminated certain avenues of benefaction). 2) Honour: honour, being a significant value in the ancient Mediterranean world and a primary means of social control, was intertwined with the founding of small groups: groups honoured their founders and benefactors; the reputation of a founder was an important component in the founding of the group; the potential honour of the group itself could influence group founding. Again, how these played out for Pauline groups was dependent on local circumstances. 3) Loyalty: in collectivist cultures most individuals highly value loyalty to the groups in which they are involved. Paul emphasizes his loyalty to the forming group (e.g., when he emphasizes his effort on behalf of the forming group in spite of opposition [1 Thess 2:2, 8-9]) and he sought to engender loyalty among individuals in the coalescing group. The emphasis on solidarity, however, did not necessarily equate to affection or even an absence of tensions within the nascent group. 4) Competition: Greco-Roman
groups arose in a highly agonistic context and so competition was not unexpected. The competition and conflict which Pauline groups encountered varied according to local factors (again note the contrast between Thessalonica and Corinth).

Given that Paul started small groups after arriving at a new location there are several more elements of the pre-affiliation context which should be explored.

4.2.1.1. Pre-Affiliation Context: Pre-Arrival Contacts

Although our model could allow for a “cold call” entrance into a city for Paul and his companions, we have that for collectivists the lack of generalized trust in others would suggest that a more likely type of entrance into a city would include getting in touch with contacts known before arrival. We have seen in our examination of Greco-Roman small group founding examples of such pre-arrival contacts, for instance in Jewish synagogues and in schools (the examples of Aristides, Libanius, and Augustine). As well, for Paul we also have in his letter to the Romans the acknowledgment of contacts in a city he had yet to visit. So while Paul’s letters provide no direct information concerning such contacts before the founding of a group, we may suggest that usually such contacts existed and we may sketch out some possibilities for them.

Even before entering a new location there could well be a reservoir of contacts – links that could be either unmediated, directly through Paul himself and his companions, or mediated through others. Paul traveled with a number of companions who could have provided multiple entry points into social networks in new locations.15 These companions could have provided links through their

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15On Paul’s coworkers see Wolf-Henning Ollrog, Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter. Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission (Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979) and E. Earle Ellis, “Paul and His Coworkers,” in Dictionary of Paul and His Letters (eds. Gerald F. Hawthorne and Ralph P. Martin. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1993), 183-89. Several accompanied him and were sent as his representative, for example: Timothy
family, ethnic/religious or occupational contacts. In addition, if Edwin Judge’s onomastic analysis of Paul’s acquaintances is tenable, it appears that a number of his companions had good opportunities for forging and nurturing such contacts – they were “people who had the means and freedom to travel, often (to judge by their names) enjoying the protection and status of Roman citizenship. They may often have been successful businessmen or civil servants (freedmen, Rom 16:10, 11; Phil 4:22).”

Similarly, given the physical mobility of the Greco-Roman world, Paul himself might well have had contacts already in the new location. These contacts could have been created at a previous location in a synagogue, a Christian assembly, another Pauline group, or the workplace. As well, as Earle Ellis notes, Paul had a number of extended family contacts.

Besides actual contacts in the new location, there could also have been potential contacts mediated through letters of recommendation. A number of these letters survive, as well as examples in epistolary handbooks. They served to introduce a traveller, to vouch for good character and to request assistance. In the pseudo-Demetrios manual we find:

(1 Thess 3:2, 6; 1 Cor 4:17) and Titus (2 Cor 8:16, 23, 12:18; cf. Gal 2:1-3). In addition we have those mentioned as co-senders of letters including, in addition to Timothy (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1; 2 Cor 1:1), Silas (1 Thess 1:1; 2 Thess 1:1) and Sosthenes (1 Cor 1:1) – their activity with Paul is unclear but mention in the greeting points to some significance for the local group.

The number of women Paul mentions as co-workers and contacts is significant (see Rom 16; Phil 4:2-3; Phlm 2) and they would have had additional links to other women.

16 Titus, for example, as an uncircumcised Greek follower of the “true and living God” (Gal. 2:1-3), may well have had easier access to “god-fearers” and followers of Theos Hypsistos.


19 Ellis, “Paul and His Coworkers,” 186.

The introductory type [of letter], which we write to one person for the sake of another, inserting words of praise, and making acquainted those previously unacquainted. Such as the following:

X, who is conveying the letter to you, is a man who has been well tested by us, and who is loved on account of his trustworthiness. Kindly grant him hospitality both for my sake and for his, and indeed also for your own. For you will not be sorry if you entrust to him, in any matter you wish, either words or deeds of a confidential nature. Indeed you yourself will praise him to others when you have learned how useful he can be in everything.21

Paul was familiar with the convention, both alluding to it (2 Cor 3:1) and using it (Rom 16:1-2).

Another pool of pre-arrival contacts (and so also providing contacts of contacts) was found in fellow travellers. Whether by road or by sea, travel furnished opportunities for connections to develop. By sea, the ships, though not built for passengers, could hold up to hundreds, who amused themselves in the confined space on deck as best they could.22 On the well maintained roads, travellers on foot, wagon or animal could travel alone. However, there was the tendency to gather and travel in groups both out of a natural desire for company23 as well as for protection. The latter motivation could also provide the opportunity to connect (to some degree) with those of a higher social standing24 as Epictetus notes:

This is the way also with the more cautious among travellers. A man has heard that the road which he is taking is infested with robbers; he does not venture to set forth

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21Translation Keyes, “The Greek Letter of Introduction,” 38. P.Oxy. 746 (16 CE) provides a real life example: “Hermophilos, who is delivering the letter to you is . . . of . . . erios, and he asked me to write to you. He claims he has business in Kerkemunis. Therefore, if you please, assist him actively, as is just.” (Translation Keyes, “The Greek Letter of Introduction,” 35).

22Casson, Travel in the Ancient World, 156-57. As for the crew, Aristotle notes how the bond between crew members is an example of a natural close relationship (Eth. nic. 1159b 28, 1160a 15, 1161b 14).

23Epictetus advocates maintaining “natural and acquired relationships, those namely of son, father, brother, citizen, wife, neighbour, fellow-traveller, ruler, and subject” (Diatr. 2.14.8 [see also 3.21.5] [Oldfather, LCL]; emphasis added).

24In terms of Park’s typology of diffusion of religion, we have then that road travel could facilitate expansion diffusion through both contagious diffusion (diffusion through everyday contact in the population) and hierarchical diffusion (ideas implanted at the top eventually trickle-down from elites). See Chris C. Park, Sacred Worlds: An Introduction to Geography and Religion (London: Routledge, 1994), 100.
alone, but waits for a company, either that of an ambassador, or of a quaestor, or a proconsul, and when he has attached himself to them he travels along the road in safety.\footnote{Epictetus, \textit{Diatr}. 4.1.91-92 (Oldfather, LCL).}

\textbf{4.2.1.2. Pre-Affiliation Context: Social Context of Arrival: Entry and Hospitality}

The Pauline letters have limited detailed information concerning the initial entry into a specific location: Paul’s entrance into Thessalonica (1 Thess 1:9; 2:1-2) is mentioned and a positive reception in the midst of difficult circumstances in Galatia is noted (Gal 4:12-15). Yet our model with its emphasis on a Mediterranean collectivist cultural context and the examples of Greco-Roman hospitality suggests several important features which would impact the founding of Pauline groups (and so also later group dynamics) and with that our reading of Pauline letters. First, given the importance of social connections for group formation and the significant relationship between hospitality and social connections, the form and location of initial hospitality would have a direct influence on the social location of the group founded and the social context of later Pauline ministry. Second, an essential element within this initial hospitality would be the possible presence of and, if so, characteristics of a host. The strictures on host and guest and the lack of mobility amongst hosts suggests that a host would have a significant influence on the shape of the resultant group. As we shall see, we would expect Paul and his companions to take advantage of private hospitality with a Jew, Christian or Jewish sympathizer who would have provided entrance into social networks – however, we also see a number of possible options for all of which our data is silent.
Upon arrival in a new location, Paul and his companions entered as strangers and so were subject to the conventions of hospitality. Hospitality was a valued behaviour and quality in the first century Greco-Roman world. Though an ambivalence towards strangers is evident in early Greek writing and inferred for early Rome, by the first century the positive perspective on strangers found in Homer was ingrained as an ideal in the culture. Hospitality took on a variety of forms: commercial; community; private (or domestic); and public (or political). Paul and his companions would have availed themselves to one of these forms.


29 Bolchazy, *Hospitality in Early Rome*, 17-34.

30 See, for example, Dio Chrysostom *Or.*, 7.

31 This final form involved the officially recognized forms of interaction between states and so will not be commented upon with respect to Paul.

32 Another possibility is that Paul and his companions did not avail themselves to hospitality but rather lived in the open, as did some Cynics – “if they [Cynics] tried to expel from the lives of other men the element of theatrical display and arrogance, they themselves first set the example by living in the open market places and the temple precincts” (Julian, *Orationes* 7.214; quoted in Abraham J. Malherbe, *Moral Exhortation: A Greco-Roman Sourcebook* [Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1986], 39). There is some evidence for this in Paul’s writing – 2 Cor 11:23-27 suggests sleeping in the open – but there does not seem to be any suggestion that he intentionally practiced this long term in a setting in which he was founding a group (and he seems rather to distance himself from Cynic practice).
Commercial hospitality. Although upon entering a new place a traveller may have preferred staying with contacts, this was not always possible. Commercial establishments providing accommodation for travellers in the Greco-Roman world are attested from the fifth century BCE and on. In urban areas there would be no problem in finding lodging – a variety of accommodations could be found lining the roads outside the city gates and within the town proper (just inside the gates or around the town centre). Apollonius of Tyana and his entourage are portrayed as finding an inn near the gates of Rome: “And they put up in an inn [πανδοχεῖον] close to the gate, and were taking their supper for it was eventide, . . .” (Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 4.39 [Conybeare LCL]). Several Latin terms differentiate between types of lodgings, illustrating what was found in the first century, not only in the Latin west but also in the east: hospitia or deversoria offered rooms along with food and drink (and, if desired, sexual companionship) and were either purpose built or a further use of an existing home; stabula were similar to hospitia (though often smaller) with the addition of stables, usually having an open courtyard surrounded by a kitchen, latrine and bedrooms; a caupona catered to a lower social class (though often the use of any commercial lodging would have indicated that the traveller was part of a class “who were too poor or socially insignificant to have developed a network of personal hospitality”).

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34This is a rough sorting of the terms. As Frier illustrates (particularly from Petronius’ Satyricon) there was interchangeability of vocabulary (Bruce Woodward Frier, “The Rental Market in Early Imperial Rome,” JRS 67 [1977]: 27-37, here 30-34). On both the Latin and Greek terminology and for examples from both the east and west of the ancient world see also André and Baslez, Voyager dans l’Antiquité, 461-466 and Hiltbrunner, Gastfreundschaft in der Antike, 125-130, 131-156.

35O’Gorman, “Dimensions of Hospitality,” 27. Or as Casson notes, “the average public house in town was a workday no-nonsense place for housing the rank-and-file traveller overnight” (Travel in the Ancient World, 204).
Two forms of tenancy were considered for residence beyond a few days. If remaining in the urban centre, one could extend the stay in a deversorium. As Freier notes, in cities these “structures housed both travellers and residents, side by side, so that ‘inns’ blended imperceptibly with the tenements of the poor.” The rental of a room would be accounted for daily and possibly paid for daily or weekly. A more stable longer term tenancy was associated with the rental of an apartment within an insula, apartment building. Here leases might extend for a year or more, a half-year being the shortest period, with payment due at the end of the term. These two forms of tenancy thus reflected a social distinction:

It is helpful, therefore to distinguish more or less sharply between the long-term tenancy that is associated with the cenaculum-form [in an insula]; and the short-term tenancy, continuously renewed by both parties, that is associated with the inn-like deversoria. At root, this distinction would have social significance. The making of a long-term contract, with delayed payment, implied trust in the tenant’s future ability to pay; such trust derived from the landlord’s assessment of the tenant’s character and background. . . . Those at a certain distance above the lower classes rented, for long terms, relatively large and high-quality apartments; while the poor made do with short-term leases in tenements that physically resembled inns. . . . This model is interesting for its evidence of how thoroughly a basic economic structure like the urban rental market was, in the Roman world, not ‘economic’ in the modern sense of maximised profit, but instead interpenetrated by considerations of social status and subjected to social restraint and regulation.

Community hospitality. Alongside commercial establishments, there was community provision for certain travellers. Speakers of note could enjoy the hospitality of the gymnasium, being

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37 Frier, “The Rental Market in Early Imperial Rome,” 34. This is seen not only in texts such as Petronius’ Satyricon (the same lodging having travellers and residents), but also in legal texts which distinguish between transients and residents of a lodging house (Ulpian, Dig. 47. 5. 1, 6) (Frier, “The Rental Market in Early Imperial Rome,” 32-34).

38 Frier also notes that the tenant population included those who “lived in the mezzanines or the backrooms of the ground-floor shops in which they worked” – though they were fewer than those in the inn-like accommodations (“The Rental Market in Early Imperial Rome,” 30).

39 Frier, “The Rental Market in Early Imperial Rome,” 34, 35.
received and taken care of by the gymnasiarch. The possibility of staying in community building, a gymnasion or temple, is reflected in the stories of Diogenes. Dio Chrysostom specifically notes that Diogenes stayed in gymnasia and temples (Or. 6.14). One occasion of lodging in a temple is expanded on in Diogenes, Epistle 37, in which Diogenes is given to report that, after arriving in Rhodes and not being able to find his expected host, “I came up and asked for the hospitality of the gods. So I lodged with them.”

The likelihood of Paul and his companions staying in a temple or gymnasion is remote given the religious and social implications. However, there was the opportunity of lodging in rooms provided by the Jewish community. In Palestine there is ample evidence of a connection between synagogues and hostelry: the Theodotos inscription (CIJ 1404) specifically mentions a guest house (καταμαθή) with the synagogue; Rabbinic literature mentions individuals seeking out the synagogue for a place to stay (y. Meg. 3.4, 74a; possibly b. Pesah. 100b-101a), and that some synagogues had a lodging house while others did not (t. Ma. 2:20); and archaeological evidence points to a hostel on the site of the synagogue at Hamath Tiberias. A later story concerning Rabbi Meir reveals the social ranking of inns and synagogue lodging (Gen. Rab. 92:6): Rabbi Meir, while staying at an inn was encouraged to leave at night by the innkeeper who was conspiring with thieves. Rabbi Meir

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41Fiore’s translation. Apollonius of Tyana is also noted as spending time living in temples (Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 4.40, 5.20, 8.15).
refused to leave giving the excuse that he had a friend staying at the synagogue. Apparently the more prosperous stayed in an inn while the poorer went to the synagogue. The direct evidence for diaspora synagogues having accommodation is minimal,\textsuperscript{44} though it has been suggested that the side rooms in the Delos synagogue may have provided for the lodging of guests\textsuperscript{45} and that the \textit{tetrastoon} of the Stobi synagogue inscription (\textit{CIJ} 694) “would most likely be used as a study room and guest-house.”\textsuperscript{46} The lack of diaspora evidence, however, would appear to result from the paucity of material rather than the absence of community hospitality.

\textit{Private hospitality}. The preferred option for accommodation in a new location was to stay with contacts gained through a previous encounter, or through a recommendation, or through ascribed group membership (e.g., religious/ethnic background, or kinship). The former types of contact were entwined with the social conventions of friendship\textsuperscript{47} and have been mentioned under \textit{Pre-arrival Contacts}. The latter type, ascribed group membership, is illustrated in Cicero’s discussion of generosity and the advantage it brought in political influence. He notes that hospitality is an expression of generosity and offers the example of how Cimon proffered hospitality to his own group:

For an instance of extraordinary hospitality, Theophrastus writes that at Athens Cimon was hospitable even to the Laciads, the people of his own deme; for he

\begin{footnotes}
\item[44]David Binder actually omits accommodation as a function of the diaspora synagogue (Donald D. Binder, \textit{Into the Temple Courts: The Place of the Synagogues in the Second Temple Period} [SBLDS 169; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 1999]). On the other hand Claußen overextends the evidence (\textit{Versammlung, Gemeinde, Synagogue}, 219).
\item[45]Monika Trümper (“The Oldest Original Synagogue Building in the Diaspora: The Delos Synagogue Reconsidered,” \textit{Hesperia} 73 (2004): 513-98, here 582-583) allows for this possibility but does note, “Although the lodging of guests seems rather unlikely, because the south rooms of the complex resemble much more those of service than those of proper or even luxurious living” (p. 583 n. 160). On Delos and other suggested diaspora evidence see Hilbrunner, \textit{Gastfreundschaft in der Antike}, 103-106; Claußen, \textit{Versammlung, Gemeinde, Synagogue}, 219.
\item[47]Marshall has explored this for Paul in \textit{Enmity in Corinth} (Peter Marshall, \textit{Enmity in Corinth: Social Conventions in Paul’s Relations with the Corinthians} [WUNT 2.23; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1987]).
\end{footnotes}
instructed his bailiffs to that end and gave them orders that every attention should be shown to any Laciads who should ever call at his country home.\footnote{De Off. 2.64 (Miller LCL); cf. Aristotle Const. Ath. 27.3.}

Similar attention to one’s own group is seen in a dossier of first century CE documents from Corinth, in which Iunia Theodora, a resident of Corinth who came from the trading port Patara in Lycia, was honoured for her hospitality to those of her homeland.\footnote{Démètre I. Pallas, Séraphin Charitonidis and Jacques Venencie, “Inscriptions lyciennes trouvées à Solômos pres de Corinthe,” BCH 83 (1959): 496-508. See in the inscription particularly ll. 22-41.} Richard Saller also notes the specific case of a provincial in Rome and the general expectation for hospitality to one’s own group:

Fronto wrote a letter to Lollianus Avitus, proconsul of Africa, on behalf of Licinius Montanus, a native of Cirta. . . . At the beginning of the letter, in order to impress upon Avitus how close he was to Montanus, Fronto wrote that he shared his house and table with Montanus when he came to Rome. Further, Montanus was second in his affection to none of those ‘quiscum mihi hospitii iura sunt,’ (‘with whom I share the rights of hospitality’). This last clause suggests that a Roman aristocrat, especially a recent migrant who still had numerous ties with his patria, was expected to host provincial visitors as a routine duty, and so renew and strengthen his bonds with them.”\footnote{Richard P. Saller, \textit{Personal Patronage under the Early Empire} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982), 185. For further examples in Rome see David Noy, \textit{Foreigners at Rome: Citizens and Strangers} (London: Duckworth, 2000), 148.}

The sources we have point to this phenomenon operating on class lines, as David Noy observes, “Fronto would presumably not have offered accommodation to an African mule-driver, although he might have pointed him in the direction of other African mule-drivers.”\footnote{Noy, \textit{Foreigners at Rome}, 149.}

As well, religious background could serve as a contact point (though, of course, in most cases religion and homeland were inextricable).\footnote{Noy, \textit{Foreigners at Rome}, 147-148.} Apuleius portrays Lucius, after his transformation into a follower of Isis, as being received, though a stranger, as he attends the temple of Isis in Rome – “a
stranger to the shrine but an adherent to the cult.” In the fourth century Augustine, as a Manichaeans, stayed with a Manichaeans “hearer” when he arrived in Rome. Josephus joined a Jewish actor, Aliturus, when he came to Rome: “Landing safely at Dicaearchia, which the Italians call Puteoli, I formed a friendship with Aliturus, an actor who was a special favourite of Nero and of Jewish origin. Through him I was introduced to Poppaea, Caesar’s consort…” And for many Jews receiving or giving hospitality may have been limited simply to other Jews and sensitive sympathizers.

Occupation also served as a point of connection. The link might be to a patron of the occupation – this may be the reason behind the poet Archais’ immediate reception into the house of the patron of the arts, Luculli – or to other workers as we see in the layout of the Alexandrian synagogue: “they would not sit indiscriminately, but goldsmiths would sit by themselves, silversmiths by themselves, weavers by themselves, Tarsian weavers by themselves, and blacksmiths by themselves. And why to such an extent [that is, why the rigid division]? So that if a visitor comes he can [immediately] make contact with his trade, and thus he will be able to make a living.”

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54Augustine, Conf. 5.9-10.
55Josephus Vita 16 (Thackeray LCL).
56Marshall, Enmity in Corinth, 140; Arterbury, “The Custom of Hospitality,” 100; Arterbury, Entertaining Angels, 58; Stahlin TDNT 5:11-14. This tendency may have been partly responsible for the anti-social accusations against the Jews by: Apollonius Molon (Josephus, C. Ap. 2.258); Apion (Josephus, C. Ap. 2.121); Tacitus (Hist. 5.5.1); Philostratus (Vit. Apoll. 5.33.4).
57Occupation to some extent was determined by family and ethnic group so for many it may have been seen as an ascribed group.
58Cicero, Arch. 4-5.
59Emphasis added; t. Sukkah 4:6 (see also y. Sukkah 5.1,55a-b; b. Sukkah 51b); Levine's translation, The Ancient Synagogue, 84. While this refers to contacts for work, one can also imagine that hospitality would be gained through these contacts. The likelihood of this is seen in the presentation in Acts of a tentmaker finding housing with another
Extending and receiving private hospitality placed the host and the guest under certain expectations. Julian Pitt-Rivers has outlined, from an anthropological perspective, a law of hospitality – certain behaviours which universally infringe the requirements of hospitality: 1) For the guest: i) insulting or showing hostility or rivalry towards the host; ii) usurping the role of the host; iii) refusing what is offered; 2) For the host: i) insulting the guest or showing hostility or rivalry; ii) failing to protect or honour the guest; iii) neglecting to attend to the guest.\textsuperscript{60} Several concrete applications of the law of hospitality would have impacted Paul’s use of private hospitality. First, one element in Greco-Roman hospitality was for the guest to join in worshipping the host’s gods and for the host to provide libations or a sacrifice in honour of the guest.\textsuperscript{61} For Paul or his companions to refuse to join in the worship or to accept the honour of the sacrifice would have violated the role of a guest. Given the importance of hospitality and the gravity of violating the law of hospitality, it should be granted that Paul and his companions would take great care in assessing from whom they would accept hospitality – a monotheistic co-religionist (Jew or Christian) or a follower of the Most High God would appear to be the most likely hosts from whom hospitality would be readily accepted. Second, the changing of a host not only provided great offense to the host but also damaged the host’s reputation in the community.\textsuperscript{62} Lucius, in Apuleius’ \textit{Metamorphoses}, found accommodation in Milo’s poor household (1.21-26) but then later met a relative who asked him to accept her hospitality. His response was, “I could hardly bid my host Milo good-bye without his ________________


\textsuperscript{61} Arterbury, “The Custom of Hospitality,” 89; Arterbury, \textit{Entertaining Angels}, 52, 186. Arterbury provides the following references: guest joining in worship of hosts’ god: Xenophon of Ephesus 1.12.2; Longus 3.9-10; Heliodorus, \textit{Aeth}. 2.22.5-23; 5.12.3-13.1; host pouring libations or sacrificing: Homer, \textit{Od}. 3.40-68; Ovid, \textit{Metam}. 8.687-88.

feeling aggrieved. I shall make every effort to do what I can, short of breaching my obligation to him.”

Similarly, Diogenes on a trip to Rhodes is reported as having “asked for the hospitality of the gods” (i.e., he stayed in a temple) after not finding his expected host. Several days later he met the man and was urged to come and accept his hospitality. Diogenes responded, “It’s disrespectful to leave the gods, who received me after your hospitality was barred to me when I came ashore. But since they cannot take offense at anything of this sort, though we do because of our weakness, let’s go.”

Paul and his companions would have taken great care in their initial acceptance of private hospitality since changing hosts would have been seen as an offensive move.

**Summary.** Several broad options were open for Paul and his companions for their initial residence in a new location: a commercial establishment, community accommodation or a private residence. A commercial establishment provided flexibility for interaction with others (i.e., there would be no constraints from the host) but yet there would not be the connections a host could provide. Community hospitality could be limited in duration but would have provided connections within the community. Though it would depend on local factors, the most probable residence would have been private accommodation. This private hospitality would likely have been with a Jew, Christian or Jewish sympathizer (and most likely through recommendation) and would have provided entrance into social networks. Not only would there have been cognitive/ideological

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63 Aupleius, *Met.* 2.3; translation P. G. Walsh.

64 Diogenes, *Epistle* 37.13-17; translation Fiore. Diogenes’ behaviour with his host, as depicted in the letter, flouts the conventions of hospitality.

65 This “initial” residence could have lasted for an extended (if not full) period of residence in a location. In a commercial establishment the stay could have been extended for a lengthy period. For private hospitality, Arterbury notes “the guest may stay for one night (Homer, *Od.* 3.487-493, 15.184-191), multiple nights (Homer, *Od.* 17.515; Achilles Tatius, *Leuc. Clit.* 4.1.1, 8.19.2) or even for many weeks (Homer *Od.* 10.14, 11.353-361; Heliodorus, *Aeth.* 2.21-23, 5.12-16, 6.6-8)” (“The Custom of Hospitality,” 89-90). Cicero mentions a guest, Lyso of Patrae, who stayed a year (Fam. 13.19).
congruence with the host but also, as Marshall notes, to some extent there would have been social congruence between Paul and his host.\textsuperscript{66} Moreover, a host would be important for the ongoing relationship between the coalescing group and Paul given that hospitality could be the flashpoint for conflict if the conventions of hospitality were violated – a point which might explain some of the tension between Paul and the Corinthian group.\textsuperscript{67} Again, as mentioned at the start of this section, given the paucity of data in Paul’s letters, we are mainly sketching possibilities having granted our model and Greco-Roman analogies – possibilities which may be fitted to later realities reflected in Paul’s letters.

4.2.1.3. Pre-Affiliation Context: Social Context of Pauline Activity

The social context of the nascent Pauline groups is tied to the sphere of Paul’s initial activity. In investigating this we must be careful to distinguish between the social context of Paul’s initial activity before and during coalescence of the group (our area of interest) and the social context of his activity in further identity formation and integration of new members into the group once the group is formed, or the social context of the established group.

In general our model suggests that Paul would interact with the coalescing group members within shared social institutions and given Paul’s social status (not sufficient for elite public interaction) these may be narrowed to a religious/ethnic arena (the synagogue), a domestic/hospitality

\textsuperscript{66}\textit{Marshall, Enmity in Corinth}, 141-147. Marshall places this in the context of friendship in which one “seeks friendship with one’s equals, particularly with those possessing common interests” (p. 141). Marshall also notes that this has implications for Paul’s social standing, “I can find [in Acts and Paul’s letters] no instance after the commencement of his ministry in Macedonia where the hospitality he enjoyed was with other than people of means. For him to be accepted at this level must say something about his own social standing” (pp. 141-142).

\textsuperscript{67}However, see the next chapter for a more detailed outline of the origins of the tension between Paul and the Corinthians.
arena (the household) or an economic arena (the workshop). Although again the information in Paul’s correspondence is meager, we do find evidence for Paul’s initial interaction occurring in all of these areas.

**Synagogue.** Several areas have been proposed for the location of Paul’s initial activity. Although it has been denied or downplayed by some, evidence from Paul’s letters, including the programmatic statement of 1 Cor 9:20 and the evidence of actual interaction seen in the 2 Cor 11:24, suggests that some of his initial communicative activity occurred in *synagogues*. Taking E. P. Sanders’ concerns as a counter-template, the objections to the possibility of a synagogue being the context for Paul’s early activity in a new location may be seen to be overdone. Sanders deals with Paul’s missionary practice as a part of a larger effort to outline Paul’s relationship to his own people and in so doing he compresses and simplifies the stages of Paul’s activity in group formation. Sanders first focuses on the addressees of Paul’s letters, rightly noting the gentile flavour of the readers. However, he goes beyond this suggesting that the nature of Paul’s argumentation does not necessarily reflect previous contact or sympathy with Judaism for the readers. While Paul’s use of scriptural argumentation and vocabulary appears to be context based, dealing with opponents or positions promoting judaizing, his portrayal of his message (and self-evidently the messenger himself) is that of something (or someone) with deep connections to Judaism. Those gentiles most receptive to Paul’s initial message in a new location would be those with a favourable perspective

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68 Walter Schmithals not only held that Paul did not preach to Jews but also provided a comprehensive scheme in which it was after the Jerusalem council that Paul agreed to stop preaching a law-free gospel to Jews (*Paul and James* [London: SCM, 1965], 16-62). Similarly J. Louis Martyn traces two non-intersecting lines of gospel mission after the Jerusalem conference (J. Louis Martyn, *Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary* [Anchor Bible 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997], 211-216). Others questioning Paul’s activity in synagogues include E. P. Sanders (*Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People* [Minneapolis: Fortress, 1983]), 179-190) and Gerd Lüdemann (*Early Christianity according to the Traditions in Acts: A Commentary* [London: SCM Press, 1989], 185).
on Judaism – and these most often would be found with some association to the synagogue. As well, as seen above, Paul’s initial hosts would, in many instances, have had a positive connection with Judaism.

Sanders then (re)turns to Paul as a self declared apostle to the gentiles.\textsuperscript{69} This he argues took the form of exclusive engagement with gentiles and so he can dispose of Paul’s reference to interaction with Jews in 1 Cor 9:20 as hyperbole. For Sanders the early church had no provision for diaspora Jews and thus Paul could leave the Jews he encountered in God’s hands as far as salvation (and his communication to them) is concerned. Sanders concludes with:

\begin{quote}
I do not wish to argue that Paul would have refused to admit Jews to his churches, only that there are virtually no signs of them. Occasional or opportunistic proclamation to Jews need not be outside the scope of the apostle to the Gentiles. I am persuaded, however, that to make Paul first and foremost an apostle to the Jews in the Diaspora who failed and only then turned to the Gentiles is to distort our picture of him.\textsuperscript{70}
\end{quote}

Sanders’ picture of Paul’s interaction as only occasional or opportunistic fails to take into account the practical realities of entering new locations (from a social scientific viewpoint it is unlikely in the ancient world that a Jew such as Paul would not have taken up some initial contact with the local Jewish community) and the stages involved in forming a new group (group formation involves connections along social networks). Certainly Paul was not an “apostle to the Jews” who out of disillusionment turned to gentiles exclusively – however, this is not to say that he could not have had many opportunities for communication within synagogues, particularly at the early stage in a new location.\textsuperscript{71}

\textsuperscript{69}\textit{He first deals with this on page 181 in order to show that Paul discusses his ministry in terms of work with gentiles and not Jews.}

\textsuperscript{70}\textit{Sanders, \textit{Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People}, 190.}

\textsuperscript{71}\textit{Sanders goes on to note (in reference to Paul’s punishment at the hands of Jewish communities [2 Cor 11:24]): “We earlier noted that 2 Cor. 11:24 shows Paul’s continuing commitment to Judaism. He kept attending synagogue. .}
The central thread throughout Sanders’ argument – “Paul was apostle to the Gentiles. So he styled himself, and so he acted.”72 – is expanded by Sanders to imply an isolationist approach by Paul. This not only fails from a practical viewpoint but also from a theological perspective. As James Millar has recently shown,73 Paul indicates in Romans that his apostleship centres on bringing gentiles alongside Jews in united praise of God. Millar concludes that, “With this reading of Romans in mind and considering the link between Paul’s theology and practice, it follows that, if at all possible, Paul simply could not conduct his mission apart from contact with Jews.”74

Within the synagogue Paul would have had contact not only with Jews but also with Jewish sympathizers among the gentiles. These gentile sympathizers may have had a wide variety of connections with the Jewish community, ranging from earnest devotees of the Jewish God, to more independent followers of the Most High God, to those with commercial connections and so on.75

**Household.** In addition to the synagogue as an arena of initial activity by Paul is the _private house_. We find hints of this in the initial group members in Corinth being households (1 Cor 1:14-16; 16:15) and the household activity of caring for the sick (and being cared for) being at the forefront of Paul’s initial interaction with the Galatians (Gal 4:13-15). Stanley Stowers, in a

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72 Sanders, *Paul, the Law, and the Jewish People*, 190.
74 Miller, “The Jewish Context,” 111.
perceptive article on the social setting of Paul’s preaching activity,⁷⁶ begins by dispelling the view that Paul was the Christian version of a street-corner preacher. He shows that neither arguments from Acts nor from Paul’s diatribe style provide support for viewing Paul as a Cynic-like street preacher.⁷⁷ In presenting a positive portrayal of Paul’s activity, Stowers commences by clarifying what he means by “preaching activity”: it was teaching or attempts to persuade, however, “[w]e do not really know what form it took. . . . What we are concerned with is not the content but the locus, form and social circumstances of this ‘preaching.’” In other words, where did it take place, who heard it, what was their relationship to Paul, what was Paul’s social role and manner of approach?”⁷⁸ With these questions in mind, Stowers begins by acknowledging the important place the synagogue would have had in Paul’s initial activity.⁷⁹ The other centre of activity, Stowers suggests, is the private home: “The private home was a center of intellectual activity and the customary place for many types of speakers and teachers to do their work. Occasional lectures, declamations and readings of various sorts of philosophical, rhetorical and literary works often took place in homes.”⁸⁰ Not only were

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⁷⁷This however does not rule out the possibility that Paul would have visited the agora to initiate contact with locals. However, extended teaching in “public” space by a stranger would have been limited to those with the appropriate status and invitation to speak or to those who, like certain Cynics, overstepped social convention and risked at best toleration and at worst violent silencing and ejection – responses that do not generally provide the type of contacts that would coalesce into a group.

⁷⁹Stowers, “Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching,” 64.

⁸⁰Stowers felt that the synagogue would be a reasonable point of entry into the Greek population, he finds no evidence for god-fearers. Since the time of his article, the publication of the Aphrodisias god-fearer inscription (Joyce Reynolds and Robert Tannenbaum, Jews and Godfearers at Aphrodisias [CPSS 12; Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, 1987]) and the works of scholars such as Stephen Mitchell (“The Cult of Theos Hypsistos between Pagans, Jews, and Christians,” in Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity [eds. Polymnia Athanassiadi and Michael Frede; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1999], 81-148) have swung opinion in favour of recognizing god-fearers in first century synagogues. Thus Stowers conclusion carries even more weight: “Even though Paul’s major mission was to Gentiles, the synagogue must be considered one locus, and perhaps an important one for his preaching where he by birth and heritage would have a recognized although often controversial status as a Jewish Christian” (“Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching,” 65).

⁸⁰Stowers, “Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching,” 65. He provides as examples: Epictetus, Diatr. 3.23.23; Seneca Ep. 76.4; Pliny, Ep. 3.18; 5.3, 1-2, 11-12; 8.21.1f; 9.34; Dio Chrysostom, Or. 77/78.34.
homes the place of occasional teaching but also the place where philosophers and rhetoricians could set up their schools.\textsuperscript{81} These homes could be the homes of the teachers themselves or of their sponsor. Although Paul may have been able to interact with a few in a daily rental accommodation (and this type of lodging would have been his likely accommodation at the start, if he was not taking advantage of private hospitality), the likely place of Paul’s activity in a home would have been in the home of a sponsor. Stowers concludes,

What may we then conclude about the circumstances of Paul’s preaching activity? First, Paul used the synagogue on numerous occasions, although this often led to conflict and could not be a permanent locus for his preaching. Second, the private house provided the most important place for his work. Here Paul followed the pattern of Hellenistic teachers, a pattern which was continued by Christian teachers in the second century and later. Public speaking and often the use of public buildings required status, reputation, and recognized roles which Paul did not have. Public speaking, on the one hand, often necessitated some type of legitimation or invitation or, on the other hand, demanded that the speaker somehow force himself on his audience. Whereas Paul does not fit easily into these typical situations, the private home provided him with a platform where an audience could be obtained and taught without the problems of presenting oneself to be judged by the criteria of public speaking. On the other hand, Paul displays a self-understanding which implies that in a personal and informal way he carried his teaching into everyday activities such as his leatherworking trade.\textsuperscript{82}

Although the private house may not be the centre for Paul’s initial activity in each location (each situation must be examined individually – the texts suggest Paul’s activity in Corinth had a household focus, while, as we will see, a focus on the workshop is found in Thessalonica), and the initial activities which aided in group formation were not restricted to only “preaching activity” and so may have extended beyond the private home, still Stowers has presented a compelling case for the private house as an important location for Paul’s initial activity.

\textsuperscript{81}See the previous chapter on group formation in the schools.  
\textsuperscript{82}Stowers, “Social Status, Public Speaking and Private Teaching,” 81.
**Workshop.** The likelihood that Paul carried his teaching into everyday activities suggests that the *workshop* was also a significant location for Paul’s initial activity. Here the work of Ronald Hock has provided a vigorous argument for the artisan’s workshop as a significant arena for Paul’s activity. Paul indicates that it was his policy to support himself in his endeavors by the work of his hands (1 Cor 4:12; 2 Cor 11:27; 1 Thess 2:9) and Hock provides the analogue of philosophers, and in particular the ideal Cynic, Simon, who similarly combined teaching/psychagogy and manual labour. As Hock notes, if Paul was an artisan (a tentmaker, according to Hock) it is hard to imagine that he would not bring up the subject of the gospel in his discussion with fellow-workers, customers and others who entered the shop:

Sitting in the workshop would have been his fellow-workers and perhaps one or more visitors, perhaps customers or perhaps someone who has heard of this tentmaker-“philosopher” newly arrived in the city. In any case they would have been listening to, or debating with, Paul, who had raised the topic of the gods and was exhorting them to turn from idols to the living God ([1 Thess] 1:9-10). Some of those who listened – a fellow-worker, a customer, an aristocratic youth, or even a Cynic philosopher – would want to know more about Paul, about his churches, about his Lord and would return for individual exhortation ([1 Thess] 2:11-12). From these workshop conversations some would eventually accept Paul’s word as the word of God.

**Summary.** The synagogue, the private house and the workshop would have served as significant arenas for Paul’s initial communicative activity. The relative importance of each of these locations would have been determined by local circumstances and would have been of import for

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83Ronald F. Hock “The Workshop as a Social Setting for Paul’s Missionary Preaching,” *CBQ* 41 (1979): 438-450; *The Social Context of Paul’s Ministry: Tentmaking and Apostleship* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980). In *The Social Context* (echoing a similar thesis statement in “The Workshop,” 438) Hock states the central thesis of his work is that “Paul’s tentmaking, far from being at the periphery of the apostle’s life, was actually central to it. As we shall see, Paul’s tentmaking to a large extent defined the social context of his day-to-day life as an apostle of Christ and played an important part in the crisis at Corinth over his apostleship” (p.16). Hock’s contention that Paul’s work was a central element in his life and ministry has been adopted by most scholars; see most recently Todd D. Still “Did Paul Loathe Manual Labor? Revisiting the Work of Ronald F. Hock on the Apostle’s Tentmaking and Social Class,” *JBL* 125 (2006): 781-95, here 782, 785.

the development of the local small group. As Stowers suggests for the private house, each of these locations must be placed within the social topography of the ancient Mediterranean city: “People lived close to one another. This made differentiation according to social class, nationality, skill and role very important. If walls and yards did not separate people, other things did.” And so even Paul’s “private” activity within the synagogue, house or workshop would have been “public” knowledge. Each of these potential locations of activity for Paul carried social advantage and disadvantage.

4.2.2. Pre-affiliation: Connection

As has already been noted social networks serve as the framework on which small groups were built and in the Greco-Roman world, as a collectivist culture, the context for the formation of these networks was not found in a generalized trust of others (that is, the feeling that in general other people may be trusted – which results in relationships forming in a seemingly casual manner). We have however that “social institutions . . . provide a normative expectation that those who belong to the same social setting form social relationships.” Networks, then, would be expected to form among those sharing the same social setting – ethnicity, occupation, location, and so on – and that groups would emerge out of these networks.

For Paul and his companions the networks out of which groups would form were the social networks in which their contacts served as connecting nodes into the network. As previously

86 And as Loveday Alexander notes, one could expect “outsiders” to be present at (or passing by) the “private” locations used by early Christians. Loveday Alexander, “Paul and the Hellenistic Schools: The Evidence of Galen,” in *Paul in His Hellenistic Context* (ed. Troels Engberg-Pedersen; Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 60-83, here 81.
outlined these contacts could include: 1) pre-arrival contacts, arising out of family, ethnic, occupational, religious (Jewish/Christian) connections; and 2) potential contacts, arising out of letters of recommendation or fellow travellers. As well, there would be in each location: 1) initial contacts arising from the community hospitality they might have used; and 2) initial contacts from Paul’s activity: in the synagogue there would be contacts with religious connections (Jewish/sympathizers); in the workshop there would be contacts with occupational connections. Connections through Paul’s activity in a private home would be somewhat more complex. First, before using a private home, the householder would need to approve of Paul’s message and activity and so would have already had contact with Paul and may have approved of his religious outlook. The contacts, then, within the private home would already be predisposed to Paul through their contact with the householder.

The group would coalesce along the lines of these networks as ties were strengthened. However, in a collectivist culture there would still be great resistance to the formation of a new group if it was at the expense of an old one or when the strengthening of new ties would lead to loosening of older ties, so that not only would there need to be strengthened new ties but also a critical mass of individuals to provide support to one another as the allocentric individuals rearranged their previous ties.

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88 One could imagine a Greek or Roman philosophically minded householder intrigued by Paul who would not approve of his message, but still invite him for the intellectual stimulation of debate. However, this picture has several implications: it assumes Paul would have some social status in the eyes of his host; it would be of short duration (unless Paul became a client of the householder – an unlikely possibility); it holds the potential of conflict if Paul were to offend the host by word or action.

89 This could be seen in terms of loyalty/disloyalty and so, as Crook asks concerning the Thessalonians, “When Paul praises the Thessalonian believers for turning away from idols to serve a true and living God, and when he claims that their pistis has become newsworthy throughout Macedonia and Achaia (1 Thess 1:9) might it not be their loyalty, especially in the face of persecution and harassment, that Paul is praising?” (Zeba A. Crook, “BTB Readers’ Guide: Loyalty,” BTB 34 [2004]: 167-177, here 175).
We can expect then strengthened connections within the emerging Pauline groups that would run along family, kin, ethnic, religious and occupational networks and that would consolidate into groups of similar individuals. The residue of these initial networks is seen in some of Paul’s letters: the apparent professional association in Thessalonica;⁹⁰ the households of Corinth (1 Cor 1: 14-16; 16:15); the non-Jewish (and yet amenable to Judaism) hypsisterian worshippers seen in multiple locations (1 Thess 1:9; 1 Cor 6:9-11; 8:7; 12:2 and yet 10:1; Gal 4:8-10).

4.2.3. Pre-affiliation: Coalescence

Though there is much interplay between them, the elements of the process which draws individuals together into a group (behavioural, affective, and cognitive coalescence) may be considered separately.

4.2.3.1. Pre-affiliation Coalescence: Behavioural Coalescence

The group founding model strongly emphasizes the multi-modality of coalescence for Pauline groups. Rather than the skewed view often presented which focuses solely on cognition and communication, we expect that there was also a behavioural component in the formation of the group.

At several levels interdependent behaviour could arise for individuals adopting Paul’s teaching. Paul notes that his purpose was to “to bring about the obedience of faith” (Rom 1:5) or “to win obedience from the Gentiles” (Rom 15:18). If an element of this obedience were some

uniform type of collective ethical behaviour, individuals adopting Paul’s message could find themselves drawn together for common action. Additionally Paul indicates common ecstatic behaviour (Gal 3:1-5; 1 Thess 1:5; 1 Cor 2:4) among those to whom he communicated. As well, Paul introduced corporate religious rituals and the expectation of corporate worship (1 Cor 1:14-16; 1 Thess 1:9). As a result of their new common ethical, ecstatic or ritual behaviour disrupting established social patterns, some of those with whom Paul connected came under threat (1 Thess 1:6), a further factor which could lead to interdependence. All of these would be factors in behavioural coalescence.

Paul also notes the integration of households into early Pauline groups (1 Cor 1:16). For some individuals within these households the strongest factor of coalescence into a Pauline group would have been participation in the coordinated action needed to maintain a functioning household with a householder who has adopted a new perspective.

4.2.3.2. Pre-affiliation Coalescence: Affective Coalescence

Although some affective coalescence is expected for the formation of Pauline groups, as we have seen for group formation in collectivist contexts, and in particular the Greco-Roman world, this

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91 Miller views obedience in Romans as dealing with worship in general and concretely to include ethical actions within relationships. See James C. Miller, *The Obedience of Faith, the Eschatological People of God, and the Purpose of Romans* (SBLDS, 177; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2000): 75-95 and Miller, “The Jewish Context,” 104-108. Further on “obedience of faith” see Don B. Garlington, *‘The Obedience of Faith’: A Pauline Phrase in Historical Context* (WUNT, 2.38; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1992).

92 As seen in group founding in the Greco-Roman context (Chapter Three), groups arose in the context of intense competition with attendant rivalry and struggle.

93 As Vincent Branick notes, “We can suppose some social pressure on individuals within a household to convert with the conversion of the head of that house. To the degree such pressure existed, the conversion of a household to Christianity would entail a diversity of personal conviction and engagement.” *The House Church in the Writings of Paul* [Wilmington, Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1989], 18. One element of coordinated action might have included preparation for and participation in household corporate worship and, as a group solidified, preparation for and participation in group meetings within the house.
type of coalescence is not expected to be of primary importance. In fact, there is no definitive explicit indication in the letters of Paul of interpersonal attraction within the nascent groups – an argument from silence, but still significant in that it lines up with our expectations.

Contributing to interpersonal attraction are such elements as proximity, competence, reciprocity, physical attractiveness and similarity. For the formation of Pauline groups proximity within a household, a community meeting place (e.g., an agora or a synagogue) or a workplace may have contributed to some affective coalescence. As well, similarity, whether ethnic, economic or need based similarity, would have resulted in drawing together a homogenous group.

However, it must be kept firmly in mind that for collectivists generalized trust, and so the easy formation of friendship ties, is not related to relationship formation but rather to the maintenance of relationships. Affective coalescence, though present, should not be expected as a primary factor in group founding, though, it could well be in later group recruitment.

As with behavioural coalescence there would have been some individuals for whom this type of coalescence would have been the strongest factor. This may well have been particularly true for women for whom collectivism may have been derived from specific relationships and who would have favoured common-bond groups.

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94 However, as seen in the Greco-Roman groups, loyalty/solidarity, a highly valued trait, should not be equated with affection.

95 For collectivists belief and attitudinal similarity are not emphasized as bases for the perception of similarity (Harry C. Triandis, Individualism and Collectivism [Boulder: Westview Press, 1995], 118).

96 Tasuku Igarashi et al., “Culture, Trust, and Social Networks,” Asian Journal of Social Psychology 11 (2008): 88-101, here 96-98. This was also seen in our examination of the founding of self-organized associations in the Greco-Roman world (§3.2.1.2.).

4.2.3.3. Pre-affiliation Coalescence: Cognitive Coalescence

In Paul’s portrayal of his group founding activities – and in current renditions of the founding of Pauline groups – elements of cognitive coalescence are brought to the fore. We find then, as seen below, more concrete correlation between the model and the data in Paul’s letters than we found for other factors of coalescence.

**Social Attraction.** Paul himself, and his co-workers, appear not to have engendered strong interpersonal attraction through competence or physical attraction at the beginning of their time in new communities: in Thessalonica, as Anthony Blasi notes, “Rather than serving as a ‘charismatic leader’ or a focal personage around whom people would naturally gather, Paul appeared in Thessalonica as someone who had been driven out of Philippi by abuse and derision”\(^98\) (1 Thess 2:2); in Galatia, Paul’s entrance into the community was a result of weakness and produced difficulties for them (Gal 4:13-15); and in Corinth, Paul acknowledges that he was not a trained rhetor and did not use lofty words and wisdom (1 Cor 2:1-5; 2 Cor 11:6). What our model leads us to expect to develop in the coalescing group was not interpersonal attraction but rather social attraction, that is, attraction to the nascent group, which included attraction to Paul and his co-workers as group prototypes. Their prototypical group beliefs, behaviours and relationships would have included: perseverance and courage when encountering suffering on behalf of the group beliefs (1 Thess 1:5-6, \(^99\) 2:2); upstanding behaviour towards others (1 Thess 2:10); powerful words and actions (1 Cor 1:18, 2:4); and beliefs centred around “Jesus Christ and him crucified” (1 Cor 2:2). This final element, beliefs, is also related to the process of frame alignment.


\(^99\) This is the only direct mention of actual past imitation of Paul by individuals (past imitation of Paul is also alluded to in Gal 4). On imitation and Paul as a group prototype see below on the founding of the group in Thessalonica.
Frame Alignment. As we have noted earlier, for the formation of a founded small group, frame alignment may be seen as the process whereby a prospective group member is persuaded to see the world in the same way as the founder. The persuasiveness of a frame is dependent upon the viability or resonance of the frame, which in turn is related to two interacting factors, the salience and credibility of the frame. Thus the resonance of a frame would have played a significant part in the initial gathering of individuals into Pauline small groups: the first individuals to coalesce into a group would be those for whom there would have been immediately the greatest salience and credibility in what Paul and his co-workers presented. This points to initial group members being ideologically similar to Paul, that is, Jews or sympathizers of Jews (and even hypsisterian ‘pagan monotheists’) – for it would be from among these groups that Paul’s presentation would have had the greatest resonance.

As well, certain elements of Paul’s activity would have aided in increasing the salience and credibility of the frames he proffered. Paul speaks of the “power of signs and wonders” as a

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100 In the section on cognitive coalescence in §2.3.2.3. As Frey and Sunwolf note in their discussion of recruitment into groups: “the central mechanism is frame alignment, the rhetorical process of persuading a recruit to see the world in the same way as the group.” (Lawrence R. Frey and Sunwolf, “The Symbolic-Interpretive Perspective on Group Dynamics,” Small Group Research 35 (2004): 277-306, here 293).

101 Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, “Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment,” Annual Review of Sociology 26 (2000): 611-639, here 619-621. The salience of the frame has three dimensions: centrality (how essential the beliefs, values and ideas of the group/founder are to the potential member); experiential commensurability (how closely the frame is to the personal, everyday experiences of the potential member); and narrative fidelity (the cultural resonance of the frame). The credibility of the frame also has three elements: frame consistency (the consistency between articulated beliefs, claims and actions); empirical credibility (the apparent fit between the frame and the events in the world); and the credibility of the frame articulators.

102 There may well have been resonance with other perspectives. Gerald Downing suggests that Cynicism provided “for potential converts, a vocabulary of ideas and enactments that would allow them to make sense of his invitation” (F. Gerald Downing, “Paul’s Drive for Deviants,” NTS 49 (2003): 360-71). Whether this resonance would have been greater for initial group members than the resonance provided by the Paul’s ethnic background and his vocabulary of ideas and enactments that were tied to his modified Jewish messianic outlook is unlikely.
component of his founding activity (Rom 15:19). Further possible references to miracles in the founding phase of the groups are found in 1 Thess 1:5, 1 Cor 2:4-5, 2 Cor 12:11-12, and Gal 3:1-5. The nature and setting of these miracles is unclear. However, Jack Sanders suggests that they may well be healings taking place in households and Ramsay MacMullen highlights exorcism as an important element in early Christian persuasion (second to fourth century) which may be projected back onto Paul’s group founding. Paul himself notes the powerful effect of prophetic utterance (1 Cor 14:24-25), a thought that is echoed in Dio Chrysostom’s observation concerning the power of a deity (Serapis) being displayed through daily oracles and dreams. Whether healings, exorcisms, or prophetic utterances, “signs and wonders” provided both empirical credibility, by furnishing observable interaction between the claims of the frames and the actual world, and personal credibility for the frame articulators. As well, for those directly impacted by them, the “signs and wonders” would have increased the salience (the centrality and experiential commensurability) of Paul’s message.

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103 Downing, rather out of hand, rejects the possibility that miracles were part of Paul’s initial approach in Corinth (on the basis of 1 Cor 1:22 he suggests that Paul would not produce signs), though he does allow that Paul may have changed tactics later (Rom 15:19). Downing, “Paul’s Drive for Deviants,” 369-70.


104 James Kelhoffer suggests that this lack of detail results from the nature of the sources (given that the recipients of the letter know what he is talking about) and, in particular for 1 Cor 1 and 2, the rhetorical situation (Paul has pejoratively mentioned those seeking signs [1 Cor 1:21] and yet “finds the general allusion to miracles useful in distinguishing his preaching from that of other rhetoricians”) (James A. Kelhoffer, Miracle and Mission: The Authentication of Missionaries and Their Message in the Longer Ending of Mark [WUNT 2.112; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2000], 272).


107 Dio Chrysostom, Or. 32.12
The persuasive elements in Paul’s presentation may be sorted into two categories. The first category are those factors related to the viability or resonance of the frames, which were discussed above. The second category are the modes of persuasion identified by the ancient rhetoricians: *logos*, *pathos*, and *ethos*. Each of these would play a part. *Logos*: Paul could certainly employ on the surface a variety of logical arguments, though, as Ian Scott has cogently demonstrated, Paul’s underlying logic was that of a narrative coherentist approach, which for those engaged in “elite Greco-Roman thought” would not have been overly persuasive. *Pathos*: the appeal to the emotions was not only an element of Paul’s discourse but would also have been present in emotionally evocative practices, such as baptism rituals and common meals (seen in e.g., 1 Cor 1:13-17; 11:17-34). *Ethos*: the focus on the character of Paul and others in their initial efforts, as seen, for example, in 1 Thess 2:1-12, not only served to strengthen the credibility of their presentation but also served as an important component in the social proof arguments (stressing the behaviour and views of others) which would have held great weight for allocentric individuals.

Given the importance of frame alignment we would expect to find within Paul’s letters hints of the frames Paul used. These may be glimpsed in the content Paul communicated in gathering the coalescing group. If one turns simply to an extended discussion on “Paul’s gospel” there is the danger of including material used within the *formed* group for teaching/catechizing group members.

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108See, for example, Folker Siegert, *Argumentation bei Paulus: Gezeigt an Rom 9-11* (WUNT 1.34; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1985).

109On the logical plane, Paul does not argue in foundationalist terms, following syllogisms from unquestionable premises to unassailable conclusions, but tends rather to follow a coherentist logic. This means that the Apostle does not try to justify his system in terms of the dominant Greco-Roman intellectual traditions; rather, he proclaims a narrative which comes from outside those traditions and seeks to demonstrate its coherence. Hence, one who judged reasonableness in terms of elite Greco-Roman thought would likely miss the coherence in Paul’s story and see only that it lacked the ‘proper’ sort of justification.” Ian Scott, *Implicit Epistemology in the Letters of Paul: Story, Experience and the Spirit* (WUNT 2.205; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006), 284.

and for fostering group identity. Given that Paul’s letters fall within the latter category of teaching and identity formation material, we must turn to “Randbemerkungen, Verweise und Anspielungen”, as Reck remarks, in order to probe the content of Paul’s initial communication. A minimalist approach would be to take the oft-used 1 Thess 1:9-10, in which we find “the framework of the basic message concerning the one true God and Jesus Christ as God’s Son, who has been raised from the dead, who is Lord, and Who is awaited in the end time as savior and judge.” This, however, may be fleshed out with further texts referencing an initial message. Eckhard Schnabel looks at 1 Thess 1:9-10 and several additional passages (1 Thess 2:13; 1 Thess 4:2-7; 2 Cor 11:4) and from these extracts factors of “foundational importance for Paul’s missionary preaching to pagans.”

From these factors we can add further contours to the framework of Paul’s basic message: 1) the one true God is the God of Israel; 2) the message about Jesus Christ includes the narrative of the

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111 Reck, Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau, 169.
112 On this approach see Eckhard J. Schnabel, Early Christian Mission (2 vols; Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 1386. Or one could start with 1 Cor 15:3-8.
113 Jospeh Plevnik, “Pauline Presuppositions,” in The Thessalonian Correspondence (ed. Raymond F. Collins; BETL 87; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990), 50-61, here 59. See also Koester’s summary of the central elements: “Christ’s suffering and death; his sacrifice ‘for us’; his cross; his being raised from the dead (or rising from the dead); his appearances; his coming again in the future.” Helmut Koester, Ancient Christian Gospels (Philadelphia: Trinity Press, 1990), 6-7. As Margaret Mitchell notes these are the building blocks of the gospel and may be combined and expressed in a variety of ways, in which “the resulting narrative can either be compacted or expanded, depending on one’s literary, rhetorical and theological purposes.” Margaret M. Mitchell, “Rhetorical Shorthand in Pauline Argumentation: The Functions of the ‘Gospel’ in the Corinthian Correspondence,” in Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker (eds. L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson; JSNTSup 108; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994), 63-88, here 64.
114 Given Schnabel’s use of texts mainly from 1 Thessalonians, his outline of Paul’s message is similar to Plevnik’s in “Pauline Presuppositions.” Plevnik examines the teachings presupposed by Paul in 1 Thessalonians and uses them to outline Paul’s initial teaching to the group. Plevnik’s results, however, include items that would have been part of Paul’s teaching after the group was formed. Reck uses a similar procedure, investigating 1 Thess 1:9-10 and Rom 15:20-21. (Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau, 169-171).
117 On the Jewish framework of Paul’s gospel see Terence L. Donaldson, “‘The Gospel That I Proclaim among the Gentiles’ (Gal. 2:2): Universalistic or Israel-Centred?” in Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker (eds. L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson; JSNTSup 108; Sheffield: Sheffield
life and ministry of Jesus\textsuperscript{118} and gives the significance of his death and resurrection as central events which make the message good news for gentiles: in Jesus Christ, God frees people from sin and invites gentiles to become members of the people of God through faith in him; 3) the expected return of the resurrected Jesus is a rescue from God’s wrath that will come upon others; 4) there is a demand for commitment to God and to the benefit of others which becomes visible in certain behaviours (and these in some sense are related to the Spirit).

Our model allows for a variety of communication modes and we do find that, although the primary medium used by Paul to communicate these frames was verbal, he also used other modes of communication.\textsuperscript{119} He may have used visual aids, with the enigmatic reference in Galatians, “before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified” (Gal 3:1), perhaps referring to a graphic representation of the crucified Christ.\textsuperscript{120} Rituals, such as baptism (1 Cor 1:13-16; Gal 3:27), would also have served as visual symbolic practices.\textsuperscript{121} Gerald Downing notes concerning Paul’s physical scars: “... Paul has already suffered at least some of the beatings which he refers to

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{118}The mention of Jesus (alone) in 1 Thess 1:9 points to this.}

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{119}Festzuhalten ist hier also die Tatsache, daß die apostolische Erstverkündigung nicht allein verbal-kognitiv geschah, sondern mehrdimensional. Und das steigerte neben der Glaubwürdigkeit nicht zuletzt auch die effektive Übertragungsleistung nach dem Prinzip der Synästhesie.” (Reck, Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau, 173; emphasis in original).}


\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{121}See Betz on Paul as cult founder transferring rituals (“Transferring a Cult”). See also Morton Smith who points out that such rituals would have been seen as magic (“Pauline Worship as Seen by Pagans,” HTR 73 [1980]: 241-49).}
in 2 Cor 11:23-25. And he sits half-naked [in his workshop]; or so he tells us at 1 Cor 4:11 (cf. 2 Cor 11:27). He displays the shamefully slavish way he has been treated, and it seems to be an integral part of his enactment of his message.”\(^{122}\) Paul’s drawing attention to his self for communicating his message would not have stopped at his physical appearance but would have also included his example in activities and character.\(^{123}\)

As we have noted earlier that there are four types of frame alignment processes which would link the potential member’s and the founder’s frames and which depend on the nature of the initial congruence between the interpretive frame of the potential member and the founder.\(^{124}\) 1) Frame bridging: two ideologically congruent but unconnected frames may be linked (i.e., the linking up of like minded individuals). 2) Frame amplification: ambiguity, uncertainty or even misconstrual can obscure the beliefs and values of the founder and so in order to connect the interpretive frames of the potential member and the founder (or potential group) clarification or reinvigoration of the interpretive frame of the founder may be required. 3) Frame extension: the founder may need to extend the boundaries of the primary framework to include areas which may not be salient but may be of salience to the potential group member. 4) Frame transformation: to bring potential members on board the founder may need to bring new values, reject old meanings and beliefs, and so bring a transformation of the potential member’s frame. Given the presence in Paul’s frames of contentious religious (e.g., monotheism), political (e.g., messianism), and philosophical (e.g., resurrection) concepts, it is not surprising that frame bridging and frame amplification would have

\(^{122}\) Downing, “Paul's Drive for Deviants,” 364-365; emphasis added.

\(^{123}\) Judith Hill outlines Paul’s communication through his example, both in activity and character. (Judith Lynn Hill, “Establishing the Church in Thessalonica” [Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1990], 79-111). See also Reck, Kommunikation und Gemeindeaufbau, 174-178.

\(^{124}\) These are taken from Snow et al. (“Frame Alignment Processes”). The frame alignment processes are connected to the resonance of the frames involved.
been isolated to followers of the Christian movement, Jews and god-fearers (including some pagan monotheists, such as followers the Most High God) – with (large) elements from each of these groups also being unresponsive to Paul. Paul’s call for action may have ranged from the challenge to listen to his teaching, or to change behaviour, or, most pointedly, to transfer loyalty (trust/faith) to the God of Israel. *Frame extension* may have been employed with many of those whom Paul encountered in order, at the least, to gain a further meeting and it is explicitly referred to in 1 Cor 9:20-22. For some who eventually allied themselves with Pauline groups old values and beliefs were jettisoned or reframed; in short, there was *frame transformation*. Here, for example, Paul’s salvific eschatological message concerning awaiting “Jesus who delivers us from the wrath to come” (1 Thess 1:10) would have required an initial stretch of imagination for many and have subsequently necessitated a radical transformation of perspective on former activities for some.125 When frame extension and frame transformation led to the alteration or abandonment of important social norms, it would be fair to label the result as social deviance and given the collectivism of the ancient world it would most likely initially occur with idiocentric individuals or with allocentric individuals who were buttressed by the mutual decision of a group126 or of a number of individuals in a social network.127

125 John Cook also notes a number of difficulties elite pagan philosophers had with Paul’s message and observes that, “The difficulties that the antagonistic philosophers had with the Christian proclamation cast some light on the difficult transition Paul’s Thessalonians had to make from paganism to Christianity” (John Granger Cook, “Pagan Philosophers and 1 Thessalonians,” *NTS* 52 (2006): 514-32, here 531).


127 As noted above at the end of §4.2.2.
4.2.4. Group Beginning

Individuals gathered into small groups as network ties were strengthened through the forces of behavioural, affective and cognitive coalescence at work. Although there is imprecision as to when a small group actually begins, we may take it as when people began to think about themselves as belonging to a new group and began coordinating action for a collective purpose.\footnote{We will be emphasizing local participation and so Paul and his co-workers, although they may constitute a small group, will not be consider as a local Pauline group.} A primary coordinated action would be meeting at regular intervals for teaching, ritual, or commensal purposes.

4.2.4.1. Group Beginning: Initial Conditions

Initial conditions are dependent on the local situational factors and so here we will give only parameters for these conditions.

Group Size. The initial size of the group could have ranged from several individuals to the numbers included in several households. There is no indication in Paul’s letters of the beginning size of a group, though, his mention of baptizing two individuals and a household (1 Cor 1:14-15) (with the household of Stephanas being reckoned as the first [1 Cor 16:15]) may indicate an initial size of roughly ten. The estimates for maximum numbers involved in a house church provide an upper limit for initial numbers:\footnote{The situation in a specific location could be more complex than having only a single group. There is evidence of multiple sub-groups meeting in several cities (Wayne Meeks, The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 143; for a fuller discussion see Roger W. Gehring, House Church and Mission: The Importance of Household Structures in Early Christianity [Peabody: Hendrikson Publishers, 2004], 155-59). Although there is the possibility of several groups emerging at one time through Paul’s efforts, we will concentrate on one original group, given the likelihood that multiple sub-groups would emerge only after the group began.} Jerome Murphy-O’Connor and others have argued for numbers
of forty or less, though, more recently David Balch has shown that there could be space for gathering significantly more than forty individuals.

**Boundaries.** The temporal boundaries for the groups are matters of speculation. We do not know how often the beginning groups met, though, later evidence may suggest weekly meetings on a set day. The time of day and length of meetings is also unknown, though, for slaves and labourers the possibility of meeting would be limited by the flow of the workday.

The physical boundaries for the beginning group corresponded to some degree with the social setting of Paul’s activity. A workshop could provide room for perhaps twenty to meet and an atrium-peristyle house room for many more. Both of these possibilities would require a patron or sponsor of some type who would provide/allow the use of the space. An apartment in an *insula* could also provide room for a few to initially gather.

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132Acts 20:7; Ign., *Magn.* 9:1; *Barn.* 15:9; Pliny, *Ep.* 10.96.7; Justin, *1 Apol.* 67. 1 Cor 16:2 mentions the first day of the week for setting aside collection money but it does not indicate that this is the day the group came together.

133Granted that there were associations within the diaspora Jewish communities (e.g., the later *dekania* group of “Lovers of Study, also called the All-Blessing” at Aphrodisias [*IJO* 14A (Aphrodisias; third to fifth century CE)]) who may have used community buildings, if Paul’s groups were seen as Jewish in flavour, they may have been able to meet within synagogues. This is not seen in Paul’s letters, in which the groups appear to be predominantly gentile. Another possibility for meeting would be to congregate in the open as did the followers of Theos Hypsistos, who would meet at sunrise in open spaces.


The psychological boundary of determining who was and was not part of the group was apparently an experience of the Spirit (Gal 3:1-5) and the conversion ritual of baptism.\(^{136}\) Paul assumed the members of the groups were baptized (1 Cor 1:13-16, 12:13; Gal 3:27; see also Rom 6:3). The criterion for baptism rested upon allegiance to the God of Israel and acceptance of Paul’s message concerning Jesus Christ, though as we have noted there would be a diversity of individual conviction and engagement.

4.2.4.2. Group Beginning: Prototypical Groups

**Attachment.** As with associations and philosophical schools, the primary member attachment is attachment to the group – that is, Pauline groups were *common-identity* groups. This does not rule out affection for one another within the formed group, but it does emphasize the importance of cognitive coalescence (and for some groups external threat\(^ {137}\)) in the formation of the group.

\(^{136}\)See also Kloppenborg’s discussion of how membership in Pauline groups was indicated (Kloppenborg, “Membership Practices”).

4.2.4.3. Group Beginning: Transforming

The possibility must be kept open that some Pauline groups were formed through schism or the transformation of a previous group. This has been suggested for the group in Thessalonica.\textsuperscript{138}

4.3. Summary

We began with Paul’s perspective on group founding: although Paul did not present himself as the founder/gatherer\textsuperscript{139} of groups, he did regard himself as the herald of a message which transformed individuals, individuals who were embedded in networks and who subsequently coalesced into groups. We then outlined in broad strokes the expectations of our group founding model and the related elements found in Paul’s letters, noting such factors as: 1) the establishment of contacts; 2) the social context of Paul’s activity being situated in the workshop, the household and possibly the synagogue; 3) connections growing from among ethnic/religious and occupational contacts; 4) the variety in coalescence, though focusing on cognitive coalescence and in particular frame alignment. As indicated in the introduction to this chapter this coarsely textured overview may function as: 1) a broad outline of how Pauline groups \textit{may have been} founded (and so then as a springboard for future examination of Pauline group founding in that this broad application of the model may act as a generative tool, proposing possibilities, eliminating misguided suggestions and posing questions); 2) a guide to the expectations of the group founding model and the related data we have in the letters of Paul; and 3) a background to the following chapter.


\textsuperscript{139}Founding specifically seen here as the initial drawing together of the group until the beginning of group life and not the further activities of establishing the group firmly.
Chapter 5
Pauline Small Group Founding: Thessalonica, Corinth, Galatia

We turn now to the founding of three groups and the texts referencing these foundings in the letters of Paul. How does our small group model expand our understanding of these groups and these texts? We have provided, through social description built on the material found in Paul’s letters and the expectations of our small group model, a general overview of group founding in Pauline groups (Chapter 4). This overview must be tuned for each group and should be seen as a tool to suggest possibilities, to form questions and to eliminate false portrayals. We now move to the application of the model to the texts within Paul’s letters in order to provide solid ground for some current perspectives, to expand some existing views and to break some new ground.¹

5.1. Thessalonica Case Study

5.1.1. Thessalonica: Introduction

City and People. Thessalonica was a bustling² trade and political centre in Macedonia.³ Judith Hill summarizes the physical layout of the city in this way:

¹The nature of our results may be judged in a similar vein to those of many social science investigations of historical works (there are notable exceptions, such as Thiessen’s early work on the Corinthian church). As Michael B. Thompson notes in his review of Still’s use of the sociological theory (in particular, conflict theory) when dealing with conflict in Thessalonica, “I found myself asking if the resulting questions were anything more than what a thorough use of common sense might produce . . . These and other conclusions drawn in this sure-footed study are neither earth-shattering in their nature, nor breath-taking in their originality” (“Review: Conflict at Thessalonica. A Pauline Church and its Neighbours. By Todd D. Still,” EQ 77 [2005]: 92-94, here 93, 94). What these social science investigations provide is rigor to intuited or common sense views.

²Cicero reports that Thessalonica and environs were noisy and full of people (Att. 3.14).

³On the history of the city until the first century and the social, political and economic situation of the city in the first century see Christoph vom Brocke, Thessaloniki – Stadt des Kassander und Gemeinde des Paulus (WUNT 2.125; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2001), 12-101; Judith Lynn Hill, “Establishing the Church in Thessalonica” (Ph.D. diss., Duke University, 1990), 18-70; Craig Steven de Vos, Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationships of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities (SBLDS, 168; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1999), 124-143; Mikael Tellbe, Paul between Synagogue and State: Christians, Jews, and Civic Authorities in 1 Thessalonians, Romans, and Philippians (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 2001), 81-86.
For the city itself, then, in the first century A.D., evidence suggests a “normal” city: walls, a harbor, a fortified acropolis, centers of worship, a gymnasium, a stadium, a quaestorium, possibly a synagogue, colonnades, exedra, streets, gates, arches, and agora(s). In many ways, Thessalonica’s architecture appears to follow the pattern of Hellenistic towns that rather gradually took on a more Roman appearance.\(^4\)

Several physical features of this “normal” town would have affected the development of the group.\(^5\)

First, as we have noted before, would be the “openness” of the city with its public spaces and yet high population densities within the main residential accommodations – this close proximity and publicness resulted in, as Ramsay MacMullen put it, the fact that “everyone spent his day at work and play in his neighbor’s house.”\(^6\) Given the social sensitivity in a collectivist culture and the social awareness engendered by a life lived in “public”, any shifting of social networks or the development of a small group would not have gone unnoticed.\(^7\) A second feature would be the localization of certain trades within the city\(^8\) – if initial members of a coalescing small group were part of a certain trade, given the physical proximity and economic similarity, one would expect the strengthening of ties to those within that same trade group and the emergence of a localized, homogenous group, whose members were affiliated with that trade.

Demographically, given that Thessalonica was an important provincial capital and node of trading routes, it is not surprising to find that the city hosted a diverse population mix. The most

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\(^4\)Hill, “Establishing the Church in Thessalonica,” 45.


\(^6\)MacMullen, *Roman Social Relations*, 64.

\(^7\)Kloppenborg notes the impact on participation in civic festivals and patron relationships (“Rhetorical Engagement,” 275-276).

\(^8\)MacMullen notes how the appellations of streets and other city features could take on the names of trades practiced in a locality and notes that this specialization of areas by economic activity was “a ubiquitous and most important feature of urban life” (*Roman Social Relations*, 69; see also Appendix A: Subdivisions of the City, 129-137). In Thessalonica, for example, we do find the “purple dyers of Eighteenth Street” (*IG X/2* 291.1-4 [Thessalonica; second century CE]).
significant population groups in the first century CE were the Thracians, Greeks, Macedonians and, the most recently settled, Romans. The Romans were the most influential, coming at the top of the provincial administrative structure and providing benefits to the city, which resulted in a tradition of honouring Roman benefactors and in the development of a civic cult in which “honors to the emperor, ‘the gods,’ and Roma and Roman benefactors were apparently interrelated.” And yet the city remained a thoroughly Greek city being organized along Greek lines, producing money with Greek inscriptions, maintaining Greek units of measure and calendar, and being dominated by the Greek language.

A similar mixture is found in the religious life of the city. We may divide the religious cults into three divisions according to origins: Greek, Egyptian and Roman. Thessalonica lay within

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9See Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 86-101; de Vos, *Church and Community Conflicts*, 129-130. De Vos also emphasizes the ethnic integration found in the city.

10Holland Hendrix, “Thessalonicans Honor Romans” (Th.D. diss., Harvard University, 1984), 318.

11Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 95-101. With respect to language, of the over 1000 inscriptions in IG X/2, less than 50 are in Latin (including six bilingual). This is in contrast to Philippi where Latin was more significant, see Pilhofer, *Philippi I: Die erste christliche Gemeinde Europas* (WUNT 87; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1995), 118-122.

12Here, circumspection is advised. The circumstances eliciting Charles Edson’s caution at the beginning of his study of the cults of Thessalonica still apply: “Up to now, the inscriptions found in Salonica have all been chance discoveries, almost invariably due to such causes as the demolition of the old city walls in the nineteenth and the early years of this century, the remodelling or removal of older buildings and other construction in the life of a large port and center of population [one could add now the construction of the metro with the resulting necropolis discovery in 2008]. For these reasons it must be emphasized that the several hundred pagan inscriptions whose texts are now known (many of the stones once seen have been lost or destroyed) are in fact a quite fortuitous body of evidence. The following pages, therefore, cannot pretend to be a balanced and complete study of the religious cults of pagan Thessalonica.” (Charles Edson, “Cults of Thessalonica (Macedonia III),” *HTR* 41 [1948]: 153-204, here 153).


13This is, of course, artificial, given that the cults when brought into Thessalonica were contextualized, developing a local flavour, and that the actual origin of the cults is often unknown (for example, was Dionysos Thracian or Phrygian or, for that matter, Minoan?) and was likely of little consequence to many of the participants. Note the complexity in this description of the origins of an eastern cult found in Thessalonica: “was die römischen Händler aus Delos nach Thessaloniki heranbringen, ist kein römischer, sondern griechisch umgefarbter, ‘ägyptischer’ Kult” (Ulrike Egelhaaf-Gaiser, Jörg Rüpke, Christopher Steimle, and Charalampos Tschochos, *Schlußbericht zum Forschungsprojekt Religion in der römischen Provinz Makedonien im Rahmen des DFG-Schwerpunktprogramms Römische Reichs- und Provinzialreligion* [Erfurt: Universität Erfurt, 2005], 20).
sight of Mount Olympus and of the Greek gods we find references to Zeus, Asclepios, Aphrodite, Demeter and others in the epigraphical finds.\(^{14}\)

The most significant of these Greek cults appear to be the cult of Cabirus (in the singular in Thessalonica) and the cult of Dionysos. Charles Edson notes that “The archeological and slight epigraphic evidence combines with that of the coins to demonstrate that the worship of Cabirus was the chief and most highly publicized cult of Thessalonica since the last years of the first century A.D. at the latest.”\(^{15}\) Little is known about this local cult beyond a violent story of two brothers who killed a third brother and buried his head at Olympus. At Thessalonica alone was only one brother worshiped and he was referred to as the “holiest ancestral god”\(^{16}\) of the city. Edson has also suggested that the general conflation of the Dioscuri (the twins) and Cabiri in the Roman period is seen in Thessalonica in the western Roman gateway on the Via Egnatia.\(^{17}\) This cult has been suggested as background to Paul’s call to holiness in 1 Thess 4\(^{18}\) and, in a more extensive reconstruction by Robert Jewett, the co-optation of the cult from the lower classes by the civic establishment has been seen as an element in the rise of the Thessalonian church as a millenarian movement.\(^{19}\)


\(^{15}\)Edson, “Cults of Thessalonica,” 200.

\(^{16}\)IG X/2 199 l.3-4 (Thessalonica; mid-third century CE).

\(^{17}\)Edson, “Cults of Thessalonica,” 197-200. Contra Brocke, Thessaloniki, 119 and Donfried, “The Cults of Thessalonica,” 26. Whether or not the two were conflated, evidence for the significance of the Dioscuri in Thessalonica is provided by Kloppenborg (“Rhetorical Engagement,” 286).

\(^{18}\)Brocke, Thessaloniki, 121. Rainer Riesner, following J. B. Lightfoot, has also suggested that in 1 Thess 2:3, “Paul was distancing himself from the orgiastic practices typical of the Cabirus-cult” (Rainer Riesner, Paul's Early Period: Chronology, Mission Strategy, Theology [Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1998], 374).

The long influence of the cult of Dionysos is seen in the naming ‘Dionysias tribe’ within the city structure, the appearance of Dionysos on coinage, and the epigraphical evidence suggesting both a civic cult and private (or perhaps connected with the civic cult) associations. The cult, including the sexual symbols of the cult and the general emphasis on noisy revelry, has been taken to provide background for the exhortations concerning sexual restraint in 1 Thess 4:3-8 and the image of the nurse in 1 Thess 2:7-8.

Fortuitous archeological and epigraphical discoveries have provided a wealth of material on the Egyptian cults in Thessalonica. Not only have buildings, a Serapeion and a Roman temple, been found, but with them more than seventy inscriptions. In addition to the goddess Isis (including a fragment of the “Isis Aretalogy”), numerous Egyptian gods are mentioned: Serapis, Osiris, Anubis, Harpocrates and others. As well, private associations arose for worship of these gods and fellowship. While we know of the presence of Egyptian gods in Thessalonica, even as they were

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20 IG X/2 185. Although this is from 225 CE, Edson suggests the names of the tribes reach back to the third century BCE (Edson, “Cults of Thessalonica,” 160 n. 4; see also Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 122-123).

21 Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 123.

22 IG X/2 28, 59, 244, 258, 260, 261, 503, 506.

23 Donfried, “The Cults of Thessalonica,” 24-25 (Malherbe, however, in his oft-cited article, sees the nurse image arising from a Cynic background rather than a Dionysian nurse background [Abraham J. Malherbe, “‘Gentle as a Nurse’: The Cynic Background to 1 Thess 2,” *NovT* 12 (1970): 203-217]). Brocke also suggests that the images of day and night in 1 Thess 5:5-8 would be understood against the background of the night feasts of the Dionysos cult (*Thessaloniki*, 128-129). See also Riesner, *Paul's Early Period*, 374-375.


25 In *IG* X/2 254 (Thessalonica; second century).

26 Brocke lists inscriptions for these (*Thessaloniki*, 132 n. 105).

27 Inscriptions of private associations mentioning Egyptian gods: Serapis *IG* X/2 192 (Thessalonica; third century CE); Serapis and Isis *IG* X/2 255 (Thessalonica; first or second century CE); Anubis *IG* X/2 58 (Thessalonica; early second century CE); Hermes-Anubis *IG* X/2 220 (Thessalonica; third century CE).
reported to be in “all seaports,” the sheer bulk of the material should not be allowed to unduly “overemphasize the actual role played by the Egyptian gods in the religious life of Thessalonica.”

Roman interests influenced Thessalonica’s fortunes from the mid-second century BCE and on. As Holland Hendrix has demonstrated, in response to their dependence on the Romans, Thessalonians developed ways of honouring Roman benefactors that elicited further favours and increasingly honours to Roman benefactors were included alongside honours to the gods. In the first century BCE the goddess Roma joined the benefactors in divine honours and a civic priesthood for both was established. The Roman emperors also were accorded divine status in the first century CE as evidenced by a temple to Caesar and coinage which joined Augustus and the divine Julius. Given the importance of the imperial cult in first century CE Thessalonica, it is not surprising that it has been taken as background for several portions of 1 Thessalonians, most notably the use of the imperial slogan, “Peace and Security,” in 1 Thess 5:3 and the eschatological language of arrival in 1 Thess 4:15-17.

While the coalescing group founded by Paul could well have included those from the dominant religious streams in Thessalonica, it is far more likely that initial contacts would come from within religious traditions similar to Paul’s ethnic/religious background. While there have

28 Aristides, Apo. 15, 4.6.
29 Edson, “Cults of Thessalonica,” 182.
32 As we have emphasized, for a collectivist culture and a coalescing group, similarity, affinity and frame bridging would be expected and so the initial contacts would most likely be of similar ethnic/religious background (see
been optimistic statements of a large Jewish presence in Thessalonica in the first century CE, the direct evidence is sparse. Outside of the account in Acts 17 the only literary evidence is Philo’s account of a letter noting that most eastern regions in Rome’s control, including Macedonia, included a Jewish population (*Legat.* 281-282). The epigraphical evidence is temporally\(^{33}\) or geographically\(^{34}\) distant from first century Thessalonica or uncertain.\(^{35}\) The most relevant inscription is *IJO* 1.Mac15 (Thessalonica; late second or early third century CE),\(^{36}\) a sarcophagus inscription from Marcus Aurelius Jacob (also known as Eutychios) and his wife Anna (also known as Asynktrition) warning against reuse of the sarcophagus with the threat of a fine of 75,000 denarii to be paid to the *synagogues*. However, the multiple synagogues mentioned may be the result of Judean emigration after the uprisings in Judea and so the conclusion of Brocke is the most that we can say at this point.\(^{37}\)

> Insofern wird es schwerlich möglich sein, von der für die erste Hälfte des 2. Jhs. n. Chr. aus der Inschrift erschlossenen Situation auf die Zeit . . . des Paulus zurückzuschließen. Zwar wird man generell mit der Existenz einer jüdischen Gemeinde auch schon im 1. Jh. n. Chr. zu rechnen haben, wie bereits das Zeugnis des Philo nahelegt, aber daß sie schon ähnlich zahlreich und einflußreich gewesen ist wie im 2. Und 3. Jh. N. Chr., scheint mir eher unwahrscheinlich zu sein.\(^{38}\)

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\(^{33}\) E.g., the Samaritan inscription *CIJ* 693a (= *IG* X/2 789) is at the earliest from the fourth century CE. Closer to the first century are two second century tomb inscriptions with Jewish symbols and scripture (Ps 46:8, 12?) (*CIJ* 693b) and names (*CIJ* 693c) found in an early Christian necropolis. These may, however, be Jewish-Christian.

\(^{34}\) E.g., the Stobi synagogue inscription (*CIJ* 694) and the late (fifth century CE) Beroean tomb inscriptions (*CIJ* 694a; *CIJ* 694b).

\(^{35}\) E.g., the epitaph for Abramios and Theodote, *CIJ* 693 (= *IG* X/2 633) (second century CE), may be Jewish though the names are overwhelmingly found for Christians and not Jews (see Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 227-228).


\(^{37}\) Edson’s caution concerning the fortuitous nature of the evidence for pagan cults in Thessalonica should also be applied here – we have no clear picture of the first century Jewish community in Thessalonica, but the paucity of evidence in no way indicates that we do not have a Jewish community!

\(^{38}\) Brocke, *Thessaloniki*, 227. This comes close to, though not as negative as, Richard Ascough’s conclusion in his appendix on Jewish communities in Macedonia (*Paul’s Macedonian Associations: The Social Context of Philippians and 1 Thessalonians* [Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2003], 191-212); see also de Vos’s cautious assessment of
There is, however, another group in Thessalonica with close affinity to Paul’s religious views: the followers of the Most High God. Numerous inscriptions contain ‘hypsistarian’ content: mention of Theos Hypsistos or Zeus Hypsistos.\textsuperscript{39} The cult of Theos Hypsistos has been much discussed, particularly with respect to questions related to its nature and origin and this is discussion has been usually tied to the question of Jewish influence.\textsuperscript{40} Given the focus on Jewish or pagan origins, it is not unexpected that in discussions of Thessalonica that Theos Hypsistos is often merely trotted out in service to the question of the nature of the Jewish community.\textsuperscript{41} However, the cult may stand on its own and provide a collection of followers who would have had some attraction to Paul’s position. Stephen Mitchell has pointed out in his definitive look at the cult of Theos Hypsistos\textsuperscript{42} that rather than seeking to distinguish Jewish and pagan inscriptions one should look at the body of inscriptions as a whole. From this a broad and nuanced picture of the Hypsistos cult can be painted.

In the discussion that follows I have deliberately considered dedications to Theos Hypsistos, Zeus Hypsistos and simply Hypsistos as a whole. This is not because they can be regarded as formally identical. Logically we can only assert the identity of two distinct entities in

\textsuperscript{39}IG X/2 62, 67, 68, 71, 72 (as well IG X/2 69 and 70, though they do not mention Theos Hypsistos, belong with the others in that they come from columns of the building associated with the other inscriptions).

\textsuperscript{40}In the Septuagint, Pseudepigrapha, and other Jewish authors, \textit{υψιστός} is used of Yahweh. But it is also used in classical literature and inscriptions of pagan deities, most frequently Zeus. After examining the epigraphical evidence widely differing views have been developed concerning the origins of the \textit{θεός υψιστός} cult ranging from Levinskaya’s Jewish non-syncretistic influence theory, to F. Cumont’s syncretistic-Jewish (tied in with Sabazios) origin, to P. R. Trebilco’s “monotheizing” paganism theory (for Asia Minor at least), to Y. Ustinova’s pagan roots (and, in Tanais, specifically Iranian roots). Irina Levinskaya, \textit{The Book of Acts in Its Diaspora Setting} (vol. 5 of \textit{The Book of Acts in Its First Century Setting}; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1996), 83-103; F. Cumont, “\textit{ΨΥΣΤΟΣ},” \textit{RE} 9 (1916): 444-50; Paul R. Trebilco, \textit{Jewish Communities in Asia Minor} (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991); Y. Ustinova, \textit{The Supreme Gods of the Bosporan Kingdom: Celestial Aphrodite and the Most High God} (Leiden: Brill, 1999).

\textsuperscript{41}Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 195-201 (the cult of Zeus Hypsistos and Theos Hypsistos in Macedonia show no evidence of Jewish influence); Brocke, \textit{Thessaloniki}, 220-222 (the cult of Zeus Hypsistos is of Macedonian origin, while Theos Hypsistos is an Asian import).

relation to a single, shared archetype. But there are no such archetypes for ancient (or modern) gods, who must be regarded simply as collective representations of the human imagination. Zeus Hypsistos and Theos Hypsistos are not two ways of denoting the same reality. On the other hand, at the practical level of cult, the association between them was extremely close . . . It is both convenient and analytically profitable to focus on the ‘hypsistarian’ nature of these cults, and treat them together, rather than split them and stress their differences.  

By focussing on the common elements of these cults Mitchell is able both to provide a comprehensive picture of the hypsistarian phenomenon and to sidestep the difficult procedure of distinguishing Jewish and pagan examples of worship of Theos Hypsistos. For Mitchell, first, the cult of Theos Hypsistos is, on an overarching level of practices and patterns of belief, the monotheistic preserve of both pagans and Jews – each seeing the god worshipped by the other as the same god – and yet, second, he can speak of and concentrate on the pagan cult. On this second level, the cult of Theos Hypsistos reaches as far back as the second century BCE and arose independently in several regions. The worshippers of the Most High God remained a part of the non-Jewish world and yet acquired many characteristics analogous to Jewish worshippers. At the same time Jews of the diaspora were being influenced by pagan neighbours. What Jews and followers of Theos Hypsistos had in common were elements of worship and a monotheistic, or at the least a henotheistic, focus.

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45 Mitchell, “Theos Hypsistos,” 127. Mitchell presents some of the components of the cult worship and belief: prayers to the rising and setting sun, the lighting of lamps, raising of hands in prayer, use of acclamations, meeting in a ‘place of prayer’ (προσευχή), incorporation of lesser ‘deities’ as angels, the absence of animal sacrifice, and the self-designation of cult followers as θεοσεβεῖες.
46 Since the publication of Pagan Monotheism in Late Antiquity there has been much discussion of the relevance of the term ‘pagan monotheism’ and the use of terms such as ‘henotheism’. See for example the papers in One God: Pagan Monotheism in the Roman Empire, (eds. Stephen Mitchell and Peter Van Nuffelen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010) and Peter Van Nuffeln, “Beyond Categorization: ‘Pagan Monotheism’ and the Study of Ancient Religion,” Common Knowledge 18 (2012): 451-463. In “Further Thoughts” Mitchell clarifies the view of god in the cult of the Most High God as “a single supreme divinity who was not represented in human form” and yet “other divinities might be acknowledged, but had a lesser status within the divine hierarchy, or to be precise, as the oracle [Oinoanda]
Mitchell’s sweeping overview of the cult of Theos Hypsistos, however, must be used with attention to local features. In Thessalonica, what the inscriptions do reveal is a cult association focused on common meals, made up of citizens and freedmen, who avoided iconic monuments – elements found also among early Christ followers. If these social elements were combined to some degree with a monotheistic/henotheistic perspective and with a cult practice similar to Mitchell’s description in which there was, for example, the raising of hands in prayer, the use of acclamations, and the absence of animal sacrifice, then we would have among hypsistarians a pool of potential contacts in Thessalonica, though not specifically Jewish, whose religious outlook and practice would have been agreeable to Paul’s perspective.

5.1.2. Thessalonica: Group Founding Texts and Application of the Group Founding Model

The Thessalonian correspondence was written shortly after Paul’s group founding visit to Thessalonica. As Robert Jewett notes, within epistolary rhetoric it is logical to refer to earlier phases of a relationship, and in particular the most recent contact. We find then in 1

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47 Note the labelling of the association members as synklitai (IG X/2 70) and the leader as trikleinarches (IG X/2 69). See Mitchell “Further Thoughts,” 181 n. 65.


49 Most commentators place the letter as written in Corinth at the beginning of the 50's CE soon after Paul’s visit to Thessalonica (Ascough, Paul's Macedonian Associations, 162; F. F. Bruce, 1 & 2 Thessalonians [WBC 45; Waco: Word Publishing, 1982], xxxiv-xxxv; Abraham J. Malherbe, The Letters to the Thessalonians [Anchor Bible 32B; New York: Doubleday, 2000], 71-74).

50 Jewett, The Thessalonian Correspondence, 29; see Heikki Koskenniemi, Studien zur Idee und Phraseologie des griechischen Briefes bis 400 n. Chr. (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedakatemia, 1956), 35-37, 88-97.
Thessalonians\textsuperscript{51} a number of references to Paul and his associates’ initial visit to Thessalonica that touch on the group’s founding: 1:5-6, 9-10; 2:1-8, 9-12, 13-14\textsuperscript{52} (see also 4:1, 9-12 and Phil 4:14-16).

As we look at the most significant of these texts we will focus on features related to group founding and not on, for example, rhetorical or epistolary features, or on elements of post-affiliation group formation.\textsuperscript{53} The basic outline and elements of the group founding are found in 1 Thess 1 and our attention will focus on those texts.

\section*{5.1.2.1. 1 Thessalonians: Group Founding Texts}

We will investigate 1 Thessalonians 1:5-6 and 1:9-10, two passages which exhibit the possibilities for the application of our group founding model. The remaining passages in 1 Thessalonians, as far as group founding is concerned, feature elements found in these initial passages.

\textsuperscript{51}Given the both the doubts concerning the authorship of 2 Thessalonians and the paucity of references to Paul’s founding mission (perhaps only 2 Thess 2:15 referring to the traditions Paul taught and 2 Thess 3:6-10 referring to Paul’s labour in Thessalonica and his teachings), we will concentrate on 1 Thessalonians.


\textsuperscript{52}That the second thanksgiving, 2:13-16, is an interpolation, has been frequently suggested. See Ascough, \textit{Paul’s Macedonian Associations}, 163-164; Wanamaker, \textit{The Epistles to the Thessalonians}, 29-33; Malherbe, \textit{The Letters to the Thessalonians}, 164. That the opposition to Pauline authorship is overstated see Ingo Broer, “‘Der ganze Zorn ist schon über sie gekommen’: Bemerkungen zur Interpolationshypothese und zur Interpretation von 1 Thes 2,14-16” in \textit{The Thessalonian Correspondence} (ed. Raymond F. Collins; BETL 87; Leuven: Leuven University Press, 1990) and Malherbe, \textit{The Letters to the Thessalonians}, 164-165.

The apparently hostile language in these verses is consistent with the observation that collectivists, once a group relationship has soured, are more outspoken than individualists (Harry C. Triandis, \textit{Individualism and Collectivism} [Boulder: Westview Press, 1995], 77).

\textsuperscript{53}Our findings would thus serve as a preamble to studies such as Börschel’s examination of the development of social identity in Thessalonica (\textit{Die Konstruktion einer christlichen Identität: Paulus und die Gemeinde von Thessalonich in ihrer hellenistisch-römischen Umwelt} [BBB 128; Berlin: Philo, 2001]).
Throughout the letter the first person plural verbal form predominates (the singular form being found only in 3:5 and 5:27; 2:18 includes the singular pronoun in the interjection ἐγὼ μέν Παύλος καὶ ἀπαξ καὶ δίς). A variety of suggestions have been given for this unusual feature of the Thessalonian correspondence (summarized in Wolf-Henning Ollrog, Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter. Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979], 184), but Malherbe’s expanded examination of similar letter writing (including Seneca) provides a foundational reason for the usage of the plural: the paraenetic tone of the letter (Malherbe, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 86-89). For our purposes the tone of the letter is not a basic concern, but rather the founding of the group; for this the mention of co-senders (1:1, καὶ Σίλουανος καὶ Τίμοθεος) has greater significance – they were apparently known to the group and, given the recollections in the first three chapters of the founding of the group, were with Paul as the group coalesced. Both Paul and his co-workers were involved in the founding of the group. However, for convenience’s sake and since the network of the group founders would have been an ego-centred network with Paul at the centre, the founding actions will be referred to as Paul’s.

Context. Verse 4 begins with the third participle (ποιοῦμενοι [μνείαν] 1:2; μνημονεύοντες 1:3; εἰδότες 1:4) modifying the main verb in the sentence (εὐχαριστοῦμεν 1:2). The knowledge of the Thessalonian group’s selection by God (εἰδότες τὴν ἐκλογὴν ὑμῶν) provides the ultimate cause for Paul (and his associates’)54 thanksgiving. In this context Paul also introduces for the first time in the letter fictive kinship terminology, ἀδελφοὶ ἡγαπημένοι υπὸ [τοῦ] θεοῦ. Would the use of these terms have had part in the formation of the group? The mere labelling of potential group members with group specific appellations can bring about group phenomena (categorization). Wayne Meeks writes of the ‘language of belonging’ in which terms that strengthen in-group bias are applied to individuals and he illustrates this with the terms ἁγιοί (in some manuscripts 1 Thess 5:27, cognate in 3:13) and ἐκλεκτοί (cognate here in 1 Thess 1:4)

54Throughout the letter the first person plural verbal form predominates (the singular form being found only in 3:5 and 5:27; 2:18 includes the singular pronoun in the interjection ἐγὼ μέν Παύλος καὶ ἀπαξ καὶ δίς). A variety of suggestions have been given for this unusual feature of the Thessalonian correspondence (summarized in Wolf-Henning Ollrog, Paulus und seine Mitarbeiter. Untersuchungen zu Theorie und Praxis der paulinischen Mission [Neukirchen-Vluyn: Neukirchener Verlag, 1979], 184), but Malherbe’s expanded examination of similar letter writing (including Seneca) provides a foundational reason for the usage of the plural: the paraenetic tone of the letter (Malherbe, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 86-89). For our purposes the tone of the letter is not a basic concern, but rather the founding of the group; for this the mention of co-senders (1:1, καὶ Σίλουανος καὶ Τίμοθεος) has greater significance – they were apparently known to the group and, given the recollections in the first three chapters of the founding of the group, were with Paul as the group coalesced. Both Paul and his co-workers were involved in the founding of the group. However, for convenience’s sake and since the network of the group founders would have been an ego-centred network with Paul at the centre, the founding actions will be referred to as Paul’s.
Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 85-88. See also: Börschel who examines the creation of group identity by examining how Paul addresses the Thessalonians using such terms as “beloved of God” (1 Thess 1:4), “chosen” (1 Thess 1:4), and “called” (1 Thess 2:12; 4:7; 5:24) (*Die Konstruktion einer christlichen Identität*, 142-147) and Burke who examines the function of brotherly language in re-socialization in 1 Thess (Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters: A Socio-Historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians* [JSNTSup. 247; London: T&T Clark, 2003], 169-175).

Philip Harland examines the broader context of fictive kinship language within Greco-Roman associations. As Harland demonstrates the use of familial terminology was not exceptional for Greco-Roman associations and suggests that it served more of an *intragroup* function of promoting solidarity, than an *intergroup* function of developing ingroup bias as suggested by Meeks. (“Familial Dimensions of Group Identity: ‘Brothers’ (Ἀδελφοί) in Associations of the Greek East,” *JBL* 124 [2005]: 491-513; see also Arthur Darby Nock’s much earlier article on cult-associations which begins with the statement, “The cult-association is primarily a family” (“The Historical Importance of Cult-Associations,” *The Classical Review* 38 [1924]: 105-109, here 105)).

1 Thessalonians 1:5. Given the usual σιδάρα . . . δτι (“know that”) syntax, even though the elements are separated, the δτι should be taken as epexegetical, expanding the content of what Paul means by their selection. He emphasizes that the message, το εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν, his frame, was

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55 Wayne Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 85-88. See also: Börschel who examines the creation of group identity by examining how Paul addresses the Thessalonians using such terms as “beloved of God” (1 Thess 1:4), “chosen” (1 Thess 1:4), and “called” (1 Thess 2:12; 4:7; 5:24) (*Die Konstruktion einer christlichen Identität*, 142-147) and Burke who examines the function of brotherly language in re-socialization in 1 Thess (Trevor J. Burke, *Family Matters: A Socio-Historical Study of Kinship Metaphors in 1 Thessalonians* [JSNTSup. 247; London: T&T Clark, 2003], 169-175).

56 Philip Harland examines the broader context of fictive kinship language within Greco-Roman associations. As Harland demonstrates the use of familial terminology was not exceptional for Greco-Roman associations and suggests that it served more of an *intragroup* function of promoting solidarity, than an *intergroup* function of developing ingroup bias as suggested by Meeks. (“Familial Dimensions of Group Identity: ‘Brothers’ (Ἀδελφοί) in Associations of the Greek East,” *JBL* 124 [2005]: 491-513; see also Arthur Darby Nock’s much earlier article on cult-associations which begins with the statement, “The cult-association is primarily a family” (“The Historical Importance of Cult-Associations,” *The Classical Review* 38 [1924]: 105-109, here 105)).

communicated through several media. This use of τὸ εὐαγγέλιον ἡμῶν highlights Paul’s pivotal and prototypical role in communicating the message. In addition, both his activity and character reinforced the verbal message in such a way that the Thessalonians’ experience of receiving the message was more than just a cognitive event. Paul’s description of the way in which the message was received, οὐκ ἐγενήθη ἐν λόγῳ μόνων ἀλλὰ καὶ . . . , connects, rather than separates, the cognitive element with the other elements (affective and behavioural) which would eventually feed into group coalescence. In that Paul throughout this section is reviewing the Thessalonians’ response, the threefold addition to the presentation ἐν λόγῳ should be taken from the Thessalonians’ perspective: the message came to them in power, which Paul further elucidates as with the Holy Spirit (for Paul, the source of their experience) and with full conviction by the Thessalonians.\(^{58}\) The necessity of additional components beyond verbal communication for persuasion and guidance (and consistency between the verbal and other components) was a commonplace\(^{59}\) and so to enhance his review of their election (v.4) Paul notes that not only did his message come to them in word and experience but also that his words and practice were consistent – οἴδατε οἵoi ἔγενηθημεν [ἐν] ὑμῖν δι’ ὑμᾶς. This latter aspect is further expanded in 2:1-12. As well, this last clause sets up the introduction of the theme of imitation – they not only knew, and by implication approved of, the behaviour of Paul, they also modeled their behaviour on it.\(^{60}\)

\(^{58}\) For coverage of the textual and interpretive options see Fee, *Thessalonians*, 34-36.


\(^{60}\) In other words the norms of the nascent group were seen in Paul, i.e., he was the group prototype.


1 Thessalonians 1:6. The sentence continues into v. 6\(^61\) with further evidence of the Thessalonians’ election: καὶ ὑμεῖς μιμηταὶ ἡμῶν ἐγενήθητε καὶ τοῦ κυρίου. The theme of imitation is found in several of Paul’s letters\(^62\), though this verse and the renewed thanksgiving (2:14) provide the only instances without connection to an imperative. The nature of the Thessalonians’ imitation is clouded by several issues: the relationship of the aorist participle δεξάμενοι to the verb (is it temporal or instrumental?) and the meaning of θλιψις. An instrumental understanding of the participle would stress that their imitation of Paul and the Lord consisted of the way in which they received the word. While a focus on the reception of the word (expanded as ὁ λόγος τοῦ κυρίου in 1:8) is plausible for Paul, it is difficult to see how it would apply to the Lord. A better reading would be a temporal reading which suggests that the Thessalonians’ imitation occurred after adopting Paul’s message and also suggests that the imitation was found in their suffering affliction accompanied with joy.\(^63\) It has been suggested by Malherbe\(^64\) that the θλιψις endured by the Thessalonians was internal distress similar to that evidenced in philosophical conversions. However, we find: 1) Paul’s discussion in 3:1-5 indicates that the affliction was more that inner distress; 2) given that they are imitating also the Lord, it is significant that inner distress does not reflect the usual presentation of the trials of the Lord; and 3) given that the Thessalonians become examples to all believers in Macedonia and Achaia, it would seem that

\(^{61}\) In spite of the full stop in the Nestle-Aland text, the sentence should continue into v. 6 with καὶ as a coordinating conjunction. See Fee, Thessalonians, 37 and Malherbe, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 114.

\(^{62}\) 1 Cor 4:16; 11:1; Phil 3:17 (see also Gal 4:12; Phil 4:9; 2 Thess 3:7, 9).

\(^{63}\) In 1 Thess 2:14 we see that also later the group’s imitation of the groups in Judea was found in their suffering.

\(^{64}\) Malherbe, Paul and the Thessalonians, 48, though, see also The Letters to the Thessalonians, 115.
their affliction would be more than the normal inner distress experienced by all who adopt new frames.\textsuperscript{65}

\textit{1 Thessalonians 1:9-10}

9 αὐτοὶ γὰρ περὶ ἡμῶν ἀπαγέλλουσιν ὅποιαν εἰσόδον ἐσχομεν πρὸς ὑμᾶς, καὶ πῶς ἐπεστρέψατε πρὸς τὸν θεὸν ἀπὸ τῶν εἰδώλων δουλεύειν θεῷ ζῶντι καὶ ἀληθῶς 10 καὶ ἀναμένειν τὸν οὐν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν σωρανῶν, ὅν ἦγειρεν ἐκ [τῶν] νεκρῶν, Ἰησοῦν τὸν ρυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς θρησκείας τῆς ἐρχομένης.

\textit{Context.} Following up on Paul’s report of their initial reception of his message and of their suffering with joy, verses 7 and 8 deal with the example of the Thessalonian group after it has coalesced: other groups have followed their example and there is no necessity to add to the reports of other groups. As a prototypical group, Paul highlights their efforts in communication and their loyalty in the midst of affliction.\textsuperscript{66}

\textit{1 Thessalonians 1:9.}\textsuperscript{67} Paul now turns to the report he had received concerning the formation of the group. The first element of the report emphasizes the entrance\textsuperscript{68} of Paul, which,

\textsuperscript{65}Wanamaker \textit{The Epistles to the Thessalonians}, 81-82.


\textsuperscript{67}On the basis of linguistic usage and supposed un-Pauline thought, some have taken 1 Thess 1:9b-10 to be a traditional formula (Ernest Best, \textit{A Commentary on the First and Second Epistles to the Thessalonians} [BNTC; London: Black, 1972], 85-87; see also the discussion and references in Hill, “Establishing the Church in Thessalonica,” 183-186 and in David Luckensmeyer, \textit{The Eschatology of First Thessalonians} [Gottingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2009], 106-113). This has been rebutted by Wanamaker (\textit{The Epistles to the Thessalonians}, 84-87; see also Traugott Holtz “Traditionen im 1 Thessalonicherbrief,” in \textit{Die Mitte des Neuen Testaments} [eds. Ulrich Luz and Hans Weder; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1983], 55-79, here 53-62). The passage is not simply a rehearsal of a message, but rather a summary of a report of what the group experienced and, whether or not the passage is traditional, it should be assumed that the group would have seen it as summarizing their experience.

\textsuperscript{68}εἰσόδος may be ‘entrance/visit’ or ‘welcome/reception’. Although ‘welcome’ is simply a metaphorical extension of entrance, particularly so in a collectivist culture (if you have ‘entered’ into a group, you have been welcomed), ‘entrance’ fits best here given that: 1) the report is said to be περὶ ἡμῶν; 2) εἰσόδος alone is not often used in the ‘passive’ sense of ‘welcome’ and the rarely found εἰσόδος . . . πρὸς is ‘access’; 3) and εἰσόδος is used as ‘entrance’ in 2:1 (see also Luckensmeyer, \textit{The Eschatology of First Thessalonians}, 78-80). Their manner of ‘entering’ is shown in 2:1-12.
though including positive behaviour (acceptance) on the part of the Thessalonians, serves to stress the central part Paul played in drawing the group together. Their positive reception of Paul’s message and behaviour, the result of his ‘entrance’ to them, led to their turning to God from idols. Here, at the least, we may be assured that the initial composition of the group was not Jewish. The description of God as ‘living and true’ further stresses the contrast with idols – an element of what appears to be part of a typical Hellenistic Jewish polemic against gentiles. Although the action of turning to God may focus on ‘conversion’ of individuals, the action provides a basis for the subsequent coalescence of the group.

1 Thessalonians 1:10. The result of their turning is a change in cult practices (δουλεύειν θεῶν ζωντι καὶ ἀληθινῷ) and an eschatological anticipation framed in terms of rescue (ἀναμένειν τόν υἱὸν αὐτοῦ ἐκ τῶν οὐρανῶν, . . . Ἰησοῦν τὸν ῥυόμενον ἡμᾶς ἐκ τῆς ὀργῆς τῆς ἐρχομένης). Here we have elements that serve both behavioural and cognitive coalescence, with the eschatological anticipation also representing a typical perspective found in (emerging) groups under social pressure.

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69 Malina and Pilch’s insistence that Paul’s audience must be ‘Israelites’ is ill-founded (Bruce J. Malina and John J. Pilch, Social-Science Commentary on the Letters of Paul [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2006], 14-25, 28-29, 38). While there was certainly assimilation by Jews (see also, for example, Philip A. Harland, “Acculturation and Identity in the Diaspora: A Jewish Family and ‘Pagan’ Guilds in Hierapolis,” JJS 57 [2006]: 222-44), the label ‘idol-worshiper’ would have been inappropriate for them. See below on the composition of the group (§5.1.2.2.2.).

70 This would fit with Richard’s suggestion that the report which Paul is paraphrasing in 1:9-10 comes from Jewish-Christians (Earl J. Richard, First and Second Thessalonians [SP 11; Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1995], 74).

71 Significantly, throughout 1 Thessalonians there is little evidence of factors contributing to affective coalescence. See the following section.
5.1.2.2. Thessalonica: Application of the Group Founding Model

Moving now to the application of the group founding model to understanding 1 Thessalonians and the group in Thessalonica, we are able to not only provide a solid social scientific basis for some current readings, but also to expand existing views and to break new ground. In particular, we will address: 1) the multi-modality of frame alignment and coalescence; 2) group composition; and 3) the interaction of homogeneity, threat and group prototype in group coalescence and later group development. Three propositions arising directly from the group model will be given which address elements of the text and which cover three basic questions for Thessalonica: How was the Pauline group founded? Who were part of the coalescing group? and What impact did group founding have on later group development?

5.1.2.2.1. Reinforcement of a Current View: The Multi-Modality of Frame Alignment and Coalescence

Proposition 1: a) In contrast to perspectives which focus solely on verbal communication in Pauline group founding, the founding of Pauline groups must be seen as a function of cognitive, behavioural and affective elements (with even the cognitive element, when viewed from the perspective of frame theory, stressing more than verbal communication). b) However, in contrast to an overemphasis on a common affective bond in group founding, it must be recognized that there was relatively weak affective coalescence for Pauline groups.

Multi-Modality of Frame Alignment and Coalescence. First Thessalonians 1:5-9 indicates that the presentation of Paul’s frame which was accepted by the Thessalonians included additional components beyond verbal communication – words and deeds, Paul’s message and prototypical behaviour, went into bridging the frames of Paul and the Thessalonians. These additional
components contributed to the persuasive force of Paul’s presentation for the individual and to its cohering function for the group.

The multi-modality of group coalescence (behavioural, affective, and cognitive) for Pauline groups has gained credence, in particular, with the acceptance of sociological and social historical emphases such as, for example, those found in Malherbe who stresses the philosophical commonplace of consistency between words and deeds\(^{72}\) (which fits with the frame theory’s position that the viability of a frame rests on its credibility\(^{73}\)), and in Stark who stresses the relational element in group founding.\(^{74}\) Our group founding model provides a rigorous, comprehensive and integrated presentation of this multi-modality of coalescence for the founding of Paul’s groups.

As well, the multi-modality of coalescence illuminates the background of Paul’s rhetoric in 1 Thessalonians. The statements on the group’s founding in 1 Thess 1:5-9, which are further embellished in 2:1-13,\(^{75}\) have standing behind them an actual founding during which the group participants would have experienced, and upon further reflection would have recognized, the multi-modal nature of the group’s formation. This actual founding, including in it words, actions, interdependent behaviour, emotions, cognitive elements and so on, provided the foundational content for Paul’s rhetoric, whether ones sees it as apologetic or parenetic.\(^{76}\)

\(^{72}\)Malherbe, The Letters to the Thessalonians, 111.

\(^{73}\)See §2.3.2.3. Cognitive Coalescence.


\(^{75}\)1 Thess 2:1-13 focuses on the actions and attitudes of Paul and his co-workers. As such it adds little about the founding of the group to the information we have in 1 Thess 1:5-9 beyond reinforcing the consistency of Paul’s words and actions.

\(^{76}\)Paul’s purpose in writing 1 Thess 2:1-12 is a topic of much discussion: was he commending himself and so encouraging the Thessalonian group (a parenetic purpose) or was he fending off potential/actual external/internal threats to the group (an apologetic purpose)? In placing Paul’s presentation in 1 Thess 2:1-12 in the context of the depiction of Cynic philosophers (following up on Martin Dibelius’ earlier suggestion [An der Thessalonicher I und II (HTKNT 11; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1937), 7-11]), Malherbe suggests that Paul was, like Dio, using antithetic terms in the
However, as we have noted, throughout 1 Thessalonians there is little evidence of factors contributing to affective coalescence. Two dimensions of interpersonal attraction would have come into play in the beginning of the group: personal attraction to Paul and his associates and interpersonal attraction among potential group members. Although Paul spoke of his affection for the Thessalonians, even from the start as he began to communicate with them (1 Thess 2:8), he presented this affection in behavioural rather than emotional terms: he worked so as to not be a burden (1 Thess 2:9); he behaved blamelessly (1 Thess 2:10); he exhorted them like a father (1 Thess 2:11). While some level of emotional bonding may be presumed, it is not brought to the fore, and the affection of the Thessalonians for Paul is not even mentioned. Of possibly greater significance for the affective coalescence of the group would have been interpersonal attraction among the Thessalonians themselves. There may be an indication of emotional attachment between individuals which could reach back to the time before the group began: “But concerning love of the brothers [or
including upholding the honour of the group before outsiders (see Burke, Family Matters, 203-224).

Wanamaker states: “More importantly, however, Paul and his missionary colleagues’ work situation and use of private homes for missionary activity provided the context in which to create affective interpersonal bonds with their prospective converts. This in turn enabled them to engage in the intensive interaction with the Thessalonians which Snow and Phillips maintain is essential if conversion is to take place. I Thessalonians 2 is rich in evidence that this happened, and in fact it is perhaps our best source in the Pauline corpus for the nature of Paul’s interpersonal connection with his converts during his missionary stay.” (“‘Like a Father Treats His Own Children’: Paul and the Conversion of the Thessalonians,” JTSA 92 [1995]: 46-55, here 50; emphasis added).

Proposition 2: a) Given the extremely strong pressures for homogeneity in a collectivist culture, it should be assumed that Pauline groups at their founding were socially and religiously/ethnically homogeneous. In addition, the frame of (nascent) group members would have been congruent to Paul’s. b) If a Pauline group is evidently a heterogenous group, then it should be assumed that it developed from the integration of a heterogenous network(s) (e.g., a socially stratified household) into the forming group.

The group founding model for a collectivist culture highlights at several points the pressures for the formation of a homogenous group: 1) networks would be expected to arise along ascribed ethnic, kinship and religious lines, or along lines originating in behavioural situations – these homogenous networks would provide the initial group members; 2) trusted acquaintances would be preferred over strangers in group formation – in a collectivist culture these alters would be expected to be of the same social and religious/ethnic group; 3) the bridging of frames among those with similar ideologies would be expected – original members of the group being those who would find in Paul’s frame the greatest resonance, which would be directly related to the salience and credibility of the frame, two factors constraining diversity. Given these pressures to homogeneity we may move beyond the usual characterizations of the composition of the coalescing Thessalonian group.

From 1 Thess 1:9 we may conclude that the coalescing group was not made up of Jewish members. However, this does not mean that we are left with the conclusion of David Luckensmeyer: “It is practically impossible to identify which gods Paul may have had in his mind when he refers to τὰ ἐὐθώλα (vom Brocke 2001, 116). These might include any ἐὐθώλα of the Egyptian divinities Isis, Serapis, Anubis and Osiris, of the cults of Dionysus, the Cabiri and the goddess Roma, of the mysteries of Samothrace, as well as of other gods including Zeus, Asclepius, Aphrodite,
Demeter, etc.

Although it is possible that Paul could have had contact with the very (?) small Jewish community upon his arrival and that there may have been some Jews among the original group, the reference to idols suggests a non-Jewish group at its founding. Though the original group members may well have been followers of one of what currently are seen to be the most significant cults in the city, the cult of Cabirus or of Dionysos, given their congruence with Paul suggested by frame bridging a far more probable scenario is that they had an affiliation with a Hypsistos cult and, as well, participated in the civic cult. Our model and, in particular, frame

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81 Luckensmeyer, The Eschatology of First Thessalonians, 86 n. 69.

82 Malina and Pilch state: “The presumption that these were non-Israelites is simply misplaced for two reasons: Paul’s target audience consisted of Israelites, and many Israelites resident among non-Israelites were far along the way of assimilation, including adopting local worship patterns.” (Social Science Commentary, 38). However, although Paul’s message was within the trajectory of diaspora Judaism, it does not imply that his message would have been incomprehensible to non-Jews and that thus Paul had only a renewal movement within Judaism in mind. His (later) stated target audience includes gentiles (Gal 2:7, 9; Rom 1:5, 14, 15:16). And, although individual diaspora Jews were assimilating, their community profile could hardly be held to include the label “idol worshippers.”

83 Such a scenario also avoids the problems of those who suggest that the original group are “synagogue-going” gentiles who turned from idols before Paul came (for example, Marius Reiser, “Hat Paulus Heiden bekehrt?” BZ 39 [1995]: 76-91, here 83). We avoid the need to set up a multiple step understanding of the turning from idols and responding to Paul (Reiser claims, “Wenn Paulus die Thessalonicher daran erinnert, wie sie sich von den Götzen abwandten, ‘um dem lebendigen und wahren Gott zu dienen’, so erinnert er sie an einen Schritt, den sie vor seiner Ankunft in der Stadt getan hatten” [91]. This is not what the passage indicates!). The question of whether followers of the Most High God would have been addressed as having worshipped idols in the plural may be answered in the affirmative:

1) Although έιδωλον did occasionally serve to denote cultic images in non-Jewish and non-Christian Greek, it primarily served as a Jewish/Christian term which originally combined a pejorative connotation of ‘copy’ with ‘figurative representation’ (see Terry Griffith, “ΕΙΔΩΛΟΝ as ‘Idol’ in Non-Jewish and Non-Christian Greek,” JTS 53 [2002]: 95-101). As such it also came to represent the deity itself. Polemic against idolatry is found in Jewish scripture with the plural becoming part of the stock phraseology (1 Chr 16:26; Ps 115:2-8; 135:15-18; Isa 44:9-20; Jer 10:2-16; Hab 2:18-19) and this is taken over into Hellenistic Jewish works (Wis 13:10-14:31; 15:7-19; Let. Aris. 134-138; Sib. Or. 3.29-35; Philo Decal. 52-81, Contempl. 3-9, Spec. 1.13-19, 2.255). In fact, a stylized contrast between idols and the living God developed as seen in, for example, “So he answered, ‘Because I do not revere idols made with hands, but the living God, who created heaven and earth, and has dominion over all flesh’” (Bel. Theod. 5) (see also: Dan 5:23 LXX; Dan 6:27 LXX; Jos. Asen. 8:5; Sib. Or. 3.762-3; additionally: Philo Dec 67; Jos. Asen. 11:10 ) (see Mark Goodwin, Paul, Apostle of the Living God: Kerygma and Conversion in 2 Corinthians [Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2001], 69-80). Paul’s use of εϊδολα in 1 Thess 1:9 (whether or not it originated with Paul) partakes of this stylized phrasing and so any emphasis on the plurality of gods worshipped by the group members should not be overplayed.

2) In addition, as mentioned above, followers of the Most High God and other ‘pagan monotheists’ may well have been henotheists (see Mitchell, “Further Thoughts,” 187). Locally in Thessalonica, given that a number of the inscriptions were found in the area of the Serapeum, it has been suggested that they were connected with the worship of the Egyptian gods (Sarah Campanelli, “Kline e synklitai nel culto di Hypsistos: Nota su due iscrizioni del Serapeo di Tessalonica,” ZPE 160 [2007]: 123-133; see also Christopher Steimle,
theory highlight the congruity between Paul and the proto-group members. We would then have a coalescing group consisting of individuals: 1) with an openness to the Paul’s message through their participation in the cult of the Most High God (thus a frame congruent to Paul’s); 2) with an acquaintance with the main cults of the city through their extended residence in the city; and 3) with the potential to be labelled as idol worshippers though their involvement in civic festivals. The first element follows from our examination of frame bridging, the second and the third from the following.

In addition to 1 Thess 1:9, the ethnic/religious background of the implied readers is seen in 1 Thess 1:1 and 2:14. In 1 Thess 1:1 Paul addresses the group in an unusual manner: τῇ ἐκκλησίᾳ Θεσσαλονικῆς. It is only in this greeting in his letters that Paul addressed a group of inhabitants rather than a group in a location; we may assume that the majority of the current group (and so of the original group) were residents of Thessalonica having roots within the city and were not itinerants or recent migrants. In 1 Thess 2:14 Paul mentions the persecution of the group by

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Religion im römischen Thessaloniki: Sakraltopographie, Kult und Gesellschaft 168 v. Chr.-324 n. Chr [STAC 47; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2007], 109-114). A more likely interaction with other deities, given its pervasiveness in social life, would have occurred with participation in the imperial cult (see Harrison, “Paul and the Imperial Gospel at Thessaloniki,” and Donfried, “The Imperial Cults”).

84 And from Paul’s perspective perhaps even through their worship of the Most High God. Christian Blumenthal suggests that even god-fearers could be characterized by the terms Paul uses in 1 Thess 9-10 and so he labels the addressees as “Heiden als auch Gottesfürchtige” (“Was sagt 1 Thess 1.9b–10 über die Adressaten des 1 Thess? Literarische und historische Erwägungen,” NTS 51 [2005]: 96-105).


86 Hill, “Establishing the Church in Thessalonica,” 195-200. See also de Vos, Church and Community Conflicts, 144-147. De Vos insists that all the group members were citizens of the city. This is unlikely given the flexibility of the term and the restrictions on citizenship in the city. Donfried further connects “Thessalonians” to an imperial context and a political agenda on Paul’s part (“The Assembly of the Thessalonians: Reflections on the Ecclesiology of the Earliest Christian Letter,” in Ekklesiologie des Neuen Testaments [eds. Rainer Kampling and Thomas Söding; Freiburg: Herder, 1996], 390-408).
their “fellow tribesmen” (συμφιλείτης). This unusual word\(^87\) would most naturally refer to one of the \textit{phyle} of the city\(^88\) and so it would be reasonable to assume that the majority of the original members of the group were part of \textit{one} of the city’s divisions.\(^89\)

In addition, providing we continue to highlight the homogeneity of the coalescing group and homogeneous networks arising in behavioural situations, we may also add some additional support to arguments concerning the social setting of the emerging group. Several lines of evidence converge to provide a social setting among hand labourers for the emerging Thessalonian group.\(^90\)

First, there is the economic level of the resultant group. Though 2 Cor 8:1-5 contains rhetorical hyperbole in an effort to shame the Corinthians into contributing to Paul’s collection, the claim that the Macedonian Christians contributed in spite of “extreme poverty” does reflect a lower economic

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88 Four divisions are attested for Thessalonica: Antigonis tribe (\textit{IG X/2} 184 [Thessalonica; c. 225 CE]); Asklepias tribe (\textit{IG X/2} 183 [Thessalonica; c. 225 CE]; \textit{IG X/2} 265 [Thessalonica; first century BCE]); Dionysias tribe (\textit{IG X/2} 185 [Thessalonica; c. 225 CE]); Gniaias tribe (\textit{IG X/2} 278 [Thessalonica; second or third century CE]). See Brocke, \textit{Thessaloniki}, 156-161.

89 Brocke, \textit{Thessaloniki}, 152-166. Still notes how Paul uses φιλή in a wider ethnic manner and so may have been simply referring to non-Jewish Thessalonians (\textit{Conflict at Thessalonica}, 220-225). However, given the homogeneity of the group, one would expect the composition of the group to be of a more restricted makeup then just “non-Jewish.”


In his extended review of Meeks’ \textit{The First Urban Christians}, G. Schöllgen provides several points of caution which apply to any construction of the social setting of the Thessalian group: 1) Paul’s reference to hand work in 1 Thess 4:11-12 does little to narrow down the nature of their occupation since nearly all occupations would have included hand work; 2) 1 Thess 4:11-12 may well refer to only a segment of the group; 3) Given the make-up of and, in particular, the agrarian basis of ancient cities, the labour demographic would have included a large segment of agricultural and general day-labourers. (“Was wissen wir über die Sozialstruktur der paulinischen Gemeinden?” \textit{NTS} 34 (1988): 71-82, here 76 and 73; see Kloppenborg, “Rhetorical Engagement,” 268 n. 11).
level on their part. This, taken with the limited resources provided by the Thessalonians to Paul, as shown in the needed support from Philippi (Phil 4:13-16) and his desire not to be a burden (1 Thess 2:9; there were also other reasons behind this), suggests that the group had few economic resources.\footnote{It has also been suggested that in 1 Thess 1:6, where Paul writes of the θλιψις of the group as they accepted his message, he is touching on economic distress (see 2 Cor 8:13); however, this is unlikely given that the affliction in the context is connected to imitation of Paul and of the Lord – the point of which would not primarily be found in economic stress.}

Second, there is the rhetoric of the letter with respect to work, both in the use of the example of Paul and his work and in the general positive tone of the letter towards work. In the midst of establishing his \textit{ethos}, Paul highlights his manual labour (1 Thess 2:9)\footnote{“For you remember our labour and toil, brethren; we worked night and day, that we might not burden any of you, while we preached to you the gospel” (1 Thess 2:9). In this portion of the letter, from a rhetorical standpoint, Paul is presenting the \textit{narratio} in ethical and pathetical terms and it is at this point that he stresses the nature of his activity among them (this portion has characteristics of both an \textit{exordium} and \textit{narratio} and so Johanson refers to it as “an integrated \textit{exordium/narratio}” [\textit{To All the Brethren}, 187, see also 159]). Physical work for wages is suggested in the verse, with κόπως and μόρφος evoking physically demanding labour. This is called to the Thessalonians’ remembrance by Paul as he establishes his \textit{ethos}, thus showing that the work was a significant and positive element in his gathering the group. Abraham Smith seeks to reduce the reference to work to a merely a symbol of virtue: “Some ancient writers viewed hard work as a condensation symbol for virtuous toil in the likeness of Hercules. . . . In both 2:9 and 4:11, then, Paul’s self-sufficiency references may well only indicate the virtuous character of Paul or his congregation.” (\textit{Comfort One Another: Reconstructing the Rhetoric and Audience of 1 Thessalonians} [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1995], 38-39; emphasis in original). However, Paul’s call to remembrance and reference to work among the Thessalonians, loses its appeal to virtue if it is not grounded in some element of truth – for otherwise he becomes a self-aggrandizer, a type from whom he has distanced himself in the previous verses.} and he later exhorts them to live in a manner pleasing to God “as you learned from us” (1 Thess 4:1) and to “work with your hands” (1Thess 4:11). Third, there is Paul’s social setting in the workshop and the resulting probability that his contacts would come through occupational ties. These ties may have been with those of the same occupation or with other workers who came into contact with Paul in the workshop.\footnote{Given the localization of trades and if the divisions of the city were neighbourhood based, the emerging group being made up of workers from a single trade would also fit with the emerging group coming from a single division of the city.}

Our group founding model has added weight to current views which highlight the homogenous social make-up of the emerging group (i.e., hand labourers). However, in addition, we
have been able to refine current views – the emphasis of the small group founding model on homogeneity and frame alignment substantially increases the probability that the religious background of the group was a hypsisterian cult.

5.1.2.2.3. Breaking New Ground: The Interaction of Threat, Homogeneity and Group Prototype in Group Coalescence and Later Group Development

Proposition 3: In Pauline groups: a) The presence of strong homogeneity and the presence of stress brought on through threat and conflict: i) provide the background for the development of a group prototype in which Paul’s behaviours and values come to the fore; and also ii) illuminate the subsequent development of the group in which group structure is centralized and group norms and identity are developed deductively. b) However, when levels of homogeneity and threat are low during group formation the nature of the group prototype will be altered and subsequently group structure is decentralized and group norms and identity are inductively developed.

Social Stress and the Group Prototype. In 1 Thess 1:5-6 and 2:13-14\(^94\) we find reference to the suffering of individuals and of the group from the beginning. An assortment of reasons for this distress have been proposed ranging from simple internal disquiet,\(^95\) to political opposition,\(^96\) to over enthusiastic evangelizing by converts,\(^97\) to theological necessity,\(^98\) and to a “shift in social patterning.”\(^99\) This final reason provides an important reminder of the collectivist social and cultural

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\(^95\) This is Malherbe’s view of affliction in 1 Thess 1:5-6 and 2:17. He does see external persecution in 1 Thess 2:13-14. *Paul and the Thessalonians*, 46-47, 65.

\(^96\) Donfried, “The Cults of Thessalonica,” 39. It has been suggested that background for the opposition is found in the laws against associations (see the section on Allowance for and Prohibition of Associations in §3.2.1.5).


\(^99\) Kloppenborg, “Rhetorical Engagement,” 275; see also Lone Fatum, “Brotherhood in Christ: A Gender Hermeneutical Reading of 1 Thessalonians,” in *Constructing Early Christian Families: Family as Social Reality and*
context and, whether or not this reason provides the full picture, it does fit with the intense competition seen in the founding of groups in collectivist cultures and particularly where the founding of the group would have involved the transfer of loyalty from another group. The ongoing rivalry also explains such features in 1 Thessalonians as Paul’s anxiety over the group’s continuing loyalty (1 Thess 3:5) and the outburst by Paul against a group which opposed him personally (1 Thess 2:14-16).\textsuperscript{100}

To the extent that he portrayed the potential group prototype (and as the primary founder he would be seen, to a great extent, as the group prototype), Paul would have been the object of social attraction for those to whom the potential group would be salient.\textsuperscript{101} A social identity would then be formed which measured the self by that group prototype. Tangible evidence of this social attraction would be imitation of the behaviour and beliefs of the group prototype, Paul.\textsuperscript{102} In 1 Thess 1:6 mention is made of imitation by the Thessalonians from the very beginning of their reception of Paul’s message.\textsuperscript{103} In 1 Thess 1:6 the imitation of Paul includes, at the least, joyful perseverance in

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\textsuperscript{100}We are conflating competition and conflict somewhat. At the beginning of a group they may be difficult to distinguish.

\textsuperscript{101}This is a somewhat awkward expression of applying social identity theory to a coalescing group. For those who had accepted Paul’s message (and so who could be expected to view the potential group as salient) Paul would be seen as embodying the behaviours, values, beliefs of the potential group (i.e., he would be seen as embodying the group prototype).


\textsuperscript{102}Here we are dealing with past imitation during group founding and not with Paul’s call for his groups to imitate him. The latter has been examined as either a power play or a pedagogical ploy or something in between (power play: Elizabeth Castelli, Imitating Paul: A Discourse of Power [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1991]; pedagogical ploy: Willis P. de Boer, The Imitation of Paul: An Exegetical Study [Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1962]; in between: Brian Dodd, Paul’s Paradigmatic ‘I’: Personal Example as Literary Strategy [JSNTSup 177; Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1999]).

\textsuperscript{103}1 Thess 2:14, the only other passage treating imitation in the past, deals with the imitation of the groups in Judea by the Thessalonians as a corporate body and so postdates the beginning of the group.
As we have noted, changes in social, political and cultic patterns would have led to social pressure. Lone Fatum provides an overview:

In the urban society of Graeco-Roman Antiquity, defined by publicness and collectivity and organised on the basis of family relations, of trade, craft and neighbourhood associations and memberships of clubs and cultic assemblies, social identity is secured by group adherence, and status is maintained in a vertical pattern of social alliances and public loyalties. In such a society it is indeed a comprehensive and risky project to change one’s faith and way of life; in a literal sense it means a radical change of social identity in order to adjust to a new pattern of adherence and inter-dependence. Old bonds and alliances as well as natural relations break down or must be ignored; new ones have yet to be built, or lack the necessary stability. The converts experience opposition and exclusion (2:14); they are regarded with suspicion by family and friends, and at the same time their confidence in their new adherence may be faltering.

For those individuals who responded to Paul’s message and who, as a result, found themselves under social threat and pressure, Paul’s paradigmatic response to affliction would have served as an attractant, not only as a model for their own behaviour but also as an appealing model of ideal behaviour when oppressed. This depersonalized perception of Paul as a group prototype would have provided a salient shared identity for those undergoing social stress and would have made a significant contribution to coalescence.

The presence of threat during the founding process had far reaching consequences for the Thessalonian group. Not only did it shape the social attraction of the group by impacting a

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104 Andrew D. Clarke argues that it consists of much more, including a lifestyle consistent with Paul’s (and the Lord’s) lifestyle and the promulgation of the message Paul had brought them. (“‘Be Imitators of me’: Paul’s Model of Leadership,” TynBul 49 [1998]: 329-360, here 333-340). See also Michael Martin, “‘Example’ and ‘Imitation’ in the Thessalonian Correspondence,” SwJT 42 (1999): 39-49, here 43, and Burke, Family Matters, 147-148.


107 Malherbe, who also takes Paul’s modeling as more than a didactic technique, broadens this beyond Paul’s example in affliction and, as well, provides analogues from the philosophers (Paul and the Thessalonians, 52-60).
significant element of the prototypicality of Paul (i.e., bringing to the fore his response to affliction) but it also had far reaching consequences for the development of the group.

**Group Development.** “As soon as a group starts acting as a collective, it acquires direction and momentum . . . [they/the group] step collectively into the marsh of possibilities and simply keep going in whatever direction was set by that first step. Dynamically, what seems to be happening is that a very small movement acquires astonishing inertia.”

Small group theorists have noted how initial conditions leave a strong and persistent imprint on the future development of a group. We can see how this plays out for the group in Thessalonica; two features which were present as the group drew together – homogeneity and conflict – and the processes associated with them, furnish prime examples of how attention to group founding can expand the current research on the Thessalonian group.

These two features, homogeneity and the presence of stress brought on through conflict and threat, unleash a variety of effects which persist into the life of the group. Small group research has demonstrated the connection between homogeneity and *closed and reinforcing networks*; while for conflict, research has shown several relevant consequences (even beyond the older, well known results of research on social conflict which emphasized: strengthened cohesiveness through increased salience of the group; the decrease of intergroup ties; and the definition of boundaries): **conflict**

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110 In particular when one examines the differences between the groups founded by Paul in Thessalonica and Corinth.

111 Lewis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: The Free Press, 1956). For Paul’s groups the application of these older results is seen in, for example, Anthony J. Blasi, *Early Christianity as a Social Movement* (Toronto Studies in Religion 5; New York: Peter Lang, 1988), 54 and Barclay, “Conflict in Thessalonica,” 529 n. 61.
brings a centralization of structure, authority and communication for groups,\textsuperscript{112} which, in turn, contributes to a deductive route to the development of group norms and identity.\textsuperscript{113}

Given the significance of conflict theory in sociology and the prominent place of conflict in 1 Thessalonians it is not unexpected that several articles and book length studies have sought to apply sociological theory to this area.\textsuperscript{114} John Barclay in the early 1990's produced several articles dealing with conflict in Thessalonica. In “Thessalonica and Corinth: Social Contrasts in Pauline Christianity” he examined the differences between the Thessalonian group and the Corinthian group noting the contrast in external social conflict experienced by the two groups. He posited that the social conflict experienced in Thessalonica influenced the development of the group and could be correlated with the apocalyptic outlook of the group – social dislocation and apocalyptic symbols reinforcing each another. Barclay took up this theme again in “Conflict in Thessalonica,” elaborating on the correlation between conflict and apocalyptic\textsuperscript{115} and providing a cause for the conflict, the over zealous evangelism by Thessalonian group members. Barclay’s student, Todd Still, expanded the topic in his dissertation published as, 

\textit{Conflict at Thessalonica: A Pauline Church and its}


\textsuperscript{114}\textsuperscript{For example, see Blasi’s chapter “Paul and Christian Controversy” in \textit{Early Christianity as a Social Movement}, 51-81; Barclay, “Thessalonica and Corinth” and “Conflict in Thessalonica”; de Vos, \textit{Church and Community Conflicts}; Still, \textit{Conflict at Thessalonica}. Though not applying sociological theory Donfried does provide a good exegetical overview of persecution in 1 Thess (“The Theology of 1 Thessalonians as a Reflection of Its Purpose,” in \textit{To Touch the Text: Biblical and Related Studies in Honor of Joseph A. Fitzmyer, SJ} [eds. Maurya Horgan and Paul Kobelski; New York: Crossroad, 1989], 243-260).

\textsuperscript{115}\textsuperscript{Social conflict leads to tightening of boundaries which is reflected in the temporal and social dualism displayed in Paul’s apocalyptic presentation. The connection between social conflict and apocalyptic, for Barclay, contrasts with Jewett’s view that links social status and millenarianism. (Barclay, “Thessalonia and Corinth”, 56 and “Conflict in Thessalonica,” 516-520; Jewett, \textit{The Thessalonian Correspondence}).
De Vos even begins his work with a quotation from Barclay’s “Thessalonica and Corinth.” For Still, while Paul’s persecution came from interaction with Jews, the affliction of the Thessalonians was external, gentile opposition from fellow townsfolk. The reason for this opposition was multi-faceted including: 1) on the side of the Thessalonian group members, ideological and social separatism and active proselytism which alienated their compatriots; and 2) from the side of others in Thessalonica, their view of the group as subversive to family, religion and government. The impact of this conflict for the group was strengthened faith, reinforced intragroup ties and heightened eschatological hope. Appearing at the same time was Craig de Vos’s dissertation, *Church and Community Conflicts: The Relationships of the Thessalonian, Corinthian, and Philippian Churches with Their Wider Civic Communities*, which developed another aspect which Barclay had pointed out: the differences in social interaction among Pauline groups. He sought to understand why some Pauline groups experienced conflict with their wider civic community and others did not. Utilizing sociologist H. M. Ross’s culture of conflict theory he examined psychocultural and social-structural factors to determine whether the cities in which Paul began groups were high or low in the propensity for conflict. Of significance in determining this propensity were two factors: 1) Most importantly, the nature of social network ties, whether they were reinforcing, that is, having an overlap of the same individuals in the various networks of an individual, or cross-cutting, having a variety of different individuals in the various social networks; 2) The nature of the politico-legal system, whether hierarchical or egalitarian. In

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116 De Vos even begins his work with a quotation from Barclay’s “Thessalonica and Corinth.”
Thessalonica the reinforcing ties and egalitarianism, combined with a cultural traditionalism, placed the Pauline group in a high conflict situation.

Both Still’s and de Vos’s work provide substantial advances in our understanding of the social situation of the group in Thessalonica (and for de Vos the groups in Corinth and Philippi as well). Yet there are areas for significant improvement on their work which may be extracted from our observations on homogeneity and stress in the proto-group (and the persistence of the effects of these throughout the life of the group). For Still, several areas for additional emphasis should be noted: 1) Still provides a well supported outline of the reasons for the opposition to the Thessalonian group. As a matter of emphasis, however, although the reason for conflict is certainly multi-faceted, as Still clearly shows, the focus for a collectivist culture in which behavioural conformity is accented, should be primarily on relational and behavioural elements over ideological elements. 2) Several details could be added to Still’s portrait. First, a developmental picture of the conflict at Thessalonica would enhance his description. The opposition began before the group even formed (1 Thess 1:6) and developed into not only opposition to individuals but also opposition to the group\(^{118}\) (1 Thess 2:14). The connection between these developmental stages of conflict, as well as, the foundational importance (for subsequent development) of the opposition encountered before the group began, are not addressed by Still. In addition, though Still does make use of sociological theory while addressing the impact of conflict on the group (the impact being conveniently

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\(^{118}\)One tool used to oppose the group may have been the application of laws against associations. However, Arnaoutoglou’s cautions on applying a blanket prohibition on associations to the situation need to be heeded (Ilias N. Arnaoutoglou, “Roman Law and collegia in Asia Minor,” Revue Internationale des droits de l’Antiquité 49 (2002): 27-44). In Thessalonica there were associations which were operating (for example, see IG X/2.1 70, 255, 259; SEG 42:625). What disturbed the authorities was the potential for unrest from a group – with this in mind, unevenly employed sanctions on associations could have been used by those in opposition to the Pauline group to apply political/legal pressure. See also Justin K. Hardin, “Decrees and Drachmas at Thessalonica: An Illegal Assembly in Jason's House (Acts 17.1–10a),” JTS 52 (2006): 29-49.
characterized as increased faith, love and hope), recent social-psychological findings would add further depth to his conclusions. The discovery that conflict, through the centralization of communication, can contribute to deductive routes for norm formation and group identity formation provides a clearer picture of what happened in Thessalonica and accords well with the affirmative tone of 1 Thessalonians. Under the stress of conflict the emerging group, during its founding phase, deductively adopted Paul’s social identity (Paul as prototype), which had been propagated through both his speech and prototypical behaviour. When this is combined with the well-attested phenomenon of group polarization in which groups tend to move towards extremes\textsuperscript{119} the reason for the nuance of Paul’s approach in 1 Thessalonians becomes clearer as he on the whole positively supports the group\textsuperscript{120} and yet at points must curb excesses (which in fact are over-extensions of his own teaching and behaviour) such as the overenthusiastic interaction with their out-group (1 Thess 4:11-12).\textsuperscript{121}

De Vos approaches the origin of conflict in Thessalonica with a macro-level sociological model which attempts to place the conflict encountered by individuals and the group in a city-wide social context. In doing this he overstates his findings. For example, in order to embed the Thessalonian group in a civic environment characterized by reinforcing relational ties he must downplay both patron/client relationships and ethnic diversity/interaction in Thessalonica,\textsuperscript{122} both of which would have contributed to cross-cutting ties. As he notes the latter claim (downplaying

\textsuperscript{119}From a Social Identity Theory standpoint this is the construction of a more extreme ideal prototype toward which average group members move. On group polarization see Susan T. Fiske, \textit{Social Beings: Core Motives in Social Psychology} (Hoboken, New Jersey: John Wiley and Sons, 2004), 495-496.


\textsuperscript{121}Barclay, “Conflict in Thessalonica”; Still, \textit{Conflict at Thessalonica}, 245-250.

\textsuperscript{122}\textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 129-138
ethnic diversity) is very tentative\textsuperscript{123} and the former (downplaying patron/client relationships) is contested.\textsuperscript{124} Yet there is no compelling reason to stress these factors in order to prove his point of reinforcing relational ties – what does help is the local level phenomenon of the homogeneity of the group, a point which eventually he must fall back on: “In other words, the church was socially very homogenous. Therefore, relational ties at Thessalonica, and especially those involving the Thessalonian Christians, were strongly reinforcing.”\textsuperscript{125} Hence, the additional evidence we have noted for pressures toward homogeneity as the group formed\textsuperscript{126} taken with the evidence of the letter itself provide enough support for the claim of reinforcing ties. In addition, de Vos proposes that conflict would arise over particular norms, values and beliefs of the community, especially those related to civic concerns of residency and citizenship.\textsuperscript{127} Though this may be true – de Vos does not provide substantial justification for this claim – again it should be noted that on the whole for collectivist cultures the emphasis must be on the relational and behavioural elements of the norms and values.

\textbf{Summary.} Attention to the interplay of homogeneity and conflict in the formation of the group provides clear insight into how Paul as group prototype was viewed (adding clarity to readings of 1 Thess 1: 5-6) and how the group developed with centralized authority and communication and

\textsuperscript{123}\textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 136.


\textsuperscript{125}\textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 296. Note also that at the cultural level he points out the predominance of reinforcing ties in Mediterranean cultures (\textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 22).

\textsuperscript{126}Networks would be expected to arise along ascribed ethnic, kinship and religious lines, or along lines originating in behavioural situations; trusted alters would be preferred over strangers in group formation; the bridging of frames among those with similar ideologies would be expected.

\textsuperscript{127}\textit{Church and Community Conflicts}, 117.
with deductive processes for norm and group identity formation (providing understanding of the tone of the letter and filling out the picture of the group’s development\textsuperscript{128}).

As we turn to the Corinthian group the three propositions provided in this section will also furnish further clarity to the founding of the group in Corinth, especially, when compared to the group founding in Thessalonica.

5.2. Corinth Case Study

5.2.1 Corinth: Introduction

City and People. Occupying a strategic position between two seas Corinth became a thriving commercial and political centre. In the assimilation of the Achaean League, the Roman general Lucius Mummius conquered and, according to ancient literary sources,\textsuperscript{129} totally destroyed the city in 146 BCE. While this destruction was not absolute – there is evidence of ongoing occupation\textsuperscript{130} – it did wipe out the defensive capabilities and eliminated the political structures. Over one hundred years later, in response to migration pressures arising from an extended period of civil unrest, Julius Caesar instituted a colonization program in the provinces\textsuperscript{131} including the refounding of Corinth in

\textsuperscript{128}We could trace in a similar fashion the effects of homogeneity and conflict during the founding of the group on other topics of current interest. For example, a number of monographs have been written on Paul’s leadership, authority, power and imitation. It is clear that recognizing that the stress of conflict during the formation of a group centralizes authority, structure and communication for the group and so also leads to deductive processes for norm and group identity formation, has obvious implications for how one views Paul’s leadership and his exercise of authority.

\textsuperscript{129}Pausanias, \textit{Descr.} 2.1.2; 7.14.1-7.16.10; Polybius 38.9.1-38.18.12, 39.2.6; Diodorus Siculus 32.26.1-6; Livy, \textit{Per.} 52; Strabo, \textit{Geogr.} 8.6.23.


\textsuperscript{131}Suetonius, \textit{Jul.} 38.1
44 BCE. The town was laid out afresh along Roman city lines and with Roman architectural design. As with Thessalonica and other ancient cities, the new physical layout and subsequent development included both publicness and localization of trades.

At the founding of the colony the Italian, Latin-speaking colonists placed a Roman imprint on the city which continued into the first century CE. Bruce Winter has produced a wide range of evidence for his conclusion concerning first century CE Corinth: “In conclusion, whether rich or poor, bond or free, the cultural milieu which impacted life in the city of Corinth was Romanitas. This does not mean that there were no ethnic minorities, but it does mean that the dominant and transforming cultural influence was Roman.” However, the city was not cut off from its Greek past or Greek surroundings. A combination of factors, including trade, migration, assimilation, and high urban death rates, would have provided room for a growing Greek presence within the city. Thus, although Corinth was a Roman colony and not a Greek city, Winter’s evidence needs to be refined by a greater recognition of a Greek backdrop.

In the first century CE Corinth was the largest city in Greece and an important trading centre. As such it not only attracted traders and tourists, but also became a cultural centre, “boasting at least three schools of sculpture, and many resident rhetoricians, philosophers, and other educators.”

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134 Robert Dutch provides nuance to Winter’s finding by showing, for example, even in the numismatic material with Latin inscriptions there were Greek subjects portrayed. He concludes: “To sum up, I agree that Corinth is a Roman colony, not a Greek city, and agree with Winter that its dominant culture is Roman. Nevertheless, I have shown that Roman Corinth was not in total isolation from its Greek past. Moreover, Roman Corinth, in the Greek East, was not in total isolation from its surrounding Greek culture” (Dutch, *The Educated Elite in 1 Corinthians*, 45-56, here 56). Winter does note the interest in the Greek language by the Romans and that the multi-cultural character of Corinth would have meant that only some spoke Latin. The Corinthian congregation spoke the *lingua franca* of the Roman empire, Greek. *After Paul Left Corinth*, 24-25.

contrast to Thessalonica, there is considerable evidence which attests to the diversity of religious traditions.\textsuperscript{136} Greek deities, such as Aphrodite and Apollo, had temples in the west of the forum. A statue of Athena stood at the centre of the forum. Egyptian gods, Isis and Sarapis, were mentioned in inscriptions\textsuperscript{137} and Artemis of Ephesos had a shrine. Dominating the west end of the forum was a Roman temple dedicated to the imperial cult\textsuperscript{138} and numerous monuments and inscriptions honoured the emperors.

As we have noted for Thessalonica, although the coalescing group founded by Paul may well have included some from the dominant religious streams, it is most likely that many of the initial contacts would come from religious traditions similar to Paul’s Jewish background. A fragmentary, poorly carved inscription mentions “Synagogue of Hebrews” (\textit{IKorinthMerit} 111 [Corinth; first to fourth century CE]) but it was not found \textit{in situ} and is difficult to date. There are also a number of undated fragments with possible Hebrew lettering or Jewish symbols.\textsuperscript{139} In spite of the uncertainty with the inscriptions, given that Philo mentions Corinth as a location of the Jewish diaspora (\textit{Legat.} 281), it is not unreasonable to assume that a Jewish community existed in Corinth at the time of Paul’s visit. As well, there was a hypsistarian presence in the city – Pausanias notes that in the forum “the images of Zeus also are in the open; one had not a surname, another they call Chthonius

\begin{enumerate}
\item See Jospeh A. Fitzmyer, \textit{First Corinthians} (Anchor Yale Bible 32; New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 26-28, 33-34.
\item See Dennis Edwin Smith, “The Egyptian Cults at Corinth,” \textit{HTR} 70 (1977): 201-231, here 217-218. There are also statues of Sarapis and Pausanias mentions several precincts of Isis and of Sarapis (\textit{Descr.} 2.4.6).
\item The date of the introduction of the imperial cult may be after the time of Paul’s visit (Fitzmyer, \textit{First Corinthians}, 33). On the debate concerning the identity of Temple E see John K. Chow, “Patronage in Roman Corinth,” in \textit{Paul and Empire: Religion and Power in Roman Imperial Society} (ed. Richard A. Horsley; Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 1997), 104-125, here 107 n. 13.
\item See Levinskaya’s discussion (\textit{The Book of Acts}, 165-166).
\end{enumerate}
While Theissen may have provided the first intentionally sociological analysis of the social stratification of the Corinthian group, the view of Corinthians as a socially heterogeneous group pre-dates even Deissmann’s social devaluation of early Christians. See, for example, Georg Heinrici, “Zur Geschichte der Anfänge paulinischer Gemeinden,” *ZWT* 20 (1877): 89-130, here 103-104. See also Meeks’ chapter on the social level of early Christians (*The First Urban Christians*, 51-73) – Meeks, however, relies too heavily on the Corinthian group for a picture of all Pauline groups and does not take into account the likelihood of local differences.


See for example, Gordon D. Fee, *The First Epistle to the Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1987), 6. Furnish notes the conflict between the group and Paul in this way: “Even though Paul was the first to preach the gospel in Corinth, once a congregation had been founded there it seems to have taken on a life of its own. . . . Judging from 1 Corinthians, he [Paul] was having to contend with understandings of life that were in certain essential respects at odds with the gospel he preached. (Victor Paul Furnish, *The Theology of the First Letter to the Corinthians* [Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999], 9-10, 11).

### 5.2.2. Corinth: Group Founding Texts and Application of the Group Founding Model

The three propositions used in our examination of the group in Thessalonica will serve to organize our overview of 1 Corinthians and group formation. We will move beyond how our model informs the reading of certain texts in 1 Corinthians to how it can help to explain fundamental observations about the group in Corinth. Among these observations which our model explains are the following: the heterogeneity of the group (in particular, the social stratification of the group is often noted); the social harmony surrounding the group (this is related to what is sometimes noted as the ‘compromise’ of the group with its embedding society); the contrast of the group’s beliefs and norms with those of its founder Paul (which gives rise to the proposal that the underlying situation of the letter was conflict between the group and its founder); and the factionalism within
the group and yet the maintenance of a group identity.\textsuperscript{143} Each of these observations can be linked to the founding of the group.

**Group Founding Texts.** Looking back to the founding of the group, the Corinthian letters were more distant temporally and more overshadowed by intervening events\textsuperscript{144} than the Thessalonian correspondence. We do find though a number of passing references to Paul’s visit to Corinth and the founding of the group: 1 Cor 1:14-17; 2:1-5; 3:5-10; 4:14-15; 16:15 (see also 1 Cor 1:21-24; 4:11-13; 9:1-2 and 2 Cor 11:7-11; 12:11-13). We will briefly examine the significant texts with an eye to elements of the group founding.

5.2.2.1. 1 Corinthians: Group Founding Texts

**1 Corinthians 1:14-17**

\textsuperscript{14} εὐχαριστῶ [τῷ θεῷ] ὅτι οὐδένα ὑμῶν ἐβάπτισα εἰ μὴ Κρίσπον καὶ Γαίον, 15 ἵνα μὴ τις εἰπή ὅτι εἰς τὸ ἐμὸν ὄνομα ἐβαπτίσθητε. 16 ἐβάπτισα δὲ καὶ τὸν Στεφανᾶ οἶκον, λοιπὸν σὺν οἴδα εἰ τινὰ ἄλλον ἐβάπτισα. 17 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλέν με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν ἄλλα εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, σὺν ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγῳ, ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ οἱ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ.

Also 1 Corinthians 16:15

15 Παρακαλῶ δὲ ὑμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ὀσεθατε τὴν οἰκίαν Στεφανᾶ, ὅτι ἐστὶν ἀπαρχὴ τῆς Ἀχαΐας καὶ εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἔταξαν ἑαυτούς:

\textsuperscript{143}In dealing with the factionalism combined with robust group identity, some take the lack of mention of the factions beyond 1 Cor 1-4 as indication of no factionalism (see especially Johannes Munck, *Paul and the Salvation of Mankind* [Richmond: John Knox Press, 1959], 135-167; see also Fee, *I Corinthians*, 59 and Raymond F. Collins, *First Corinthians*, [SP 7; Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1999], 73). Most commentators maintain some level of factionalism. The divisions within the group did not necessarily lead to separate parties, but at least the divisions led to divided opinions and loyalties with respect to group leaders.

\textsuperscript{144}Barclay, when looking at Paul’s founding message in Corinth, notes: “1 Corinthians is so intensively focused on developments in the church since its foundation that Paul’s pristine preaching and church instruction is no longer in the foreground” (“Thessalonica and Corinth,” 56). This is not only true for Paul’s communication but also for the actions and interactions involved in the founding of the group.
Context. In 1 Cor 1:10-17 Paul begins the body of the letter with an initial exhortation, arising in response to reports of divisions and quarrels. The slogans of 1:12, “I follow Paul,” “I follow Apollos,” and so on, whether actual party slogans or caricatures created by Paul, demonstrate the reality of divided loyalties among the group and as such the likelihood of multiple group prototypes. Paul’s rhetorical response in 1:13 aims at pointing out the absurdity of their divisions, culminating with, ἡ ἐν τῇ ὀνομᾷ Παῦλου ἐβαπτίσθητε; With the mention of baptism Paul digresses for a few sentences to distance himself from the administration of the ritual. In 1:14-17 it appears that Paul is seeking to put the rite into a proper perspective with respect to the communication of the good news. Within this context, both the distancing from administering baptism and the placing of baptism in a proper perspective, implicitly indicate that Paul saw some connection between baptism and the divisions in Corinth.

1 Corinthians 1:14-17 [and 16:15]. Concerning the founding of the group, we find some basic information in this passage about: 1) the individuals and households who formed the nucleus of the coalescing group; and 2) Paul’s emphasis on communication and frame alignment for group formation. Given Paul’s reticence to baptize it seems likely that he would baptize initial converts and then would have them (or co-workers) baptize further joiners. Thus Gaius, Crispus and the

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Footnotes:

143 Following the apparent reading of μὴ should be read at the start of the first question, thus providing a parallel with the second question. The deletion of μὴ arose from the contraction of the three syllables beginning with μ.

146 Paul is drawing on one of the cognitive elements of coalescence, i.e., categorization: As the group formed the conversion ritual of baptism would have served to provide a common label for the potential group members – they would be the ones “baptized in the name of the Christ” (1 Cor 1:13; 6:11). Paul uses this in 1 Corinthians to promote unity in the group (here in 1:13 and also in 12:13).

147 Fee, 1 Corinthians, 62

148 Paul baptizing only initial converts accords best with 1 Cor 1:16 and 16:15.

There has been much discussion on infant baptism and this passage (and in particular, the use of οἰκος versus οἰκία) (see Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 62 n.72). For our concerns, what is relevant is that households (with or without infants!) were significant elements of the networks which were integrated into the group as it formed. Chester points out the significance of the commendation of the household and not solely Stephanas in this passage (Stephen J. Chester, *Conversion at Corinth: Perspectives on Conversion in Paul’s Theology and the Corinthian Church* (London: T&T Clark, 2003), 242-243.

Paul writes of the household of Stephanas as being “the firstfruits of Achaia” (1 Cor 16:15). If Paul was thinking along the same lines as Rom 15:16, where he portrays his work among gentiles in cultic terms, he may be thinking of the firstfruits as part of that *gentile* offering.

See Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 62 and Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 69-119. It has been suggested by many that Gaius is the Titius Justus mentioned in Acts 18:7 (F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* [NCB; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1980], 34) and even that Gaius may be equated with Stephanas (Richard G. Fellows, “Renaming in Paul’s Churches: The Case of Crispus-Sosthenes Revisited,” *TynBul* 56 [2005]: 111-130, here 128-130). What may be assumed is that, if Gaius in 1 Cor 1:14, is the same as the Gaius in Rom 16:23, then he had adequate household resources to host both Paul and the group(s).

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1 Corinthians 2:1-5

1 Κάγω ἐλθὼν πρὸς οὐμᾶς, ἀδελφοί, ἤλθον οὐ καθ’ ὑπεροχὴν λόγου ἢ σοφίᾳ καταγεγέλλων ὑμῖν τὸ μυστήριον τοῦ θεοῦ. 2 οὐ γὰρ ἐκρινά τι εἰδέναι ἐν ὑμῖν εἰ μὴ Ἰσσοῦν Χριστὸν καὶ τοῦτον ἑσταυρωμένον. 3 κάγω ἐν ἁσθενείᾳ καὶ ἐν φόβῳ καὶ ἐν τρόμῳ πολλῷ ἐγενόμην πρὸς ὑμᾶς. 4 καὶ ὁ λόγος μου καὶ τὸ κήρυγμα μου οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς σοφίᾳ ἐν λόγοις ἀλλ’ ἐν ἀποδείξει πνεύματος καὶ δυνάμεως. 5 ἵνα ἡ πίστις ὑμῶν μὴ ἤ ἐν σοφίᾳ ἀνθρώπων ἀλλ’ ἐν δυνάμει θεοῦ.

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150 There has been much discussion on infant baptism and this passage (and in particular, the use of οἶκος versus οἰκία) (see Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 62 n.72). For our concerns, what is relevant is that households (with or without infants!) were significant elements of the networks which were integrated into the group as it formed.

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153 See Fee, *1 Corinthians*, 62 and Gerd Theissen, *The Social Setting of Pauline Christianity: Essays on Corinth* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1982), 69-119. It has been suggested by many that Gaius is the Titius Justus mentioned in Acts 18:7 (F.F. Bruce, *1 and 2 Corinthians* [NCB; Grand Rapids: Wm. Eerdmans, 1980], 34) and even that Gaius may be equated with Stephanas (Richard G. Fellows, “Renaming in Paul’s Churches: The Case of Crispus-Sosthenes Revisited,” *TynBul* 56 [2005]: 111-130, here 128-130). What may be assumed is that, if Gaius in 1 Cor 1:14, is the same as the Gaius in Rom 16:23, then he had adequate household resources to host both Paul and the group(s).
**Context.** In the last section of 1 Cor 1 Paul elaborates on the content of his communication to the Corinthians by contrasting his message of the cross\(^{154}\) with human wisdom. In the initial paragraph of 1 Cor 2 Paul moves from the wisdom-cross contrast exemplified in the current sociological makeup of the Corinthian group (1 Cor 1:26-31) to the wisdom-cross contrast seen in his own initial coming to them.

**1 Corinthians 2:1-5.** In 1 Cor 2:1-5 Paul contrasts his speech and message when he came to Corinth with “lofty words or wisdom,” and “plausible words of wisdom.” Johannes Munck suggested that Paul was reacting to sophists in this passage (with wisdom in 1 Cor 1 being equated to sophistic conventions) and noted the parallel to Philo’s condemnation of empty sophistry.\(^{155}\) Winter has taken up this view and provided further evidence for an anti-sophistic ‘coming’ by Paul.\(^{156}\) He notes the sophistic conventions for entry into a city, the similarity to Dio Chrysostom’s apologetic rejection of rhetorical eloquence in *Or. 47*, and the collection of distinctly rhetorical terms and allusions in the passage. Although the extensive use of rhetoric in this passage is denied by some,\(^{157}\) Winter has provided ample evidence for the claim that the *perception* of Paul’s entrance into Corinth was of importance for both the group and Paul. Paul viewed his manner of ‘coming’ to Corinth as *not using the forms* of a certain type of communicator. As in Thessalonica, what Paul did not deny was the intent to persuade or to teach in the initial phase of his ‘coming’ – in this regard

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\(^{154}\)Paul expands on the content of his message in 1 Cor 15:3-11 with additional stress on the resurrection and post-resurrection appearances (thus highlighting his apostleship).


the founding of the group should be seen as a school-like founding. And, as in Thessalonica, Paul rejected the reputation-inflating conventions of sophists and concentrated, rather, on communication in the household and workshop.

1 Corinthians 3:5-10

5 τι οὖν ἐστιν Ἅπόλλων; τι δὲ ἐστιν Παύλος; διάκονοι δὲ ὃν ἐπιστεύσατε, καὶ ἐκαστῷ ως ὁ κύριος ἔδωκεν. 6 ἐγὼ ἐφύτευσα, Ἅπόλλως ἐπότισεν, ἀλλὰ ὁ θεὸς ἠξίωσεν. 7 ὡστε οὗτο ὁ φυτεύων ἐστίν τι οὗτο ὁ ποτίζων ἀλλ’ ὁ αὐξάνων θεὸς. 8 ὁ φυτεύων δὲ καὶ ὁ ποτίζων ἐν εἰσίν, ἐκαστὸς δὲ τὸν ἰδίον μισθὸν λήμματος κατὰ τὸν ἰδίον κόπον. 9 θεοῦ γὰρ ἐσμέν συνεργοὶ, θεοῦ γεώργιοι, θεοῦ οἰκοδομὴ ἐστε. 10 Κατὰ τὴν χάριν τοῦ θεοῦ τὴν δοθεῖσάν μοι ως σοφὸς ἀρχιτέκτων θεμέλιον ἐθηκα, ἀλλὰς δὲ ἐποικοδομεῖ. ἐκαστὸς δὲ βλεπέτω πῶς ἐποικοδομεῖ.

Also 1 Corinthians 4:14-15

14 Οὐκ ἐντρέποντας ἴματς γράφω ταῦτα ἀλλ’ ως τέκνα μου ἀγαπητα νοθετῶν. 15 εἰάν γὰρ μυρίους παιδαγωγοὺς ἔχητε ἐν Χριστῷ ἀλλ’ οἱ πολλοὺς πατέρας ἐν γὰρ Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ διὰ τοῦ εὐαγγελίου ἐγὼ ἴματι ἐγέννησα.

Context. In 1 Cor 3:1-5 Paul returns to the slogans of 1 Cor 1:12, declaring that they illustrate the immaturity of the Corinthians. Paul cleverly plays on the meaning of σάρκινος in 1 Cor 3:1: meaning fleshly in contrast to πνευματικός earlier in the sentence, but also referencing fleshy, corpulent, an attribute of infants fed on milk, which is put off as they mature.158 The contrast of infant-milk and mature-solid food is found in antiquity in the context of teaching as an image of the contrast seen in the progression of understanding from elementary truths to deeper knowledge.159

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158“Nay, I would urge teachers too like nurses to be careful to provide softer food for still undeveloped minds and to suffer them to take their fill of the milk of the more attractive studies. For the time being the body may be somewhat plump [fleshy], but maturer years will reduce it to a sparer habit.” (Quintilian, Inst. 2.4.5 [Butler, LCL])

Note Paul’s shift in vocabulary in the following verses to σάρκικος, a word which would not have fit the double meaning in the first verse but which fits well with the remainder of the argument.

159Quintilian, Inst. 2.4.5 (see previous note); Epictetus, Diatr. 2.16.39; Philo, Agr. 9.
Here Paul pictures himself as the one giving the initial nourishment to the Corinthians – initiating their progress in understanding. Whether this correlates with the founding of the group or the initial teaching within the group after it coalesced is too fine a distinction for the metaphor. What is seen is the importance for Paul of verbal communication and frame alignment in the early stage of group life. In 1 Cor 3:5-6 Paul shifts to another common metaphor taken from agriculture, planting seedlings or root stock.

**1 Corinthians 3:5-10 [and 4:14-15].** As Paul seeks to reorientate the Corinthians’ view of those around whom the slogans revolve, he emphasizes that both Apollos and he are servants of God. As fellow workers for God they, however, had different roles: Paul planted the vines/trees and Apollos irrigated the plants. Yet, since neither planting nor watering provide the vital factor, it was God’s working, giving growth, that was, and is, the most significant element. The unexpressed implication was that their divided loyalties, as seen in the slogans, were misguided – since all revolves around God, as master of the servants, as giver of growth, and as owner of the vineyard/orchard, undivided loyalty to God should trump the divisions created by following God’s workers.

Agricultural metaphors were common in ancient rhetoric and instruction and, in particular, the images of a farmer sowing, planting, cultivating and reaping were used in relation to the teacher and instruction. Paul, working with the same metaphor, does not touch directly on the founding

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160φυτεύω indicates the planting of seedlings or root stock and when taken with γενέω, which may refer to an orchard or vineyard (and whose cognate in the NT most often refers to a vineyard), indicates the planting of vines or trees. In 1 Cor 9:7 the verb specifically refers to the planting of a vineyard.


162For example: Plato, *Phaedr.* 276b; Quintilian, *Instr.* 1.3.4-5, 10.3.2; Ps.-Plutarch 4c; Libanius, *Or.* 13.52, 18.12-15. See Teresa Morgan, *Literate Education in the Hellenistic and Roman Worlds* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 255-259; Raffaella Cribiore, *The School of Libanius in Late Antique Antioch* (Princeton:
of the group[163] but rather indicates that individuals who responded to his message (planted) and were subsequently taught by Apollos (watered) now together form a group (orchard/vineyard) which belongs to God.

This thought is taken up in the subsequent metaphor. Building on a foundation served as a metaphor for the giving of instruction based on an elementary teaching or on a receptive nature.[164] Paul views his contribution to the lives of the individuals in the Corinthian group to be the laying of the foundation of Jesus Christ (as he has already made clear in 1 Cor 1:17 and 2:2). Thus with reference to the founding of the group, Paul regarded his role as being a communicator of a message about Jesus Christ around which he felt the coalescing of the group should focus.

Reflecting a similar view of his role in the founding of the group, Paul, in 1 Cor 4:15, takes up an additional common metaphor applied to teaching and instruction. Teachers were often described as fathers and fathers as teachers.[165] Paul clearly draws this reference to being a father to the Corinthians into the realm of instruction by the comparison to μυρίος παιδαγωγός. In the same way that a teacher could become a father to their students by planting in them the seed of instruction,[166] so too Paul became a father to individuals in the Corinthian group through the communication of the good news.

Princeton University Press, 2007), 141-147. In the NT one also finds similar imagery equating sowing and planting with teaching: Mark 4:1-20 (Mt 13:1-23; Lk 8:4-15).


[164] Philo, Somn. 2.8, Gig. 30, Mut. 211; see also Epictetus, Diatr. 2.15.8
The similarity of the application of the Paul’s two metaphors (agricultural and architectural) to instructional contexts provides the coherence in the text in spite of the seemingly sudden switch in metaphor.


[166] See Cribiore, The School of Libanius, 141-142.
5.2.2.2. Corinth: Application of the Group Founding Model

As we did with 1 Thessalonians we will apply our group model in three areas: 1) the multi-modality of frame alignment and coalescence; 2) group composition; and 3) the interaction of homogeneity, threat and group prototype in group coalescence and later group development. In the last two areas in particular we will see that significant differences between the Thessalonian and the Corinthian group arose out of factors found in their formation.

5.2.2.2.1. Reinforcement of a Current View: The Multi-Modality of Frame Alignment and Coalescence

Proposition 1: a) In contrast to perspectives which focus solely on verbal communication in Pauline group founding, the founding of Pauline groups must be seen as a function of cognitive, behavioural and affective elements (with even the cognitive element, when viewed from the perspective of frame theory, stressing more than verbal communication). b) However, in contrast to an overemphasis on a common affective bond in group founding, it must be recognized that there was relatively weak affective coalescence for Pauline groups.

Though Paul focuses on verbal communication there is evidence of the multi-modality of frame alignment and coalescence in the group formation.

Frame Alignment. Paul, as he did in 1 Thessalonians, depicts frame alignment as a significant element of his activity (1 Cor 1:17, 21-24; 2:1-5; 4:15; 15:1-11), though he also includes significant allusions to frame extension or frame transformation (1 Cor 9:19-23). This frame alignment moves beyond simple verbal presentation: 1) Actions accorded with words: Though Paul in 1 Cor is not as explicit as in 1 Thess concerning consistency between words and actions, it is clear that a similar anti-sophistic view and with it a similar rejection of word and action inconsistency stands behind 1 Cor 2:1-5; 2) Ritual enacted the message: Frame alignment would not only have
included verbal presentations but also would have involved the enacted message exhibited in the one ritual evidenced in the proto-group, baptism (1 Cor 1:14-16).167

Several important factors are to be drawn from the nature of frame alignment which shape the resulting Corinthian group. First, even though Paul acknowledges the significant hurdles Jews would have to overcome to be persuaded by his message (1 Cor 1:23-24), Jews and worshippers of the Most High God would still require the least realignment of frames and so the earliest recruits would have been drawn from among them. As we will see the implied readership of the letter is non-Jewish and so, though not negating the possibility of early Jewish members in the group, it does suggest that the significant element for the later development of the group were hypsisterian worshippers. Second, given that households were drawn into the forming group, there would have been individuals within the household whose primary force of coalescence would not have been cognitive and so a greater heterogeneity of religious/ethnic background than in Thessalonica would have been present. Third, in addition, and in contrast to the development of the group in Thessalonica, although Paul depicts frame alignment as an important part of his activity, the portrayal of the later group indicates significant areas in which the members have not fully retained the frames Paul had promoted – after formation the group inductively developed its own frames.168

**Multi-Modality of Coalescence.** The passing references in 1 Cor to the founding of the group focus on cognitive coalescence, particularly frame alignment. We do find, however, indications of a broader base for the coalescence of the group, though, as in Thessalonica, the affective element is not as significant as other elements.

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167 As Horrell states, “Many of the central ideas of the Pauline gospel, then, would have been passed on to the Corinthians, symbolised and enacted, in the context of baptism” (David G. Horrell, *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence: Interests and Ideology from 1 Corinthians to 1 Clement* [Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1996], 86).

168 See below, §5.2.2.2.3.
**Behavioural Coalescence.** As in Thessalonica, interdependent behaviour would have arisen out of the mutual action arising from common ethical, ecstatic and ritual behaviour. While 1 Cor reveals much about the ethical, ecstatic and ritual behaviour of the group after its founding (though perhaps not as much as assumed by some\(^ {169} \)), the situation before the group began is not as clear. We do however have the following behaviour elements in the proto-group: the adoption of the behaviours of the nascent group’s prototype(s) (though this would be modified later as the group inductively constructed its norms); some ecstatic behaviour (hinted at in Paul’s mention of his message coming “in demonstration of the Spirit and power” [1 Cor 2:4]); and the ritual of baptism (1 Cor 1:14-16). In Corinth, in contrast to Thessalonica, we encounter a coalescing group that experienced little external stress or threat.\(^ {170} \) Thus, in that threat fosters interdependence, there would not have been the same impetus for cohesion from behavioural coalescence as there was in Thessalonica. Nevertheless, there would have been a high level of interdependence within households (due to their very nature\(^ {171} \)), so this weaker cohesion (in comparison to the Thessalonian group) would have been seen most clearly in weaker ties between households or between individuals not within the same household. In addition, the lack of threat would have resulted in more decentralized communication and a more inductive route to group identity. All of these factors may have contributed to fault lines within the beginning group which later contributed to the intragroup conflict we see in 1 Corinthians.

In addition, there were those whose coalescent behaviour did not arise out of direct interaction with Paul and his co-workers or even in response to his message. There were households

\(^{169}\) For example, Meeks overextends the evidence for ritual in the group (*The First Urban Christians*, 142-150). See Horrell, *The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence*, 80-88.

\(^{170}\) See below, §5.2.2.2.3.

\(^{171}\) The functioning of a household necessitating interdependent behaviour.
in Corinth which as collectivities were the earliest adopters of Paul’s message. Yet for some (many?) individuals within these households the strongest factor of coalescence into a Pauline group would have been participation in the coordinated action needed to maintain a functioning household with a householder who has adopted a new perspective.\textsuperscript{172}

\textit{Affective Coalescence.} The material in the Corinthian correspondence pertaining to the beginning of the group is minimal and so it is not surprising that there is no explicit indication of an affective component in the coalescence of the group. There may be some hints, though, of Paul’s affection for them. Paul does speak of the Corinthians as his “beloved children” in the context of his fathering them “in Jesus Christ through the gospel” (1 Cor 4:14-15) and expresses his love for the group in the context of not receiving support from them (2 Cor 11:7-11). Both of these instances may refer back to the beginning of the group. However, in 1 Corinthians the possibility of earlier emotional attachment between group members was overshadowed by the present divisions in the group and so Paul urged them to love one another (1 Cor 13). The weak interdependence (related to lack of threat and to the multiple households) would also suggest that the opportunities to develop affective attachments during the pre-affiliation period of group formation would have been reduced. Overall, as in Thessalonica, even though there is little evidence for a strong affective component in the coalescence of the group, it is probable that it did play some part, though of lesser importance than other factors of coalescence.

\textsuperscript{172}For example, the preparation for and participation in newly introduced household rituals, or the preparation for receiving guests such as Paul.
5.2.2.2. Expanding Existing Views: Group Composition

Proposition 2: a) Given the extremely strong pressures for homogeneity in a collectivist culture, it should be assumed that Pauline groups at their founding were socially and religiously/ethnically homogeneous. In addition, the frame of (nascent) group members would have been congruent to Paul’s. b) If a Pauline group is evidently a heterogenous group, then it should be assumed that it developed from the integration of a heterogenous network(s) (e.g., a socially stratified household) into the forming group.

In contrast to the situation in Thessalonica, we have in Corinth a group founding which exhibits the latter section of proposition two: a heterogeneous group arising from heterogenous networks (stratified households).

**Heterogeneity of the Group.** Given the strong impetus to homogeneity in the formation of interactive groups in a collectivist culture, the social heterogeneity of the Corinthian group needs an explanation for its origin. If the group were to have emerged from the integration of socially differing individuals or to have evolved through the transformation of a homogenous group, the strong homogenizing pressures in a collectivist culture would have in the former case forestalled coalescence into a group and in the latter case maintained the homogeneity of the original group. How then would the heterogenous group have arisen? The most likely seed from which a developed heterogenous group would have grown is an already heterogenous unit such as the household – a household would have provided the context for the development of social connections into a variety of strata within the city as the varied individuals within the household strengthened ties with their own relatively homogeneous personal networks and also as additional stratified households joined.

The nature of the heterogeneity of the proto-group may be fleshed out to some extent by examining the social context of Paul’s ministry and social composition of the resulting group.
Social Context of Paul’s Activity. The letters to the Corinthians have an implied readership of non-Jews.\textsuperscript{173} Several texts address them as idolaters (1 Cor 6:9-11; 8:7; 12:2) and, although diaspora Jews may well have been integrated into their surroundings, the discussions of food offered to idols (1 Cor 8), of legal proceedings (1 Cor 6:1-8), and of the sex trade (1 Cor 6:12-20) fit best with non-Jews. This does not rule out Jews within the Corinthian group\textsuperscript{174} or even Jews within the coalescing group, but it does suggest that the dominant make-up of the coalescing group was non-Jewish and thus, as in Thessalonica, that the synagogue did not play a lasting or significant role in the founding of the group.

After the group began Paul did not receive support from the group or even individuals within the group (1 Cor 9:1-18; 2 Cor 11:7; 12:13-18)\textsuperscript{175} and he indicates that his practice at the time of writing was to engage in hand labour (1 Cor 4:12). Apparently from the beginning he worked at his craft\textsuperscript{176} and so, as in Thessalonica, the workshop may have served as a setting for his group founding activity. His initial connections within the artisan community would have been a combination of ethnic and occupational links.

In contrast to Thessalonica, we find that Paul had connections with households from before the group came together. We see that the first (non-Jewish) response to Paul’s message in Corinth was the household of Stephanas (1 Cor 16:15) and that Paul baptized this household, (along with

\textsuperscript{173}Rhetorically Paul may speak of the Israelites of the exodus as ancestors of the readers (1 Cor 10:1).
\textsuperscript{174}See Horrell, The Social Ethos of the Corinthian Correspondence, 91-92. 1 Cor 7:18 and the attention to Jews and their concerns (1 Cor 1:22-24; 9:20-22) indicate the probable presence of some Jews in the group.
\textsuperscript{175}Though he did take support from Macedonia (2 Cor 11:9).
\textsuperscript{176}A number of reasons have been proposed for why Paul chose to work at Corinth: 1) Paul’s working was an anti-sophistic statement (Winter, Philo and Paul among the Sophists, 164-170); 2) Paul’s working was an intrinsic element of his apostolic self-understanding (Hock, The Social Context, 59-62); 3) Paul’s working was out of a fear of being tainted (Peter Richardson, “Temples, Altars and Living from the Gospel (1 Cor. 9.12b-18)” in Gospel in Paul: Studies on Corinthians, Galatians and Romans for Richard N. Longenecker [eds. L. Ann Jervis and Peter Richardson; JSNTSup 108; Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1994], 89-110, here 105); 4) Paul’s working was to demonstrate servant-leadership (Clarke, Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth, 125 n. 60).
several others, Crispus and Gaius [likely householders]), before the task of baptism was passed on to others within the local group or to his associates (1 Cor 1:14-17). Paul may then have been using households as an important location for his activity, though, as we see from his insistence on self-support, he took care to not be saddled with the obligations of a “house scholar.”

Social Composition of the Coalescing Group. As we have noted above the religious background of the majority in the later Corinthian group would have been non-Jewish. While they may have had a background in a variety of cults, several may have dominated among the earliest respondents to Paul. Given the prominence of the imperial cult and the Roman nature of the city, the imperial cult would have been of great importance for all in the city. As well, as in Thessalonica, given the congruence between Paul’s Jewish heritage and many features of the worship of the Most High God, there may have been many with a hypsistarian background.

The social composition of the group in Corinth has received much attention. Moving beyond Adolf Deissmann’s portrayal of Christians as working class, at least for the Corinthian group, a ‘new consensus’ has arisen. Gerd Theissen, in a series of articles published over three decades ago, (re)introduced social factors into the discussion of 1 Corinthians. He pointedly notes concerning 1 Cor 1:26 that “if Paul says that there were not many in the Corinthian congregation who were wise, powerful, and wellborn, then this much is certain: there were some.” The presence of both wealthy patrons and those of lower social standing has been proposed as a basis for a number

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177 In the second century Lucian in Merc. cond. provides a satirical look at house philosophers emphasizing their dependence upon the whims of their patron.

178 Schöllgen, even with his minimalist approach, notes concerning evidence for the social composition of Pauline groups that “Die korinthische Gemeinde . . . ist wohl die einzige, für die Hoffnung besteht, zu einem tragfähigen Ergebnis zu kommen” (“Was wissen wir,” 74).


180 All were translated and included in Theissen, The Social Setting.

181 Theissen, The Social Setting, 72. This interpretation of 1 Cor 1:26 is found as early as Origen in Cels. 3.48.
of the conflicts in 1 Corinthians, including the issue of court cases (1 Cor 6:1-8), food offered to idols (1 Cor 8:1-13), and divisions at the Lord’s meal (1 Cor 11:17-34).\footnote{Theissen, The Social Setting, 145-174; John K. Chow, Patronage and Power: A Study of Social Networks in Corinth (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1992); Clarke, Secular and Christian Leadership in Corinth. It should also be noted that a sociological analysis does not exclude other factors. See Dutch for a survey of the studies on the various conflicts (Dutch, The Educated Elite in 1 Corinthians, 29-42).} Although the presence of elite in the group has been challenged,\footnote{Justin J. Meggitt, Paul, Poverty and Survival (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1998), 50, 52, 59. See also Theissen’s responses to Meggitt (“The Social Structure of Pauline Communities: Some Critical Remarks on J.J. Meggitt, Paul, Poverty, and Survival,” JSNT 23 [2001]: 65-84; “Social Conflicts in the Corinthian Community: Further Remarks on J.J. Meggitt, Paul, Poverty, and Survival,” JSNT 25 [2003]: 371-391).} Theissen’s arguments for a stratified community are convincing and for our purposes it is this stratification that is important.\footnote{As Lanci notes: “The existence of Christians of the upper social strata in mid-first-century Corinth has yet convincingly to be demonstrated, but no one doubts that the Corinthian community contained people from the middle and lower strata of society. The Corinthian correspondence (and Romans 16, which was probably written at Corinth) indicate that while there were no Christian senators, equites, or decurions in Corinth, there were men and women in control of households (Chloe, Gaius, Crispus, 1 Cor 1:11, 14), people well-off enough to travel (Prisca, Aquila, Stephanas, Pheobe, 1 Cor 1:16, 16; 16:15, 19; Rom 16:1-2), freed persons (Achaicus, perhaps a descendant of Greek slaves, 1 Cor 16:17; cf. 7:22), a scribe (Tertius, Rom 16:22), and slaves (1 Cor 7:20-24)" (A New Temple for Corinth, 37-38). This social diversity is significant for our purposes since it is one of the factors leading to the social harmony the group would enjoy (see §5.2.2.2.3.).} The initial condition of the group which would best allow for the development of a stratified community would include at least a household (or several households) with a relatively wealthy householder. Given that households in themselves were stratified, this would allow for connection into networks that would include the diversity of social strata seen later in 1 Corinthians.\footnote{A differential rate of recruitment along the networks would have resulted in the development of a group in which the stratification would not have strictly corresponded to the stratification in a household. It would have been unlikely for a group that began as a homogenous unit to later achieve the stratification we see in the Corinthian group (see below).}

From the information Paul provides we may even specify the initial household as that of Stephanas (1 Cor 1:16; 16:15) with additional units found in the original group being Crispus and Gaius (with their households) (1 Cor 1:14). The original contact with Stephanas could have come through family, kin, ethnic, religious or occupational connections, with the most probable being...
religious or occupational. Stephanas may well have been involved in the same trade as Paul (though the tone of 1 Corinthians tends to militate against the likelihood that the wealthy in the group were
even though he maintained
involved in hand labour) or, more likely, have come from a hypsistarian background.

**Summary.** In Corinth, Paul made contact with households and, even though he maintained
his employment as a hand labourer, his group-forming activities occurred within a household setting.
The original contacts were likely hypsistarian worshippers and the contacts from within these
original households would have provided inroads into social networks which would have included
a variety of social strata, resulting in a socially heterogeneous group.

### 5.2.2.2.3. Breaking New Ground: The Interaction of Threat, Homogeneity and Group
Prototype in Group Coalescence and Later Group Development

*Proposition 3:* In Pauline groups: 
* a) The presence of strong homogeneity and the present of stress brought on through threat and conflict: i) provide the background for the development of a group prototype in which Paul’s behaviours and values come to the fore; and also ii) illuminate the subsequent development of the group in which group structure is centralized and group norms and identity are developed deductively. 
* b) However, when levels of homogeneity and threat are low during group formation the nature of the group prototype will be altered and subsequently group structure is decentralized and group norms and identity are inductively developed.

The heterogeneity and social harmony found in the Corinthian group fit the latter section of
proposition three and provide the basis for another significant contrast with the Thessalonian group.

**Stress and Threat in Corinth.** While loyalty was a significant factor in group formation, we
find for some in Corinth, given the subsequent fracturing of the group along teacher/household
lines,\(^1\) a nesting of loyalties with loyalty to the teacher or household trumping loyalty to the broader

group (i.e., the teacher or household group identity was usually more salient than the Pauline group identity). At the very start of the group, however, the nested loyalties would not have been explicit.

What was not seen in Corinth was any external rivalry or competition: “One of the most significant, but least noticed, features of Corinthian church life is the absence of conflict in the relationship between Christians and ‘outsiders.’ In contrast to the Thessalonian church, the believers in Corinth appear neither to feel hostility towards, nor to experience hostility from, non-Christians.” Although Paul could write of his own ongoing conflict with outsiders (1 Cor 4:9-13; 15:30-32), he does not indicate that the Corinthian group had suffered – in fact, there are signs of their social acceptability throughout 1 Corinthians:

That some of them (presumably the wealthier) take their disputes to the civic law-courts (6.1-6) signals their confidence in the legal system; they do not anticipate that believers will receive prejudicial treatment at the hands of non-Christians. Corinthian Christians are invited to meals in the houses of non-believers (10.27) and, conversely, non-believing friends or neighbours might well drop in to the house where the Christian meeting is taking place (14.24-25). Most significant, however, is the fact that some leaders of the Corinthian church (whose example others are likely to follow) are to be found as participants in parties and feasts in the dining rooms of the temples (8.10).

It appears that from the very beginning the group in Corinth did not experience external threat or significant disruptive shifts in social patterns. This had a important effect upon the developing group.

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the zealous follower and admirer at public declamations, so the newly baptised received instruction from their Christian teacher. Where household baptisms occurred, the entry of a teacher into that social unit had its cultural precedent in the sophistic movement. It seems reasonable therefore to explain the nexus of leaders, parties and baptism as another result of the sophistic mind-set of Corinth” (Philo and Paul among the Sophists, 186).

18Barclay, “Thessalonica and Corinth,” 57.

Group Prototype. Paul, as he embodied the group prototype, provided social attraction to those for whom the potential group would be salient. We have, however, no indication of what prototypical elements of Paul’s behaviour or belief would have been salient in Corinth. In fact, there is no mention in the Corinthian letters of earlier imitation of Paul. It appears that what might have been seen as prototypical behaviour (for example, frankness in speech) or prototypical belief (for example, the humiliation and suffering in Christ’s death) was later reinterpreted (or rejected) by the Corinthian believers as they inductively produced their social identity. In contrast, we saw explicit prototypical elements in Thessalonica, one of which was Paul’s response to affliction.

In light of subsequent developments, we see that the significant factor in social attraction in Corinth would have been that, in addition to Paul, the early adopters among the householders would have served as prototypes.

Group Development. The life of the group after founding is directly related to factors present as the group coalesced. As we have seen two features of the coalescing group which contrast with those of Thessalonica are the heterogeneity and social harmony of the proto-group.

The household-based heterogeneity of the group would explain the subgroup fractures of the group encountered in 1 Cor 1-4: within-household interdependence would have been stronger than between-household interdependence contributing to weaker cohesion between households than within; given the weak affective element in developing groups the already present affective component within a household would also have provided greater cohesion within households than between and would suggest that the households could be common-bond subgroups; in addition, householders may have served as subgroup prototypes thus creating differing multiple prototypes.

189 This lessening of Paul’s prototypicality as the Corinthians inductively negotiated among themselves their norms and group identity would have led to a reduction in Paul’s authority.
within the group, a situation which has been seen to weaken cohesion. Together these factors created a group with significant fault lines which could have endangered the existence of the group. Surprisingly, though, the group remained together. Beyond the strong value placed on loyalty to a group in a collectivist culture, several factors shed light on why the Corinthian group remained together. As Fabio Sani indicates in his discussion on schisms in groups, group disintegration results from disagreement over group identity, although schismatic intentions may be moderated through the perceived ability to voice dissent. In Corinth an inductive route to norm and group identity production damped down the fires of dissent by: 1) using internal communication to negotiate group norms and identity and so to reduce disagreement over identity; and 2) giving the opportunity for dissent to be voiced. The inductive route to group norms and group identity in Corinth was related to the other significant contrasting factor to Thessalonica, social harmony.

Both John Barclay and Craig de Vos have examined the positive social interaction which the Corinthian group enjoyed. Barclay begins by laying out the evidence for the absence of hostility in the Corinthians’s social relations and then turns to the stark contrast between the beliefs and practices of the Corinthian group and the Thessalonian group. Even though a variety of beliefs coexisted among the Corinthians, Barclay is able to identify a dominant ethos which contrasted that at Thessalonica:

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190 Arrow et al., *Small Groups as Complex Systems*, 81.

191 One could also include the fault lines engendered by the various social strata in the group (for example, as seen in 1 Cor 11). However, these differences would have been a ‘normal’ part of life within a vertical culture and so would not have necessarily jeopardized the existence of the group.


Unlike the Thessalonians, the Corinthians did not regard their Christian experience as an eager anticipation of a glory ready to be revealed at the coming of Christ. Rather, their initiation in baptism and their receipt of the Spirit had signified the grant of a superior insight into divine truths. The regular infusion of the Spirit in the Lord’s Supper gave them privileged access to knowledge, and the display of spiritual powers in worship confirmed the superior status which they had attained. They did not daily look up to heaven to await the coming of the Son who would rescue them from the wrath to come, nor did they eagerly search for signs of their impending vindication.194

The question then arises for Barclay of what factors may have influenced the contrasting beliefs and practices of the Corinthians. He examines three possible factors. He begins by looking at outside Christian influences and dismisses them given that “in the first formative period of the church’s life it was Paul alone who had the dominant influence, and there is no clear indication that the Corinthian church has undergone a radical shift since Paul left the scene.”195 The next factor is Paul himself; did he preach in different terms in Corinth? Barclay doubts that there are was any significant change in Paul’s teaching given that in 1 Corinthians Paul himself maintains an apocalyptic perspective and sectarian view. The final factor then is the Corinthians themselves and it is on them that the primary responsibility for the contrast lies. Why is this so? Barclay proceeds to note that their gentile origin does not distinguish them from the Thessalonians and so this does not provide an explanation for the contrast. The relatively high social status of some of the early members may have had some influence – they would have had much to lose if they adopted a sectarian stance. However, as Barclay notes:

[I]n Corinth, wealth and its associated social status are not necessarily wedded to a non-apocalyptic and non-sectarian perspective. . . . The Corinthians’ retention of their social status was only possible as long as others did not reject them as ‘impious’ or

194Barclay, “Thessalonica and Corinth,” 65.
195Barclay, “Thessalonica and Corinth,” 66. At the least there is no indication of external influence.
He goes on to outline several elements of the Corinthians’ theological perspective which correlated with their harmonious social context: the possession of the Spirit creating a distinction without a sense of hostility; the practice of differentiation without exclusivity; and the view that involvement in the group did not entail significant social or moral realignment. Barclay concludes by pointing out that social interaction with outsiders is an often overlooked significant factor which helps to explain the noticeable differences among Pauline groups.

De Vos takes up Barclay’s approach and concentrates on the civic context of the Corinthian group in an effort to explain the lack of social conflict. Though de Vos narrows much of Barclay’s evidence for positive social interaction to an elite subgroup, he does see the overall group as having positive relations with outsiders. The reason for the Corinthian’s social harmony was the result of several factors: the city was ‘tolerant’ and had a diverse mix of religious norms, values and beliefs; there was a strong pattern of cross-cutting relational ties in the city; and the city had a hierarchical and oligarchic political system in which some of the group participated.

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196 Barclay, “Thessalonica and Corinth,” 68-69. Barclay also notes that even Paul did not encounter trouble in Corinth the way he had in Thessalonica.

197 As we noted above (§5.1.2.3. Group Development) de Vos uses sociologist H. M. Ross’s culture of conflict theory to determine whether the cities in which Paul began groups were high or low in conflict. Of significance in determining this were two factors: 1) The nature of social network ties, whether they were reinforcing, that is, having an overlap of the same individuals in the various networks of an individual, or cross-cutting, having a variety of different individuals in the various social networks; 2) The nature of the politico-legal system, whether hierarchical or egalitarian.

198 He takes 1 Cor 4:9-13, with the contrast to manual labour, as aimed at mainly elite members of the church. Similarly the issues of 1 Cor 5-11 (interrmarriage, sexual relations with non-Christians, civil lawsuits, participation in Greek and Roman cults and invitations to meals) are seen as issues of the elite. He does conclude, however, “Although most of the matters that demonstrate this good relationship with outsiders concern the elite members of the church, it seems that the whole church was held in some esteem.” De Vos, Church and Community Conflicts, 205-214, here 214.

199 De Vos, Church and Community Conflicts, 292-300.
While both Barclay and deVos provide headway in our understanding of the social context of the group in Corinth some additional clarification of the origin of the group’s positive social relationships and their impact on Paul’s relationship with the group may be gained from a group level view of the interaction between heterogeneity and positive social relations. This interaction began during the founding period of the group.

We find as the group came together a certain amount of heterogeneity resulted from the presence of households. Together with the civic context of low conflict, as demonstrated by de Vos, the heterogeneity was accompanied by two factors which contributed to positive social interaction: 1) As occurred at the civic level, the multiple social strata found in a household provided for local level cross-cutting ties for the proto-group – the multiple social networks which extended from those in the coalescing group reached a variety of individuals. This would work against any solid front of resistance which could have been mounted against the nascent group. 2) There is also evidence that some had elite connections. These could forestall the formation of wider-scale negative interaction, if these connections were maintained in a positive state.

The social peace, which the heterogeneity of the forming group aided, would have contributed to several areas which deeply impacted Paul’s ongoing interaction with the group once it was founded. As the group formed, the lack of external stressors would have allowed for the development of communication and authority networks which were not centralized on Paul but rather would have been tuned to the structures found within the households. This also allowed for the development of norms through the inductive route of intragroup communication in which social

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201 Staw et al., “Threat-Rigidity Effects,” and Argote et al., “To Centralize or Not to Centralize.”
harmony was viewed positively and for the construction of a social identity through the negotiation, by the individuals within the group, of the direction and definition of the group as a whole. This ‘bottom up’ element in the development of the norms and social identity in the group would account for the marked divergence from Paul’s norms which the group in Corinth demonstrates and which contrasts with the situation in Thessalonica.

There is then an explanatory mechanism for the contrast between the Corinthian group and the Thessalonian group and for the divergence between the Corinthian group and Paul: it began in the forming group as households brought heterogeneity, which in turn (with other social factors) fostered social harmony, and then both heterogeneity and harmony contributed to ‘bottom up’ norm development and group identity development.

**Summary.** A number of observations have been drawn together which make sense when viewed through the lens of group formation: the heterogeneity of the group; the social harmony surrounding the group; the contrast of the group’s beliefs and norms with those of its founder Paul; and the factionalism within the group while still maintaining a group identity. The contrast seen between the Pauline groups in Thessalonica and Corinth arises primarily out of forces at work even before the groups coalesced.

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202 Though, of course, in the negotiation of social identity the contributions of higher status members would have greater weight (and so they then would also be more prototypical members, as their norms and behaviours were adopted by the group).


Our description of the situation and process in Corinth provides an explanation for characterizations of the Paul-Corinthian interaction such as that given by Chester: “The Corinthians responded to Paul’s advocacy of conversion and adopted a new Christian set of religious symbols. Yet the significance which they granted to these specifically Christian symbols was not solely determined by Paul. The Graeco-Roman society and culture in which they lived also played a part” (Chester, *Conversion at Corinth*, 317). See also the works of J. Brian Tucker and Bruce Winter.
5.3. Galatia Case Study

5.3.1. Galatia: Introduction

In seeking to extract information on group founding from Paul’s letter to the Galatians we come across several elements that are different from what we encountered in examining the Thessalonian and Corinthian correspondence. First, we find that the letter is addressed τῷ ἐκκλησίᾳ τῆς Γαλατίας. The fact that there is a plurality of groups addressed may point to a difference with the founding of the groups in Thessalonica and Corinth. The letter, however, seems to indicate that the multiple groups arose from a single founding (Gal 4:13-14) and so, in fact, the founding of a single group underlies the history of each group of addressees for the three sets of correspondence. That the addressees are labelled as Galatians, though, is more significant. The label does not allow us to narrow down the location of the group founding to a specific region, let alone a specific locale. In spite of this we may approach the group as mid-Anatolian, with no loss of information. For unless we want to actually import material from passages in Acts, the actual location will not alter what we can extract from the text of the letter concerning the group founding. The general background details for the Galatians will remain the same and we may take an approach similar to that of Clifton Arnold, who notes for his study of the religious background of the Galatians:

203 However, it has also been suggested that 1 Thess 5:27 implies a multiplicity of groups (Abraham J. Malherbe, Social Aspects of Early Christianity [2nd edition; Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983], 70) and the divisions in Corinth, even though Paul strives to address the group as a unit, may have eventually resulted in a de facto multiplicity of groups.

204 I favour a south Galatian hypothesis. See the discussion in Richard N. Longenecker, Galatians (WBC 41; Dallas: Word Books, 1990), lxiii-lxviii. See also Cilliers Breytenbach, Paulus und Barnabas in der Provinz Galatien: Studien zu Apostelgeschichte 13f.; 16, 6; 18, 23 und den Adressaten des Galaterbriefes (AGAJU 38; Leiden: Brill, 1996) and other recent works which add new twists to the old arguments: James M. Scott invokes the table of nations (Paul and the Nations: The Old Testament and Jewish Backgrounds of Paul’s Mission to the Nations with Special Reference to the Destination of Galatians [WUNT 2.84 Tübingen: Mohr, 1995]); and Thomas Witulski draws in the imperial cult (Die Adressaten des Galaterbriefes: Untersuchungen zur Gemeinde von Antiochia ad Pisidiam [FRLANT 193; Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 2000]).
Although much ink has been spilt over whether Paul wrote to Christian communities in Ancyra–Pessinus–Tavium or Pisidian Antioch–Iconium–Lystra–Derbe, the weight of this debate actually matters very little for the question I am addressing [concerning the religious background of the Galatians]. Many of the same deities were worshipped in the north, the south, and the west. The worship of Zeus, the Great Mother goddess of Anatolia, the lunar god Mēn, Artemis, Apollo, and Anaitas is attested in all of these areas. It is true that there were some regional variations of their worship demonstrated even in part by the local epithets that the deities would take (such as Apollo Lairbenos and Apollo Tarsi). But the structure of the piety associated with the worship of these deities had many of the same basic characteristics from area to area in Anatolia.\(^{205}\)

A second difference is the paucity of group founding information in the material found in the letter to the Galatians. There are only four\(^{206}\) places in the letter which may touch on the beginning of the group: Gal 1:6-9, which simply allows us to know that Paul (and his companions?) founded the group; Gal 3:1-5, which may give information on the mode of communication and the initial individual experiences; Gal 4: 8-10, which provides the religious background of the Galatians; and Gal 4:12-20, which outlines circumstances surrounding the founding of the group. Given this scarcity of material we will first provide some background material, then examine the founding passages in Galatians, and finally give a brief look at our three propositions.

**Region and People.** In the third century BCE a substantial group of Celts migrated to north central Asia Minor. After being confined to their territory, Galatia, through military means, (being finally defeated by Attalus I, king of Pergamum, in about 232 BCE) they were finally absorbed by the Romans in 189 BCE. By the mid-first century CE the Roman province of Galatia spread from the Black Sea and Pontus in the north to Pamphylia on the Mediterranean in the south and included not only the ethnic Celts but also native Anatolians and a veneer of Roman or Italian settlers. The

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\(^{205}\)Clinton E. Arnold, “‘I Am Astonished That You Are So Quickly Turning Away!’ (Gal 1.6): Paul and Anatolian Folk Belief,” *NTS* 51 (2005): 429-449, here 430.

\(^{206}\)In addition to the four, Gal 3:27 speaks of baptism which at the start of the group would have served as a psychological boundary marking group members.
north included the Celtic tribal lands and the cities of Ancyra, Pessinus and Tavium, while in the south Pisidian Antioch and Iconium were found in “Phyrgia Galatica.”

The religious traditions of the region included local renditions of Greek cults and numerous indigenous cults. Stephen Mitchell presents four groups of cults as representative of the religious atmosphere of Anatolia: 1) Zeus was the most widely worshiped deity, taking on a number of names, such as Zeus Megistos at Iconium or Zeus ‘of the seven villages’ in north-west Galatia; 2) the Mother Goddess, a chief exemplar being Cybele with her consort/slave Attis and self-castrated servants, the galli, was the foremost deity after Zeus; 3) Men, with his Phrygian cap and crescent, was worshiped throughout Asia minor; and 4) the Phrygian gods ‘Holy and Just,’ who exhibited the concern of the people for justice, vengeance and righteousness, found a home in Galatia as well. This last pair of gods are related to another feature of local folk piety and belief, the so-called Beichtinschriften, or confession (appeasement) inscriptions. These inscriptions deal with punishment for transgressions against a god:

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207 Longenecker builds the term “Phyrgia Galatica” by analogy to the official Roman designation of the northern region “Pontus Galatica” (Galatians, lxiii). He also creates the term “Lycaonia Galatica” for the territory including Lystra and Derbe.

208 As Stephen Mitchell warns there are two extremes taken in classifying the cults of Asia minor: either conglomerating local deities into “protean unities, a sky god, an earth mother, or a prototypical warrior;” or, on the other hand, atomizing the local cults without drawing wider conclusions (Stephen Mitchell, Anatolia: Land, Men, and Gods in Asia Minor [2 vols.; Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1993], 2:19).

209 Mitchell, Anatolia, 2:19-29

210 Susan Elliott has connected Anatolian religious practices, and, in particular, the cult of Cybele, to Paul’s discussions in Galatians concerning the law (Gal 3:15-4:11), Hagar and Sarah (Gal 4:21-31) and circumcision (Gal 5:1-12) (Cutting too Close for Comfort: Paul’s Letter to the Galatians in Its Anatolian Cultic Context [JSNTSup 248; London: T&T Clark, 2003]). See also her “Choose Your Mother, Choose Your Master: Galatians 4.21–5.1 in the Shadow of the Anatolian Mother of the Gods,” JBL 118 [1999]: 661–683. J. Louis Martyn (and others) also suggests that Cybele and the ritual castration of the galli might stand behind Gal 5:12 (Galatians: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary [Anchor Bible 33A; New York: Doubleday, 1997], 478).

211 Clifton Arnold provides a discussion and examples of these inscriptions and then applies them to themes found in the letter to the Galatians (“I Am Astonished”). See also Elliott, Cutting too Close for Comfort, 58-93.
All of the inscriptions represent the deities as austere, powerful gods who take offence at the transgressions of their worshippers. It does not matter if the sins are witting or unwitting; they still solicit the harsh response of the deity. . . . The gods are quick to smite the offender with any of a range of maladies, including rendering people mute or blind, putting the offender in a death-like condition, instilling madness, and even striking men and women with serious problems in their genitals. In some cases, the offender or a family member is struck dead by the god.212

After confession of the transgression and praise of the god (including erection of the inscription), the god would be appeased. Other elements of local beliefs which may relate to the letter to the Galatians include the fear of being cursed, an emphasis on angels as divine mediators and, ubiquitous throughout the Mediterranean, the evil eye belief.213

While Roman settlers were open to adopting the local gods, they also brought their own gods, such as Iuppiter Optimus Maximus at Pisidian Antioch.214 The imperial cult was also influential, going beyond having merely a political significance.215 The direct evidence for a Jewish presence in Galatia is slight but given their importance to the immediate west of Galatia (Sardis, Acmonia, etc.216), one may assume some level of presence. As well, hypsistarian inscriptions are found

212Arnold, “‘I Am Astonished,’” 434.
214Mitchell, Anatolia, 2:29.
215Philip A. Harland, Associations, Synagogues, and Congregations: Claiming a Place in Ancient Mediterranean Society (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2003), 119-121. He goes on to examine the inscriptive evidence of associations and the imperial cult in Roman Asia in order to illustrate “the integration of the emperors and imperial cults within political, social, and religious dimensions of the populace’s life on a local level” (p. 121).

There have been several recent significant contributions relating the imperial cult to passages in Galatians: Troy W. Martin (“Pagan and Judeo-Christian Time-Keeping Schemes in Gal 4.10 and Col 2.16,” NTS 42 (1996): 105-19) and Witulski (Die Adressaten des Galaterbriefes) deal with calendrical issues in Gal 4:10 and Justin K. Hardin (Galatians and the Imperial Cult: A Critical Analysis of the First-Century Social Context of Paul’s Letter [WUNT 2.237; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008]) looks into both the calendrical issues and avoiding persecution in Gal 6:12-13.
216See Trebilco, Jewish Communities in Asia Minor, and Mitchell, Anatolia, 2:31-35.
throughout Asia Minor and Mitchell provides evidence of several dedicated to Theos Hypsistos in Galatian territory.\textsuperscript{217}

\section*{5.3.2. Galatia: Group Founding Texts and Application of the Group Founding Model}

\subsection*{5.3.2.1. Galatians: Group Founding Texts}

\textit{Galatians 1:6-9}

\begin{verse}
6 Θαυμάζω ὅτι σύντομος μετατίθεσθε ἀπὸ τοῦ καλέσαντος ὑμᾶς ἐν χάριτι [Χριστοῦ] εἰς ἄλλην εὐαγγέλιον, 7 ὅσον ἔστιν ἄλλο, εἰ μὴ τινὸς εἰσὶν οἱ ταράσσοντες ὑμᾶς καὶ θέλοντες μεταστρέψαι τὸ εὐαγγέλιον τοῦ Χριστοῦ. 8 ἄλλα καὶ εἰ ἡμεῖς ἢ ἀγγελὸς ἢ οὐρανοῦ εὐαγγελίζηται [ὑμῖν] παρ᾽ ὁ ἐυθείᾳ λεξίσαμεθα ὑμῖν, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω. 9 ὃς προειρήκηκεν καὶ ἀρτι πάλιν λέγω, εἰ τις ὑμᾶς εὐαγγελίζεται παρ᾽ ὁ παρελάβετε, ἀνάθεμα ἔστω.
\end{verse}

\textit{Context.} Omitting the conventional thanksgiving formula, Paul launches into the \textit{exordium} (Gal 1:6-10) with an astonishment-rebuke formula, “I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace [of Christ] and turning to another gospel” (Gal 1:6). The absence of the thanksgiving highlights Paul’s agitation at the Galatians’ shift away from Pauline beliefs and practices.

\textit{Galatians 1:6-9}. Throughout the section Paul shames the Galatians by emphatically noting their shifting loyalty: above all desertion of God (Gal 1:6),\textsuperscript{218} but also desertion of Paul, when they are enticed by a gospel “contrary to that which we\textsuperscript{219} preached to you” (Gal 1:8). In noting the change Paul reflects back to the origin of the group, though all that we are able to obtain from the

\textsuperscript{217}Mitchell, \textit{Anatolia}, 2:49-51 and “Theos Hypsistos.”

\textsuperscript{218}“The one who called” does not refer to Paul. It is used of God in Galatians (Gal 1:15; 5:8) and throughout Paul’s other letters (e.g., 1 Thess 2:12; 4:7; 5:24; 1 Cor 1:9, 26; 7:15, 17-24). See Longenecker, \textit{Galatians}, 15 and Martyn, \textit{Galatians}, 108-109, 116-117.

\textsuperscript{219}Paul also writes of “the gospel which was preached \textit{by me}” (Gal 1:11), so whether he is including his associates in his activity is unclear.
passage concerning the group founding is that Paul founded the group through (as he views it) the presentation of his message and the Galatians’ positive reception of it (frame alignment).

**Galatians 3:1-5**

1 "O anóthoi Galátai, tís ùmías ebáskeven, oîcs kat’ óthbalmouís 'Ihsoús Xristós próergáphi estaurwménon; 2 touto mónon thélw maðeión äph ùmión éx érgon nómu to pneúma élabete ē éz åkoîhs páistewç; 3 ouçws anóthoi êste, enarexámenoi pneúmati nún sarke'épiteléiste; 4 tósaúta épairtheite eîkhì; eì ge kai eîkhì. 5 ò sòn épichorhýchwn ùmín to pneúma kai énerghôn dynáméics én ùmín, éz érgon nómu ē éz åkoîhs páistewç;

**Context.** Galatians 3 provides a series of arguments to back up Paul’s view of the (dis)connection between the Mosaic law and faith in Christ as presented in Gal 2:15-16. The first of these arguments in Gal 3:1-5 is experiential and reaches back to the Galatians’ initial response to Paul’s message and so provides a glimpse of experiences as the group coalesced.

**Galatians 3:1-5.** "O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched [ἐβάσκανεν] you, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was publicly portrayed as crucified?" (Gal 3:1). Paul’s use of the verb βάσκανεν ("to injure by the evil eye;” see LSJ) draws in the entire background complex of the evil eye and envy: certain beings (often human), by merely looking, could cast spells out of envy or greed on a person or object, thus injuring or destroying it. Fear of the evil eye was pervasive and various strategies were used to neutralize it. This provides a reminder of the folk belief context of the group (and Paul) – a belief that surfaces again in Gal 4:14.

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220 That ‘Galatians’ strictly implies an ethnic (northern) group is not evident. Contra Martyn, Galatians, 282.
221 Neyrey, “Bewitched in Galatia,” 264-265
222 This has been well exploited by Neyrey (“Bewitched in Galatia”) and Elliott (“Paul, Galatians, and the Evil Eye”) to provide insight into the Paul’s perspective on the current problem with the group.
Paul draws the Galatians back to his founding visit when he writes of Jesus Christ being publicly exhibited as crucified. ‘Public exhibition’ (προεγράφη) may simply be a metaphorical reference to a vivid or clear presentation but may well indicate Paul’s use of actual visual aids. Though the mention of Christ having been crucified surely includes all of Paul’s basic message, one implication of this message was that Paul’s suffering and weakness reflected Christ’s suffering and provided the opportunity for God’s strength to be revealed. Paul’s physical scars and weaknesses may then also have served to visually portray the crucified Christ (see also Gal 6:17).

Also relevant to the actual group founding is Paul’s description in the succeeding verses: “Did you receive the Spirit? . . . Having begun in the Spirit . . . Did you experience or suffer so many things in vain? . . . Does he who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you . . . .” (Gal 3:2, 3, 4, 5). Paul’s rhetoric is based on the assumption that the group would concur with his description of their experience. And his description of this experience is generally agreed to be some ecstatic or miraculous experience that the Galatians had when they accepted Paul’s message ‘by faith.’

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223 Martyn, Galatians, 283; Longenecker, Galatians, 100-101. David L. Balch (“The Suffering of Isis/Io and Paul’s Portrait of Christ Crucified (Gal. 3:1): Frescoes in Pompeian and Roman Houses and in the Temple of Isis in Pompeii,” JR 83 (2003): 24-55 and Roman Domestic Art and Early House Churches (WUNT 2.228; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 84-105) notes that Greco-Roman domestic space with its rich visual representations, including wall paintings portraying suffering, provides insight into how the addressees would have read (or heard) Paul’s message.


226 Hafemann provides details for this (“The Role of Suffering”). He claims that “Paul’s suffering was the instrument by which he ‘publicly portrayed’ the crucified Christ ‘before (the Galatians)’ eyes (Gal.3:1)” (p. 174) and concludes his article with: “Paul’s suffering is not an addendum to his preaching. Nor is it merely a consequence of it. Rather it is constitutive of it.” (p. 184).

227 Betz, Galatians, 29; Longenecker, Galatians, 102, 104-105. Ian Scott notes several factors to bolster this: the parallelism between being equipped with the Spirit and miracles (Gal 3:5); the association of the Spirit with deep
emotional experiences (Gal 4:6) and moral transformation (Gal 5:16); early Christian references to conversion and the “reception of the Spirit” referring not to some metonymic theological idea or a baptismal ritual but to remarkable experiences (e.g., Acts 2:38; John 20:22) (Implicit Epistemology in the Letters of Paul: Story, Experience and the Spirit [WUNT 2.205; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2006], 196 n. 53).

If the divergence between the Galatians and Paul resulted from group polarization (as we see below), then the calendrical observances would have been an extension from Paul’s Jewish roots. Thus they may have once followed the calendrical observances of the imperial cult, rather than Jewish observances – whether or not this was Paul’s point, we can be assured that for the Galatians the imperial cult would have been of importance to them before they joined the group.

Galatians 4:8-10. “Formerly, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to beings that by nature are no gods . . . how can you turn back again to weak and beggarly elemental spirits, whose slaves you want to be once more? You observe days, and months, seasons, and years!” (Gal 4:8, 9-10). Paul reveals the religious background of the majority of the group: they came from among the dominant religious traditions, though, as in Thessalonica and Corinth, the group would have most likely included hypsistarian worshippers. The reference to calendrical observances to which the Galatians were returning may touch on time-keeping schemes of the imperial cult, rather than Jewish observances – whether or not this was Paul’s point, we can be assured that for the Galatians the imperial cult would have been of importance to them before they joined the group.

Galatians 4:8-10

8 Ἀλλὰ τότε μὲν οὖν εἰδότες θεόν ἐδούλευσατε τοῖς φύσει μὴ οὐσίν θεοῖς; 9 νῦν δὲ γνώντες θεόν, μᾶλλον δὲ γνωσθέντες ὑπὸ θεοῦ, πώς ἐπιστρέφετε πάλιν ἐπὶ τὰ ἀσθενή καὶ πτωχὰ στοιχεία σίζ πάλιν ἀνωθεν δουλεύειν θέλετε; 10 ἡμέρας παρατηρεῖσθε καὶ μήνας καὶ καιροὺς καὶ ἕναντος.

Context. Closing his direct arguments for the propositio in Gal 2, Paul addresses directly the Galatians and refers to their pre-group lives. We are thus supplied with information on the beliefs and behaviours of the group members before group coalescence.

Context

The packed calendar of the ruler cult dragooned the citizens of Antioch into observing the days, months, seasons, and years which it laid down for special recognition and celebration. . . . In the urban setting of Pisidian Antioch where spectacular and enticing public festivals imposed conformity and
Galatians 4:12-20

12 GINESETE OCS EGW, OTI KAGW OCS UMIEIS, ADELFOI, DEOMAI UMWN. OUDEN ME HDIKHSETE. 13 SIDATE DE OTI DI ASTHEIEAN TIS SARKOS KAI SAGELISAMIN UMWN TO PROTERON, 14 KAI TON PEIRASMON UMWN EN TIS SARKI MNO SUC EKSOXENHTASETE OUDAE EXEPTUSATE, ALA OCS AGGELO BEN THEOU EDEXASA THE ME, AOS XRISTON IHSOUN. 15 POU SOUN O MAKARISMOS UMWN; MARTURW GAR UMWN OTI EI DUNATON TOUS OPHALMOUS UMWN EXORUXANTES EDWKA MEOI. 16 OSTHE ECHROUS UMWN GEGONA ALHEUOUM UMWN; 17 ZHLOUSIN UMAS OU KALW, ALA EKKLEISAI UMAS THELOUSIN, INA AUTOUS ZHLOUTE. 18 KALON DE ZHLOUSAI EN KALO PANTOTE KAI MI MONON EN TV PAREINAI ME PROS UMAS. 19 TINKA MNO, OUS PALIN ODIW MECRIS OU MORFOW THE XRISTOU EN UMWN. 20 HTHLEN DE PAREINAI PROS UMAS ARTI KAI ALALAXAI TIN FAVHN MNO, OTI APOROUMAI EN UMWN.

Context. Paul begins a shift from arguments to exhortations beginning with Gal 4:12 – in Gal 4:12-20 Paul switches to persuasion through pathos and appeals to the emotions of friendship, shame and anger. In doing so he recalls the circumstances surrounding the beginning of the group. Although the passage is fraught with difficulties we will concentrate only on points which relate directly to the group founding.

Galatians 4:12-20. GINESETE OCS EGW, OTI KAGW OCS UMIEIS, ADELFOI, DEOMAI UMWN – “Become like me, for I was like you, brothers, I plead with you” (Gal 4:12). Again, as in Corinth and Thessalonica, we encounter sibling language which may reach back to the time of group coalescence. The call to current imitation of Paul follows up on an earlier imitation of Paul as seen a rhythm of observance on a compact population, where Christians could not (if they wanted to) conceal their beliefs and activities from their fellows, it is not a change of heart that might win a Christian convert back to paganism, but the overwhelming pressure to conform imposed by the institutions of his city and the activities of his neighbours. (Mitchell, Anatolia, 2:10)


231 ἀδέλφοι is found in Gal 1:11; 3:15; 4:12,28, 31; 5:11, 13; 6:1, 18. If it was used during group coalescence it would have served in categorization.
in Gal 4:18: καλὸν δὲ ζηλούσθαι ἐν καλῷ πάντοτε καὶ μὴ μόνον ἐν τῷ παρεἶναι με
πρὸς ὑμᾶς – “It is good [for me] to be emulated in a good way [by you] and not only in my
presence with you [but also in my absence]”232 – thus at the beginning of the group Paul would have
been seen as a prototypical group member.

In Gal 4:13 Paul begins a direct report of the initial group founding events: “You know it was
δι’ ασθένειαν τῆς σαρκός that I preached the gospel to you at first.” The phrase ‘because of
weakness of the flesh’ is ambiguous: what weakness and whose flesh may be debated and a wide
variety of views have been proposed: 1) Troy Martin, following Jerome, takes ‘weakness of the
flesh’ as the weakness of the Galatians’ flesh and so the phrase is similar to Rom 6:19. Hence, the
reason Paul preached was the Galatians’ pre-gospel condition.233 However, as Hafemann
demonstrates, Troy Martin’s lexicographical work is not as relevant as he claims and the parallel
between Gal 4:13 “weak flesh” and Gal 4:14 “my flesh” strongly suggests that both are Paul’s flesh.
2) Taking it as Paul’s flesh, the phrase, having an attributed genitive, should then have ‘weakness
of flesh’ rendered as ‘weak flesh’ with ‘weak’ being emphasized. ‘Weak flesh’ then refers to natural
human limitations, which may or may not be negative. Thus Paul is recounting that at the first his
communicating with them was caused by some natural human limitation. Usually this is taken to
be an illness, with the thought that, because he was sick and was detained with the Galatians, he took
the occasion to persuade them.234 3) Hafemann, while accepting that the phrase refers to illness,
qualifies both the meaning, by delimiting it as illness seen specifically as Paul’s suffering/weakness

234Betz, Galatians, 224, Longenecker, Galatians, 190; see also David Alan Black, “Weakness Language in
in the vein of 2 Cor 12:7, and the occasion, by noting that the weakness was not merely the circumstance that brought the gospel but that the “suffering was the divinely ordained means by which the gospel itself was made clear to the Galatians.”

4) Denying that Paul was ill, A. J. Goddard and A. S. Cummins propose that the bodily weakness was due to the trauma of persecution. Though this comes close to Hafemann’s view, rather than seeing Paul’s suffering as constitutive of his preaching and apostolic ministry, as Hafemann does, they identify the suffering of persecution as being correlated to faithfulness to the crucified Christ and as something which both Paul and the Galatians experienced. Although in their presentation they often overplay their hand, they do provide ample evidence of persecution in Galatia both against Paul and against the beginning group. What is clear from the various proposals is that: 1) the view that Paul was suffering an illness seems most plausible; 2) Paul and the group endured persecution at the beginning; and 3) his persecution and suffering may have been used by Paul in the presentation of his message.

Paul continues by reminding them that καὶ τὸν πειρασμόν ἡμῶν ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου σὺν ἐξουθενήσατε οὐδὲ ἐξεπτύσατε, ἀλλὰ ώς ἄγγελον θεοῦ ἐδέξασθέ με, ὃς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν, “though my condition was a trial to you [or a temptation to you to reject me], you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus” (Gal 4:14). Paul uses forceful verbs to describe what their reaction to him might have been: they did not

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237 For example, their sections on “plucking out eyes” (Gal 4:15) (their examples bear no relation to the situation in Galatians) (Goddard and Cummins, “Ill or Ill-Treated?,” 112-113) and on Paul being received as an angel (rather than heavy-handedly forcing a martyrdom/persecution perspective on this, it would have been better to relate it to local views of angels, or to the other references in Galatians, or to traditions of angels as mediators) (Goddard and Cummins, “Ill or Ill-Treated?,” 107-109).
εξουθενόω (despise, reject, count as nothing) or ἐκπτώω (literally, to spit out; figuratively, to despise). The Galatians could have had several reasons to despise Paul in his condition. First, there would have been local beliefs, such as those revealed in the Beichtinschriften, which linked sin and suffering. Second, the latter verb, taken literally, to spit, was the custom when meeting an evil eye possessor. Paul may be implying that because of his weakened state (or even because of his outsider status) the Galatians could have thought of him as a possessor of the evil eye. Rather than rejecting him, however, they received him enthusiastically. Paul goes on and emphasizes their concern for him at the first, “I bear you witness that, if it was possible, you would have plucked out your eyes and given them to me” (Gal 4:15), an apparent idiom for “giving to the extreme for another’s welfare.”

5.3.2.2. Galatia: Application of the Group Founding Model

5.3.2.2.1. Reinforcement of a Current View: The Multi-Modality of Frame Alignment and Coalescence

Proposition 1: a) In contrast to perspectives which focus solely on verbal communication in Pauline group founding, the founding of Pauline groups must be seen as a function of cognitive, behavioural and affective elements (with even the cognitive element, when viewed from the perspective of frame theory, stressing more than verbal communication). b) However, in contrast to an overemphasis on a common affective bond in group founding, it must be recognized that there was relatively weak affective coalescence for Pauline groups.

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238Hafemann (“The Role of Suffering,” 171-172) and Ernst Baasland (“Persecution: A Neglected Feature in the Letter to the Galatians,” ST 38 (1984): 135-150, here 141) also point out the curse tradition from Deuteronomy which linked sin and suffering. However, this would not occur to the Galatians upon there first reception of Paul.

239As John Elliott notes: “Among these tight-knit communities, defined primarily by geographical proximity and group loyalty, the stranger or outsider is generally perceived as a threat to the common weal, and thus a likely Evil Eye fascinator with malicious or envious designs” (“Paul, Galatians, and the Evil Eye,” 266).

240Longenecker, Galatians, 193.
Multi-Modality of Frame Alignment. The letter to the Galatians reveals only a few glimpses into the coalescent elements of the group’s founding. We have the expected references to Paul’s original verbal communication (Gal 1:8-9, 4:13) and with that we may assume the priority of verbal communication in the frame alignment involved in the group’s formation. There are, however, indications of other modes of communication involved in frame alignment. As we have seen in Gal 3:1, ‘public exhibition’ (προενασσὴ) may refer to visual aids, which could include Paul’s suffering, Paul’s scars and visual representations of Paul’s message. That Paul used these in presenting his initial and foundational message, makes the later mention of the fact that he “bear[s] on [his] body the marks of Jesus” more persuasive in his plea that none should trouble him (6:19).

Several important factors are to be drawn from the nature of frame alignment which shape the resulting Galatian group. As in Thessalonica and Corinth the initial group adherents would be those requiring the least amount of alignment. And, as in Thessalonica and Corinth, we find that the group is primarily gentile (Gal 4:8-10). These facts point toward the group emerging from hypsisterian worshippers (with, of course, involvement in the ubiquitous imperial cult). Concerning the later development of the group, Paul’s strong language of desertion and disloyalty by the Galatians, shows that the frames of Paul and group eventually diverge.

Multi-Modality of Coalescence. In Galatians the few references to the founding of the group focus on cognitive coalescence. We do find, however, indications of a broader base for the coalescence of the group, though, as in Thessalonica and Corinth, the affective element is not as significant as other elements.

Behavioural Coalescence. We see in Gal 4:12-20 that the core individuals of the proto-group were involved in the care of Paul. Mutual, connected action breeds interdependent behaviour. This
behaviour would have arisen in the context of perceived or real threats. As we shall see in the next section, not only did Paul face persecution but so also did the Galatians from the beginning of the group. This persecution would have arisen because of: 1) their toleration of a social deviant, Paul; and 2) their acceptance of an apparently socially disruptive message. Interdependent behaviour in the context of perceived or real threat contributes to group formation.241

_Affective Coalescence._ There is no direct evidence of affective coalescence in Galatians – there is apparently affection toward Paul (the physically restorative actions of Gal 4:12-20 may indicate affection for Paul). However, interdependent behaviour (see above) and shared experiences (Gal 3:1-5) would have fostered-long term liking.242 Some of this affection may have been present in the emerging group and have contributed to its coalescence.

5.3.2.2.2. Expanding Existing Views: Group Composition

Proposition 2: a) Given the extremely strong pressures for homogeneity in a collectivist culture, it should be assumed that Pauline groups at their founding were socially and religiously/ethnically homogeneous. In addition, the frame of (nascent) group members would have been congruent to Paul’s. b) If a Pauline group is evidently a heterogenous group, then it should be assumed that it developed from the integration of a heterogenous network(s) (e.g., a socially stratified household) into the forming group.

_Homogeneity of the Group._ At first glance Gal 3:28 may seem to indicate a social heterogeneity in the Galatian groups. However, following the proposal first put forward by Schlier on the grounds of structure and content,243 the verse is best seen as a confessional form, perhaps


drawn from a baptismal liturgy, with only the first pair of coordinates actually touching on Paul’s argument. Given no other indications of social heterogeneity in the Galatian groups, it should be assumed that the group was homogeneous. Following Gal 4:8-10 the religious background of the initial group members followed the dominant religious streams of the region and, given the presence of hypsisterian worship and the likelihood of congruence to Paul’s frames, the group would have arisen from among such worshippers. As well, granted Paul’s background as an artisan and that he was taken in to be restored to health, it should be assumed that the group was from a similar background.

5.3.2.2.3. Breaking New Ground: The Interaction of Threat, Homogeneity and Group Prototype in Group Coalescence and Later Group Development

Proposition 3: In Pauline groups: a) The presence of strong homogeneity and the presence of stress brought on through threat and conflict: i) provide the background for the development of a group prototype in which Paul’s behaviours and values come to the fore; and also ii) illuminate the subsequent development of the group in which group structure is centralized and group norms and identity are developed deductively. b) However, when levels of homogeneity and threat are low during group formation the nature of the group prototype will be altered and subsequently group structure is decentralized and group norms and identity are inductively developed.

Stress and Threat in Galatia. Paul provides some indications that not only had he faced persecution but that the Galatians themselves had also been persecuted: Paul refers to Torah observers troubling them (Gal 1:7) – the nature of that troubling could well be similar to Paul’s own persecution of the groups during his “former life in Judaism” (Gal 1:13); Gal 3:4 may refer to suffering (“Did you suffer/experience so many things in vain?”); and the allegory of the two
offspring of Abraham (Gal 4:21-31) speaks of the promised son being persecuted (Gal 4:29). All of these may refer to times after the group formed, but we do also have Paul’s statement that “though my condition was a trial to you [or a temptation to you to reject me], you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus” (Gal 4:14). In a collectivist culture acting contrary to the social pressure to reject someone with a despised condition (weakness and the evil-eye) would have resulted in social disruption and social persecution. So it appears that even from the beginning the group was under ongoing social stress.

**Group Prototype.** As we have seen, in Gal 4:12 Paul exhorts the Galatians to current imitation of himself. This exhortation is shored up by reference to an earlier imitation of Paul in Gal 4:18: “It is good [for me] to be emulated in a good way [by you] and not only in my presence with you [but also in my absence].” Paul as group founder, and as seen in the initial evident imitation of his behaviour and the reception of his message, served from the beginning as a prototypical group member. The context of Gal 4:12-20 indicates that one area of prototypical behaviour would have involved right responses in the midst of threat and persecution.

**Group Development.** As the Galatian group formed it was homogenous and under stress. Our model would then suggest that, as the group developed, structure was centralized and group norms and identity were developed deductively. This would be similar to the group development in Thessalonica. However, in contrast to what we saw in 1 Thessalonians, there is in Galatians a strong divergence between the norms of Paul and the group (Gal 1:6-7; 3:1; 4:9-11; 5:7-8). How can this contrast be accounted for? Given the centralized communication and deductive norm

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244 Goddard and Cummins, “Ill or Ill-Treated?,” 118-120.
construction during the founding and early formation of the group, when the Pauline norms and frames would have had a significant impact (Paul serving as group prototype), the development of diverging norms should be seen as an element of group polarization. Group polarization is the tendency for groups to move to extremes in the direction of the initial leanings of the group. This phenomenon was seen to a lesser extent in Thessalonica and so Paul in 1 Thessalonians supports the group and yet at points must curb excesses (which in fact are over-extensions of his own teaching and behaviour). In Galatia the more profound movement to the extreme would have resulted not from the introduction of wholly new norms and beliefs but rather from the introduction and acceptance of extreme norms and beliefs that would have been seen by the Galatians as an extension of Paul’s behaviour and beliefs. The introduction of these more extreme elements would have benefitted from the persistence of centralized communication and authority by allowing those promoting views congruous with the polarization process to make use of the centralized structures.

This model of group development helps to pare down the welter of divergent positions concerning the views of the opponents Paul faced as he wrote Galatians. Howard provides a perspective which accords with a group polarization account of the development of the Galatian group: “Rather than assuming that the opponents held the opposite position from the one they ascribed to Paul, they held in fact the same position they ascribed to him and considered him their ally.”

Paul’s opponents were just carrying out his views – carrying them out to the extreme. This model also provides then the background to the much discussed Gal 5:11 in which the Galatians appear to believe that Paul’s practice in some way and at some time included circumcision: they felt they were simply being called to an extension of the Pauline practice.

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246 George Howard, Paul: Crisis in Galatia (2nd edition; SNTSMS 35; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 9.
Summary. We are not able to extract much from Paul’s letter to the Galatians concerning the founding of the group. Paul was ill. He was hosted by some Galatians – where and how they connected we are not told. As their guest he communicated his message to them, both visually and verbally. His hosts were most probably hypsistarian worshippers and so Paul’s message resonated with them. They responded to his message and had an ecstatic experience. This led them to view him as a special messenger of God (“as an angel, as Jesus Christ” [Gal 4:14]). Paul acknowledges that they could have responded to him as a social deviant but they did not. Apparently others did and they persecuted Paul and the early adopters of his message.

What we do find in Galatia, at one level, then is a group founding and development similar to that in Thessalonica. A variety of coalescing elements were involved as a homogenous group formed in a setting of conflict. Yet a significant difference between the Thessalonian and Galatian groups arose as more extreme polarization occurred in Galatia, instigated by external individuals whose views were perceived as an extension of Paul’s views.
Homogeneity and Conflict in Group Founding and Subsequent Group Development in Thessalonica, Corinth and Galatia

**Thessalonica**
- Collectivist culture, etc.
- Shift in social patterning, etc.
- Homogeneity
  - Reinforcing ties
  - Development of centralized communication and authority networks
    - [Focus on Paul]
  - Deductive development of norms and group identity
    - [Paul’s norms]
- Polarization
  - [Extension of Paul’s norms]

**Corinth**
- Households
- Elite connections, etc.
- Heterogeneity
  - Social Harmony
  - Cross-cutting ties
  - Development of non-centralized communication and authority networks
    - [Focus on householders/teachers]
  - Inductive development of norms and group identity
    - [Divergence from Paul’s norms]
- Factionalized (yet functioning) group

**Galatia**
- Collectivist culture, etc.
- Acceptance of despised person, etc.
- Homogeneity
  - Social Conflict
  - Reinforcing ties
  - Development of centralized communication and authority networks
    - [Focus on Paul]
  - Deductive development of norms and group identity
    - [Paul’s norms]
- External ‘teachers’
- Polarization
  - [Extreme over-extension of Paul’s norms]
Chapter 6
Conclusion

6.1. Conclusion

“So oft Paulus an die von ihm gegründeten Christengemeinden schreibt, hat er keinen Anlass, ihnen mitzuteilen, auf welche Weise sie gesammelt wurden. . . . Trotz so lückenhafter Beschaffenheit unserer Quellen sind wir im Stande, aus einer Reihe von persönlichen Mittheilungen des Apostels, welche er bei verschiedenen Anlässen zu machen sich genöthigt sieht, indem wir dieselben in Zusammenhange mit den socialen Verhältnissen der ersten Jahrhunderte unseres Zeitrechnung betrachten, ein verhältnissmässig anschauliches Bild über die Ursprünge und Anfänge paulinischer Gemeinden zu gewinnen”1

Georg Heinrici, 1877

We began with the simple question, “How were the Pauline small groups founded and, in particular, the groups in Thessalonica, Corinth and Galatia?” The question probes a hole that exists in the current understanding of the development of early Christian groups. Lying between conversion/recruitment of the individual and the corporate life of the early church, both areas which have been much explored,2 is the process involved in a group coalescing, a process most often presumed and when not taken for granted often reduced to: “Paul preached - people were converted - a church started.” In the recent past much work has been devoted in social psychology to small groups and their founding, work that helps to fill the hole when combined with cultural sensitivity and a look at the founding of small groups in the ancient world.

In chapter one we outlined the question we wished to pursue, examined New Testament scholarship and social-scientific method and proposed a way to answer the question: first developing a model of group founding; next comprehensively inspecting the records of group founding in the

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2 One could also include here the burgeoning field of studies in identity formation in early Christianity. Though this may fall, depending upon the approach, within the purview of social psychology, it is usually either an individual (self identity) or large group (Christian identity) pursuit which does not directly address small group formation.
Greco-Roman world; and finally examining the Pauline letters. It was necessary to face up to the past cross-cultural blindness of social psychology and to find a way to make it applicable across time and culture.

In the second chapter, we began with the definition of a small group and looked at the variety of perspectives that have been developed for analyzing small groups. This is one of the strengths of current research into small groups: an interdisciplinary and multi-perspectival approach. The bulk of the chapter dealt with formulating a model of small group founding. We limited ourselves to examining founded and self-organized groups, groups in which internal forces predominate, and to analyzing only the formation process up until the group begins. We then delineated the process by which a group forms, which includes the areas of context, connection and coalescence. Though our model is built upon the work of Richard Moreland and Holly Arrow et al., it is unique in drawing in the latest research and in highlighting several factors, including: 1) group founding is a process; 2) the framework on which the coalescing group accretes is social connections – it is the strengthening of these social network ties that draws a group into being; 3) there are multiple components of group coalescence, which includes intersecting elements stressing behaviour, affect and cognition; 4) a variety of approaches are involved, so that, for example, categorization, as conceived in social identity theory, and frame alignment, coming from the symbolic-interpretive perspective, are included in cognitive coalescence. Finally, with an eye toward the cultural context of the Pauline groups, an initial fine tuning of the model using the collectivism-individualism cultural syndrome was made.

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The third chapter explored the evidence of small group founding in the Greco-Roman world. A full investigation of the epigraphical material on the founding of associations yielded sparse material. However, when combined with an examination of the founding of rhetorical and philosophical groups, some further insight into group founding in the ancient world was gained. We found, for example: 1) Context: the importance of benefaction, honour, loyalty and competition; 2) Connection: connections through social institutions outweighed casual ties; 3) Coalescence: the presence of all components of coalescence and yet often the prominence of cognitive coalescence and the relative weakness of affective coalescence. These insights were used to refine the model we developed in chapter two.

We turned to Pauline small groups in chapter four. We began with Paul’s perspective on group founding and then provided a general overview of Pauline group founding focused on the expectations of the model and the data in Paul’s letters. Such elements as the following were noted: 1) the establishment of contacts; 2) the function of hospitality when entering a new location; 3) the social context of Paul’s activity being situated in the workshop, the household and possibly the synagogue; 4) connections growing from among ethnic/religious and occupational contacts; 5) the variety in coalescence, though focusing on cognitive coalescence and frame alignment. We noted that our exploration in this chapter of how Pauline groups were founded should be seen as a tool to generate possibilities/probabilities and focused questions, while eliminating ill-conceived propositions.

We proceeded then in the next chapter to look at specific Pauline groups. For the groups in Thessalonica, Corinth and Galatia, we examined group founding texts and drew conclusions structured around three propositions which flowed from our group founding model.
First, for each of the groups we provided a model based explanation of the current view (though often downplayed in favour of a strictly cognitive approach) that Paul’s groups arose out of combination of behavioural, affective and cognitive factors. Of note is that we found little direct evidence of a strong affective coalescence. This may be due to the nature of our sources, but it also points to a significant cultural factor. Even as loyalty may be seen as a behavioural and not an emotional item in the ancient world, so too the forces which strengthened the bonds that initiated the formation of these groups may well have been predominantly behavioural and cognitive and not affective. This is not to suggest, however, that the resultant groups did not develop strong affective bonds or that later recruitment may not have had an affective element. The work of Stark and Bainbridge has suggested that this latter element is necessary for the success of a group, but even their results need to be adjusted for small group founding with an eye to the more recent work on social identity and cross-cultural psychology.

The second proposition dealt with the composition of the group and provided some advance in our understanding of the makeup of the groups. Each of the groups was predominantly gentile as they began. As recent study has shown the imperial cult was of significance in all three locations and must be seen as part of the religious, political and cultural background of the early adopters of Paul’s message. Also, as we have repeatedly assumed, from the perspective of our small group founding model, the most likely cult background of the initial gentile members would share a

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congruent outlook to Paul’s – hypsistarian worshippers. One difference seen in the composition of the groups was the degree of homogeneity/heterogeneity. As one would expect in a collectivist culture the Thessalonian and Galatian groups were socially homogenous. The unexpected heterogeneity of the Corinthian group finds its explanation in the incorporation of households into the group as it formed.

The third proposition looked at the levels of homogeneity and social threat during group formation and their impact on the subsequent development of the group. Here we provided new insight into the later differences between the groups with respect to their adherence to Pauline norms and values. The seeds of later conformity to (Thessalonica), divergence from (Corinth), or extreme over-extension of (and so abandonment of) (Galatia) Pauline norms is to be found in the coalescing phase of each group.

Where might this research lead in the future? Several directions suggest themselves. First, groups are dynamic systems and small differences in initial conditions may set groups on significantly different paths of development.\(^6\) We have noted several areas where this is evident and for which, given the research on small groups, we proposed the general contours of the resultant path. One of these areas was the presence of social conflict during formation. If, as we have proposed, this results in centralized communication and so to deductive construction of social identity, one may further examine additional differences between the Thessalonian group and the Corinthian group with this in mind, looking at, for example, the differences in Paul’s manner of exercising authority and in the development of norms within the groups, and so on. One could also

\(^6\)Arrow et al., *Small Groups as Complex Systems*, 79-80.
examine the similarities and differences between the Thessalonian group and the Galatian groups, with an eye to group polarization.

Second, one could now move on to the examination of further stages of development and growth of the groups. While there is extensive current work being done on the development of social identity in Pauline groups, there is much more that could be applied from small group theory. Currently much of this work on social identity focuses on the level of social groups (rather than ‘small group’ identity), textual/socio-rhetorical concerns (rather than actual small group actions and reactions) and with little attention to the dynamics of small group development, particularly when viewed from a group level perspective (rather than an individual or strictly cognitive approach) – the application of small group formation theory would add another dimension to the discussion.
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