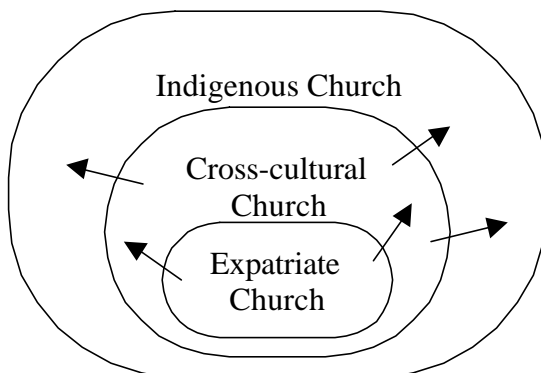


## THE GOSPEL INN: PAUL'S MISSION TO THE EXPATRIATE COMMUNITIES

By Dr. David J. Pederson<sup>1</sup>

At times, I am exasperated with Paul's energetic church planting efforts. How can one individual accomplish so much in so little time? Paul traveled over 10,000 miles, crossed distinct cultural barriers, worked in several large metropolitan areas, and finished his work in fifteen years with "no place left in these regions" (Rom 15:23). How was he able to completely evangelize the region of Asia Minor and Greece? As I have searched for an answer, my admiration remains; yet, my exasperation has been tempered by an understanding that his initial target group was the expatriate and cross-cultural community. This paper identifies the value of working with expatriate groups and marginalized people by examining a prosopography of people associated with the apostle Paul. While I do not wish to fall into the fallacy of assuming that Paul's methods *must* be duplicated in our



enterprise today, I wish to give support to the growing mission movement that strengthens and plants churches among the expatriate populations of our rapidly globalized world. Particularly in Europe, church planting has recently focused on the expatriate community as a starting point. As the above diagram shows, the expatriate church expands over time to become an indigenous body. This new wave of

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church planting often starts with English as the common language rather than the indigenous tongue.<sup>2</sup>

Paul has been considered an urban minister, itinerant minister, pioneer missionary, frontier missionary, and by some, an advocate for the 10/40 window.<sup>3</sup> The fact that his mission to expatriate people has not been deeply examined may be due to the unique cosmopolitan nature of the Roman world into which the gospel was sent. Stephen Neill writes that Paul's mission to the God-fearers attached to the synagogues of the Roman Empire is categorically different from other periods of mission history:

It was in this group that the preaching of the gospel found its most ready and its most immediate response. When it was made plain to these folk that, without undergoing the rite of circumcision, which both Greeks and Romans regarded as degrading and repulsive, they could win all that Judaism could offer them and a good deal else besides, it was not hard for them to take one further step and to accept the faith of Jesus Christ. It was the presence of this prepared élite that differentiated the missions of the apostolic age from those of every subsequent time, *and makes comparison almost impossible*. These people, or the best of them, had been well-trained in the Old Testament; they had accepted its moral as well as its theological ideas.<sup>4</sup>

A thorough comparison of mission history that looks for dynamic equivalents of the God-fearers is beyond the scope of this paper. However, I see value in examining the circle of Paul's associates. Once their cultural orientation is determined, we might be able to see if a pattern of mission emerges which might make comparison not only possible, but helpful. Wayne Meeks built a prosopography of the Pauline circle in order to demonstrate the social status of Pauline Christianity. In his work, he counters claims that early

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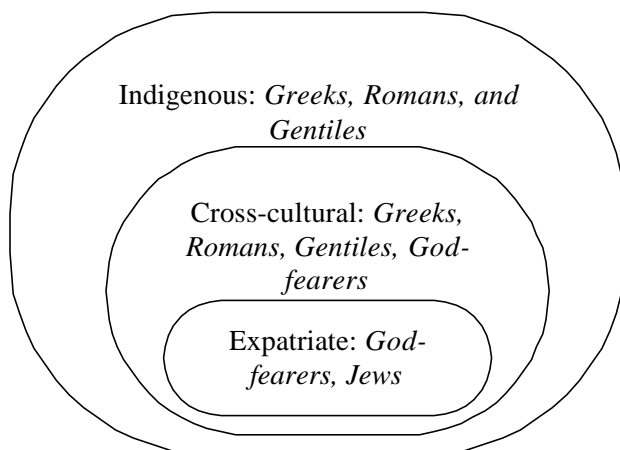
<sup>2</sup>Intercontinental Church Society, Christian Associates International, Southern Baptists, and the Assemblies of God are planting three to five International Congregations per year in Europe.

<sup>3</sup>See E. Michael Jaffarian, "Paul Tipped the Balance Toward the Frontiers," *EMQ*, 32 (1996): 165; Michael Pocock, "Focus and Balance in Missionary Outreach," *EMQ*, 32 (1996): 160-64; and P. T. O'Brien, *Gospel and Mission in the Writings of Paul: An Exegetical and Theological Analysis* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1995).

<sup>4</sup>Stephen Neill, *A History of Christian Missions* (Middlesex: Penguin, 1964), 27-28 (*italics mine*).

Christianity was a movement of the underclass and underprivileged masses of the Roman Empire. He describes the early church as urban, mobile, and interconnected.<sup>5</sup>

This examination of the types of expatriates in the New Testament is confined to Luke/Acts and the thirteen letters of Paul. Acts identifies indigenous people with city names (such as Athenians), generic names such as islanders (in Malta, 28:2, 4) or the crowd (of the Lyconian region, Acts 14:11), and ethnic descriptions such as Greeks or Barbarians. While Luke always considered Jews (living away from their homeland) to be expatriates, there is overlap in the semantic range referring to the God-fearer and Greek. Sometimes God-fearers were expatriates, other times, cross-cultural. Sometimes the Greeks were indigenous, other times, cross-cultural. Sometimes the phrase, "Jews and Greeks," refers to Jews and cross-cultural Greeks who were God-fearers attached to the synagogue (18:4). Other times it refers to Jews as expatriates and Greeks as indigenous (19:10, 17; perhaps 20:20).



For this study I have defined an expatriate as a person who is living in a foreign environment due to business, education, travel, mission, or personal necessity. A cross-cultural person is a person living in his/her native environment who has assimilated parts of another culture through language study, business contacts, or marriage.

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<sup>5</sup>Wayne A. Meeks, *The First Urban Christians: The Social World of the Apostle Paul* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1983), 12-32 and 72-74.

An indigenous person may be xenophobic, neutral, or cross-cultural. To focus these definitions, I have developed labels that describe the relative orientation of a person. A Third Culture Expatriate (TCE) is a person who comfortably moves between cultures, willing to adopt or settle in a new locale as well as being willing to remain on the move. A Home Culture Expatriate (HCE) has greater difficulty adapting, often preferring to return home, or bring part of home on the journey. Ethnic Expatriates (EE) are those who have retained ethnic identity throughout generations of settlement away from the homeland. The diaspora sent Jews into many imperial cities as Ethnic Expatriates. Indigenous people may be the historic residents of a location, as in the Lyconians who gave homage to the apostles (Acts 14:8-20); or they may be colonized residents, as in the colonists of Philippi who acted unbecomingly toward Paul and Silas, not knowing they were Roman citizens (Acts 16:16-40).

Before embarking on a prosopographic study of expatriate and indigenous people, I must offer five caveats. First, the data is incomplete for many characters. Wayne Meeks starts with eighty names and settles on thirty individuals in order to develop his prosopography. My selection is somewhat larger, but several cases lack sufficient evidence.<sup>6</sup> Second, the gospel commission tends to have a transforming effect on people; so a person may change his orientation over time. John Mark, the failed expatriate, is an excellent example of this fluidity. Third, the context of Acts and the epistles is a cross-cultural context. Every person or group in some way or another is cross-cultural. Furthermore, many of Paul's associates, often being missionaries themselves, would naturally be expatriates. Fourth, the world that faced Paul was far more cosmopolitan than many situations of recent centuries. Deeming only Roman citizens as expatriates would exclude the vast number of slaves who routinely traveled for household business. Excluding Jews who had long-settled in a particular city

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<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 56. The clue for discovering social status may only be the name "which in the particular context may be significant." Though not as reduced as Meeks, this prosopography eliminates certain names from the outset for lack of information. Eleven eliminated are Appelles and the ten (in two groups of five) in Romans 16:15. It is clear because of his greeting style that Paul knew as expatriates Prisca and Aquila, Epānetus, Mary, Andronicus and Junias, Ampliatus, Urbanus, Stachys, and Apelles. Since Rufus is mentioned after the household greetings, it is not unlikely those of Aristobulus, Herodion, those of Narcissus, Tryphaena and Tryphosa, and Persis the beloved were also personal friends who had met Paul apart from Rome, gaining his respect as fellow workers in the Lord.

(such as Thessalonica) would fail to understand their basic orientation toward the homeland.

The final consideration is the particular theological world of Luke which may potentially be lost as we seek to determine Paul's attitude toward indigenous people. For example, Acts 19:21 places Paul's determination to depart Ephesus in the context of a growing antipathy from the indigenous community. Is Luke's record of Paul's intention to depart an emphasis of Paul's eschatological plan to bring in the fullness of the gentiles? Or is he signifying that Paul's work was done since expatriate mission had spilled over into the indigenous community? Differing views of Luke's theological view of the synagogue may also hinder an accurate portrayal of Paul's mission to expatriates. I hold that he went to the synagogue both to find a receptive audience and to fulfill the call of the gospel to "the Jew first." On the other hand, holding a completion view of Paul's mission will place the expatriate mission (to the Jews) chronologically first, though not strategically important.<sup>7</sup> Furthermore, the intended readers of Luke's history may not have wished to hear of extensive proselytizing of the indigenous population.<sup>8</sup> Luke may have deliberately downplayed the number of indigenous converts by leaving out their names and using only vague references (Acts 19:20; 26). Luke has also been accused of fabricating or enlarging the number of God-fearers in order to downplay the social disruption which Paul brought to the cities in which he preached. The God-fearers are now supported through archeology, but it also seems clear that such a group served some literary purpose for Luke as he describes Paul's movement from

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<sup>7</sup>David Bosch states that Luke records Paul's synagogue visits due to the Jewish priority in salvation history. See *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 94-95. On the other hand, Johannes Verkuyl says that Paul visited the synagogue simply to find a receptive audience. See *Contemporary Missiology* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978). F. F. Bruce agrees, stating that the synagogue was used by Paul and his colleagues as "long as they were permitted [to participate]." See *New Testament History* (New York: Doubleday, 1980), 145. For a completion view, see R. D. Aus, "Paul's Travel Plans to Spain and the 'Full Number of the Gentiles' of Romans 11:25," *Novum Testamentum* 21 (1979): 232-62.

<sup>8</sup>Downplaying proselytizing efforts may have a parallel in Jewish writings. An examination of literary evidence by Shaye J. D. Cohen has shown that Josephus divides Gentiles who respect Judaism into three different groups: tolerant dignitaries, adherents, and converts. In *Bell. and Ant.* there is no overt pride in the fact that Gentiles convert to Judaism. Josephus seems to be concealing the point of conversion, perhaps in reaction to such expulsions from Rome as in A.D. 19 as stated by Dio Cassius, "they were converting many of the natives to their ways." See Shaye J. D. Cohen, "Respect for Judaism by Gentiles According to Josephus," *Harvard Theological Review* 80:4 (1987): 409-30.

synagogue to gentile community.<sup>9</sup> In spite of these uncertainties and other weaknesses, it is valuable to rediscover the world of the apostle Paul through the lens of Acts as Luke explains the expansion of the gospel into the expatriate and indigenous communities.

The prosopography of Paul's mission begins with Paul himself, an expatriate who was conversant in the language and culture of Tarsus and Jerusalem. Paul's formative training as a Christian minister took place in an international congregation in Antioch.<sup>10</sup> Each of the five prophets and teachers listed in Acts 13:1 originated from a region other than Antioch. Barnabas was from Cyprus (Acts 4:36), having resided in Jerusalem where he had property and relatives (compare Acts 12:12 with Col 4:10).<sup>11</sup> Simeon may have been "Simon of Cyrene . . . the father of Alexander and Rufus (Mark 15:21), the cross-bearer."<sup>12</sup> Lucius was an African as well (from Cyrene). Manaen's geographical origin was diverse, having been raised in the court of Herod.<sup>13</sup> Saul (Paul) of Tarsus completes the list of prophets and teachers present for

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<sup>9</sup>In 1981, A. T. Kraabel advanced that the God-fearer was a literary invention unsupported by archeological evidence. See "The Disappearance of the God-Fearers," in *Diaspora Jews and Judaism: Essays in Honor of, and in Dialogue with, A. Thomas Kraabel* (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 119-30. Subsequent articles (same volume) by Max Wilcox, Thomas Finn, G. Nickelsburg and G. MacRae, and Robert S. MacLennan also questioned Luke's reliability regarding God-fearers. The disappearing God-fearers reappeared with the discovery (in 1976) of the longest inscription yet to be found from a synagogue, at Aphrodisias, in Asia Minor. The Aphrodisias inscription gives clear evidence of a class of Gentiles not only associated with the synagogue, but participating in the prayer life of the synagogue. See Irina A. Levinskaya, "A Jewish or Gentile Prayer House: The Meaning of Proseuche," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41:1 (1990): 154-59, and "The Inscription from Aphrodisias and the Problem of God-Fearers," *Tyndale Bulletin* 41:2 (1990): 312-18.

<sup>10</sup>Daniel R. Sanchez, "The International Church: A Vital Key in World Evangelization," A copy of lectures presented at the European Baptist Convention, Interlaken, Switzerland (July 1995), in possession of the author.

<sup>11</sup>F. F. Bruce, *The Book of Acts* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1954), 109. He surmises that the property sold by Barnabas (Acts 4:36) may have been a burial plot.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, 260. Bruce notes that Simeon was given a Latin nickname, "Niger," presumably because he had a dark complexion. Furthermore, the connection between Rufus' mother and Paul (Rom 16:13) may point to the hospitality of Simeon's family in Antioch where Paul stayed in their household. Marshall, however, notes that if this Simeon (Σιμων) is the same as the cross bearer, then it is surprising that Luke spelled his name differently in Luke 23:26 (Σιμων). Even if Simeon is not connected to the cross-bearing follower, the Latin nickname indicates a complexion of African origin. See I. Howard Marshall, *Acts: Tyndale New Testament Commentaries* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1980), 214.

<sup>13</sup>A common rejoinder given by a third culture child (cf. David Pollock in *Raising Resilient MKs*, ed. Joyce Bowers (Colorado Springs: Association of Christian Schools International, 1998), 45ff.) who has been moved to a number of divergent locations in his formative years is, "my father was a diplomat." Manaen may have been Luke's informant about the history of Herod's family, since he was raised with Herod Antipas (Acts 13:2).

prayer at the time when the Holy Spirit set them apart for deliberate mission work (13:2). It was this international congregation that sent Paul on a mission.

Are there groups that were "avoided" by the apostle? It appears that Paul's mission follows the inclusive pattern laid down in Antioch, where Gentiles (God-fearers) were approached and favorably responded to the gospel (Acts 11:18, 20). However, indigenous people—particularly xenophobic people—do not appear to be a primary focus of Paul's mission. The followers of Zeus who worshipped Barnabas and Saul were indigenous to Lystra, as evidenced by their language.<sup>14</sup> The crowd misunderstood and eventually stoned Paul at the instigation of Jews from Antioch and Iconium who (presumably) incited Jews in Lystra against the apostles (14:19).<sup>15</sup> Whether the healing of the crippled man is a focused effort toward the indigenous community is not evident because the ensuing confusion leaves the apostles considerably worse off than before. Certainly, the stoning by the crowd leaves out the possibility of a significant impact on the indigenous population. It seems most likely that the disciples who gathered around the dazed apostle were from a God-fearing community much like the one met in Pisidian Antioch.

In Philippi, while Paul was focusing ministry on the expatriates gathered at Lydia's stream, he was followed by a slave girl owned by indigenous residents of Philippi (16:18). The accusers highlighted the foreign character of the apostles ("they are Jews") and the indigenous (Roman) character of themselves ("us Romans"). As a result of the exorcism, the apostles were beaten, imprisoned, and asked to leave the city (16:23, 40). Another encounter with indigenous people takes place on the island in Malta (28:1-9). No baptisms or conversions are recorded, although the Apostle performs various healings and is considered to be a god by the indigenous population.<sup>16</sup> In this case, he does not leave a group of believers behind, presumably because there was no Jewish expatriate or God-fearing community. The only

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<sup>14</sup>The fact that the Temple was outside of the city does not indicate that the cult was an expatriate cult. Other indigenous cults were located on the outskirts of the city, often because of the massive size of a temple, such as the Temple of Artemis at Ephesus.

<sup>15</sup>A Jewish synagogue in Lystra is likely because it explains how Jews from Pisidian Antioch and Iconium could persuade the Lystrans to harm Paul and Barnabas. At least there was a Jewish presence in Lystra as indicated in Acts 16:1. See Bruce (*Acts*, 295) and Marshall (page 234) for opposing views on the synagogue question.

<sup>16</sup>As Paul leaves the island, his companions are furnished with supplies. There is no indication of any brothers or disciples who remained there (compare similar brief visits in 17:10, 15).

available expatriate group appears to have been the household of Publius that sheltered some of the stranded travelers (28:7).

Paul does not consistently avoid contact with indigenous residents. In Athens, Paul had a mixed reception in his outreach to the Areopagites (17:32-34). The Areopagites were not considered entirely indigenous, as Luke mentions that the Athenians *and foreigners* spent their time exchanging ideas (17:21). The message is directed toward those outside of the typical expatriate community of Jews, God-fearers, or those favorably predisposed to the Hebrew scriptures. His subsequent reflection in 1 Corinthians 2:1-5 appears to set aside the particular approach he used in Athens. In Ephesus and Corinth, Paul's systematic teaching converted both expatriates and many unnamed indigenous people (Acts 18:9; 19:10, 20, 26). In Ephesus, the effects of his teaching eventually encroached upon the business of the indigenous people and a riot nearly broke out (19:40). The crowd readily identified Paul's expatriate companions (Gaius and Aristarchus). After public rejection by the indigenous leaders, Paul met with the brothers and then immediately left the city (Acts 14:20; 16:40; 20:1). Ephesus demonstrates that Paul made his teaching available to indigenous people, but did not exert extraordinary effort to convert crowds or leaders of indigenous people.

Mission companionship was sought from Third Culture Expatriates (TCEs) who were able to relate to a broad spectrum of people. Barnabas (alias Joseph) retained ties with Cyprus, Jerusalem, Antioch, and the places that he and Paul had visited on the first missionary journey. That he was chosen to deliver relief supplies to Jerusalem (Acts 11:30) and official news from Jerusalem (Acts 15:22) shows that he enjoyed great respect among different groups of people.<sup>17</sup> He experiences some of the TCE dissonance, such as torn allegiance (Acts 15:37) and (in the Lycaonian case) humorous misidentity (Acts 14:12).<sup>18</sup> Silas, along with Judas, had been chosen by the Jerusalem Council to join with Barnabas and Saul in presenting the Jerusalem Council's decision to the church in Antioch. Probably a diaspora Jew, Silas was received well and must have returned to Antioch by the

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<sup>17</sup>Barnabas can be seen as the model expatriate, giving encouragement financially (4:36), extending fellowship to outsiders (9:27), and willing to work with those expatriates who were discouraged (15:39).

<sup>18</sup>See also Acts 4:36; 11:22, 25, 30; 12:25; 13:1-50; 14:12-20; 15:2-37; 1 Cor 9:6; Gal 2:1, 9, 13; Col 4:10.



spring of A.D. 50.<sup>19</sup> Like Paul, Silas was a Roman citizen and was probably conversant in Latin as well as Greek and Aramaic. He is last seen living in Rome as Peter's amanuensis (1 Pet 5:12). Timothy was born into a bi-cultural family and was chosen (and modified by Paul) to relate to a broad group of people (Acts 16:3). Aquila was a native of Pontus who had migrated to Rome.<sup>20</sup> His wife, Priscilla, may have been from a higher social standing than he was. They had generally strong ties to other expatriates (Paul, Apollos) due to occupation (tentmaking) and personality. They did not settle for periods longer than four years during the history covered by Luke and Paul's correspondence.

Less known companions also exhibit the dissonance and flexibility of the TCE. Luke was trained in medicine and well-connected to both Jews and Greeks. Aristarchus was a native of Thessalonica who, along with Gaius, was with Paul during the metalsmith riot in Ephesus. He also traveled with Paul to Jerusalem and on to Rome where he shared company with the imprisoned apostle. Paul calls him a "fellow prisoner" (Col 4:10) and "fellow worker" (Phlm 24). In Ephesus, Gaius and Aristarchus were seized because they were Macedonian traveling companions of Paul (Acts 19:30). Artemas could be considered a TCE because of Paul's willingness to send him as a delegate to Crete (Titus 3:12). As noted above, Manaen, Simeon, and Lucius were expatriates dwelling in Antioch with Paul (Acts 13:1). The slave Onesimus, a fellow prisoner with Paul, had been so helpful that the Apostle wished for Philemon to return him to Paul's service. Being a slave, Onesimus may have had a specific home culture. Given the fact that he ran to the imperial city, it is best to consider him a TCE capable of residing abroad (Col 4:9; Phlm 10). Onesiphorus was also highly capable of service in diverse locations, rendering service both in Ephesus and Rome (2 Tim 1:16; 4:19). Clement is simply called a "fellow worker" (Phil 4:3). Paul mentions Crescens who traveled to Dalmatia (2 Tim 4:10). Lydia was a Greek international businesswoman of some means who practiced regular prayer at the stream outside of Philippi. She was converted and her household was baptized by Paul. Her business was based upon a product abundant in her hometown (Acts 16:14). Aristobulus may have been of the

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<sup>19</sup>Ronald Brownrigg, *Who's Who in the New Testament* (Canada: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1971), 410.

<sup>20</sup>The question of the typicality of such migrations is left open by Meeks (see page 212, n. 264) for lack of evidence. However, in the case of Aquila, it is possible to list at least some of his travels (Acts 18:2, 18, 26; Rom 16:3, 1 Cor 16:19; 2 Tim 4:19).

household of Herod Aristobulus (Rom 16:10). Epaphras was the first convert from Asia. Paul greets him in the letter to the Romans. It is not necessary for Epaphras to have been in Rome on “Christian business” as one of the leading Ephesian leaders when Paul wrote to Rome.<sup>21</sup> It is most likely that Epaphras was an expatriate whom Paul had met during his many travels. Andronicus and Junias were Jews with Greek names. They were of the Hellenized Jews dispersed to Antioch, Cyprus, and elsewhere in Stephen’s persecution.<sup>22</sup>

Some expatriates eventually settled down. Epaphras adopted the Colossae region as his home after having been trained by Paul (probably in Ephesus, A.D. 54-57). Paul attests to his chosen relocation, “Epaphras, who is one of your number, a bondsman of Jesus Christ, sends you his greetings” (Col 4:12).<sup>23</sup> Another settler appears to be Mary, whom Paul greets in Rome. While the relationship with her home culture is unknown, Paul indicates that Mary may have relocated permanently or as a resident in order to bestow much hard work upon the Roman church (Rom 16:6).

Other expatriates, though not directly associated with Paul, are significant to his ministry. Apollos, a native of Alexandria,<sup>24</sup> arrived in Ephesus (A.D. 53) while Paul was in Antioch. Apollos arrived with companions who taught the baptism of John.<sup>25</sup> However, they “had little knowledge of the purpose and progress of the Christian movement.”<sup>26</sup> Philip was conversant in more than one culture. His ability is obvious because of his connection with both Aramaic and

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<sup>21</sup>Brownrigg, 100.

<sup>22</sup>Ibid., 252.

<sup>23</sup>As an expatriate settler, Epaphras retains his willingness and ability to travel, being called a ‘fellow prisoner’ by Paul (Col 1:7; 3:12; Phlm 23).

<sup>24</sup>Luke probably lists background information because Alexandrian Jews (jAlexandreuV" tw'/ gevnel) were known for their eloquent speech and allegorical style. The ethnic and geographical background could have also been included to help explain why a Jew would be named after a Greek god, Apollos.

<sup>25</sup>The context does not clearly indicate the origin or faith of these disciples. Bruce (*Acts*, 385) asserts that they were most definitely Christian because they are described as disciples. Marshall (see page 305) says they only appeared as disciples to Paul, who found them upon further questioning to be needing salvation because they did not exhibit the Spirit. Brownrigg (31) suggests that the disciples had traveled with Apollos to Ephesus, apparently because of the qualifying pronoun *tina* (maqhtav"). This suggestion must be taken seriously because it is unlikely that Apollos converted such disciples by his ‘defective’ teaching and then abandoned them after his correction by Priscilla and Aquila. Paul arrived at Ephesus, heard of Priscilla and Aquila’s success with Apollos, and immediately sought out these other (perhaps Alexandrian?) Jews who might make up the nucleus of the church. Here we see an instance where Paul enters into a city and does not immediately go to the synagogue (cf. Acts 17:17; 28:17).

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 31.

Greek-speaking Jews in Jerusalem, his immediate entrance into Samaria, his encounter with the Ethiopian eunuch, and his home in the imperial city of Caesarea. His ministry pictures the culmination of Jesus' extension of the gospel to Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria, and the rest of the world (Acts 1:8). The appointment of six Greek-speaking Jews and one Gentile proselyte, Nicholas, ensured that inequality within the community would not be tolerated. However, cultural and linguistic differences would be accommodated. This principle which tolerated natural barriers was also applied during the first "worldwide" council of Acts 15 which met to discuss the right of pagans to convert directly to Christianity without going first through Judaism (Acts 15:21).

A small segment of Paul's band consisted of home-culture expatriates (HCE). John Mark at first appears quite bound to his home culture (Acts 15:38; 2 Tim 4:11). The transformation in Mark's life from the home culture expatriate to a third culture expatriate (HCE to TCE) is due in part to patient Barnabas (Acts 15:36-41). Whether Demas, the one-time faithful companion of Paul, is an HCE is unclear (2 Tim 4:10).<sup>27</sup> Epaphroditus is an HCE who had been sent by the local Philippian church to help Paul with gifts and service. Gerald Hawthorne advances four reasons why Paul sent Epaphroditus back to his home: (1) he was the only traveler available to convey Paul's immediate thanks; (2) he was homesick; (3) he had become ill; (4) the Philippian church was anxious over Epaphroditus. I modified the "homesickness" reason: (5) Epaphroditus was not accustomed to expatriate travel and life and, therefore, was a burden to the Apostle. Paul's praise appears disproportionate to the service rendered by Epaphroditus. Paul calls him brother, fellow worker, fellow soldier, messenger (αἰποῦστολον), and spiritual service giver (leitourgoVn).<sup>28</sup> Yet, Paul lists no additional acts of service besides the bearing of the gift from Philippi. Furthermore, Paul does not request Epaphroditus to return with Philippian news. Instead, he expects to send Timothy (2:19). The Apostle speaks as if the Philippian gifts have been recently brought (4:18 temporal participle dexavmeno") by Epaphroditus. This indicates that Epaphroditus' homesickness (εἰπιποqw'n) and distress

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<sup>27</sup>Paul's epitaph, "having loved this present world" could be taken as Demas deserting the Apostle for home or some other location (Col 4:17; Phil 1:2).

<sup>28</sup>It is true that Paul uses a similar descriptive for equally or even less-known individuals, such as Archippus of Colossae (Col 4:17 Phlm 2).

(ajdhmonw'n) were more of a burden than a benefit to the Apostle.<sup>29</sup> It is likely that at some point in his journey from Philippi that Epaphroditus fell ill. News traveled back to Philippi independently.<sup>30</sup> The news of the Philippian concern reached Paul close to the time when Epaphroditus had arrived, thus adding embarrassment to his affliction. Fortunatus may fall into the class of expatriates who were tourists (1 Cor 16:17). Phoebe had wealth and social standing in the community in Corinth and Cenchrae, where she lived. That she frequently traveled to Rome need not be assumed, since it appears that she was unknown to the Roman church. Paul's appeal for help may indicate that she had never before traveled to Rome (Rom 16:1-2).

Some useful bridge-builders were ethnic expatriates (EE). Achaicus (1 Cor 16:17) appears to have been residing in Corinth at the time that he visited Paul. Meeks surmises that it was not likely that he received the nickname, "native of Achaia," while living in Achaia. He had probably lived in Italy and there received his nickname that remained with him as he resettled as a freedmen colonist.<sup>31</sup> Presumably, Achaicus was one of the first converts in Corinth, being a member of the household which Paul personally baptized (Stephanas). Such bridges to the local culture would be highly valued by missionaries. Mnason was a Jew who had returned to Jerusalem to settle. As an expatriate, he would be a natural host for the Apostle to the diaspora Jews and God-fearing Gentiles (Acts 21:16).<sup>32</sup> The Synagogue of the Freedmen is an example of an expatriate group that has returned home

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<sup>29</sup>Gerald F. Hawthorne, *Philippians: Word Biblical Commentary* (Waco, Texas: Word Books, 1983), 114-21. He identifies Paul's appreciation for the Philippian's grant of permanent leave. "The fact that he uses the absolute *pevmyai* ('to send') and not *pevmyai* modified by *pavlin* or any other preposition or adverb meaning 'to send back' (JB, NIV), implies that the Philipppians had given Epaphroditus to Paul . . . as long as he needed him" (see page 117). However, this does not necessitate a great length of service for any great period of time.

<sup>30</sup>The news of his sickness must have arrived independent of Paul. Otherwise, why would Paul send an emissary telling of the sickness without also finding out about the welfare of the church? Considering an Ephesus imprisonment, it is possible that Epaphroditus caught a boat from Neapolis to Ephesus. He fell ill aboard ship immediately and this news was passed back to Neapolis at one of the port stops along the way (Samothraki?). Less than ten days later, he arrived sick in Ephesus.

<sup>31</sup>Meeks, 56-57. Meeks cites Glen W. Bowersock, *Augustus and the Greek World* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1965), 71. Bowersock says that the use of a place name likely points to servile origins.

<sup>32</sup>Brownrigg, 314. Brownrigg accepts that the Jerusalem apostles did not house Paul and his companions because they anticipated the fate that awaited him from the hand of the Jewish rulers. However, it is unlikely that Paul himself would have wished to put the Jerusalem Jewish Christians into compromising situations by housing his multi-background party. It is better to see the choice as Paul's rather than the church elders' refusal.

to the ethnic homeland. This group attacked Stephen with the greatest intensity, perhaps because their synagogue was losing a significant amount of members to the evangelists (Acts 6:8-10). The Jewish ethnic expatriates that Paul meets did not all travel. Crispus was converted and baptized by Paul. Eunice, the mother of Timothy, presumably remained at Lystra where she had raised Timothy, the son of her husband who was Greek and presumably indigenous to Lystra.<sup>33</sup> Some of these ethnic expatriates were opposed to any disturbances that Paul might bring into their community. Ananias is a sound Jewish name which the faithful disciple in Damascus (Acts 9:11) shared with the pseudo-Christian (Acts 5:1-11) and the High Priest (Acts 23:3-5). Whereas Ananias can be considered an EE because of his location in Damascus, there is no indication that he was a bridge-builder between the Jews and Greeks. Paul calls him a man who was devout by the standard of the Law, well spoken of by all of the Jews who lived there (Acts 22:12). Jason (in Thessalonica) also appeared to have come from a family that had settled down due to the fact that the officials readily received his bond for Paul (Acts 17:9). Of those not so favorable to the Christians, Alexander was an expatriate Jew living in Ephesus. Whether he is the apostate Alexander of 1 Tim 1:19-20 is not clear.<sup>34</sup> From Acts 19:33 we can observe the Jewish people in conflict with the large indigenous mob gathered at the Ephesus theater. Incited over the effects of Jewish Paul's preaching which was devaluing the trade surrounding the Temple of Artemis, the people were on the verge of rioting (19:40). The Jews were unable or unwilling to make a united public stand against the gathered mob; so they pushed (probalovntwn) Alexander forward as their spokesman. Alexander was not received once the crowd found out that he was a Jew. With his Greek name and the confidence that the Jews apparently had in him, it is possible that Alexander had been a bridge between the Jews and the Greeks living in Ephesus in past times. Paul's conflict with ethnic expatriates (Jews and synagogue officials) is a recurring theme in Luke. Bar-Jesus was under the patronage of Sergius Paulus who invited Barnabas and Saul to present the "word of God" to him. In an attempt

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<sup>33</sup>Ibid., 111. Eunice serves as a model for a Christian expatriate woman married to a Christian or non-Christian indigenous husband. It is presumed that she did not follow Timothy to Ephesus since Paul did not greet her by name in his words to her son.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid., 22. Brownrigg says that Alexander had "seemingly attached" himself to Paul. However, this is not necessary in the context. Paul's band did not enter into the theater (Acts 19:31). But the Jews were present and put forward Alexander.

to deny a hearing, Elymas met with temporary blindness. The governor believed the gospel (Acts 12:4-12). While the seven sons of Sceva were not directly opposing Paul, they are not considered part of his band of workers. This exercising band of seven received publicity among the indigenous people of Ephesus because of their embarrassing encounter with an overpowering demon. As a result, the ministry of Paul advanced (Acts 19:13-16).

Certain ambiguous cases should also be noted. Apphia (Phlm 2) according to tradition was martyred in Colossae during Nero's persecution. There is no indication besides her social status, as the wife of Philemon, that she traveled. Archippus (most likely her son) was leading the church (Phlm 2). Philemon was the wealthy home owner and slave owner who does not appear willing to travel extensively beyond Asia Minor.<sup>35</sup> Erastus was the city treasurer of Corinth and supportive of the Apostolic work (Rom 16:23). Euodia and Syntyche are unknown apart from Paul's correspondence to Philippi. So placing them as indigenous is quite tentative, especially since Paul considers them fellow laborers.<sup>36</sup>

Some indigenous people were xenophobic and resistant. Others were converted, though unnamed. Others were either neutral or helpful to the mission. Gamaliel was the grandson of Hillel and the teacher of Saul of Tarsus. He gives a practical warning to leave the Christians alone because a human work would eventually die out (Acts 5:35-39). Gamaliel demonstrates the neutral approach to expatriates. James is an indigenous cross-cultural person who is neutral to those from outside. Although unwilling to participate directly in fellowship with the Gentiles, he makes it possible to do so by moderating the first council of the church. However, the prohibition against fornication may have been an implicit ban on marriages between Jew and Gentile.<sup>37</sup> James does not appear to have traveled outside of Palestine, although

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<sup>35</sup>The letter of Philemon is the longest personal description in which little evidence is given about the cross-cultural position of the people listed. We may surmise that Onesimus felt himself safe in Rome, perhaps being aware that his master never had traveled that far. Paul also hints that it was impractical for Philemon to provide the kind of personal assistance which Onisemus was able to give (Phlm 13). Thus, we may suppose that Philemon was not given to travel. But, granting his wealth, this question must remain open.

<sup>36</sup>Hawthorne, 179. Hawthorne says that is it not necessary to follow the Tübingen School which designates one as the Jewish and the other as the Gentile element in the church. However, it is possible that each was important in the church as "deaconesses" or "within their homes a separate congregation met for worship."

<sup>37</sup>Brownrigg, 150.

his exposure to expatriate life was extensive enough to comment on the availability of synagogues throughout the world (Acts 15:21). The neutral indigenous person is closest to the indigenous community; so it is not surprising that this person often suffers. James was executed under the high priest and the Sanhedrin shortly after the death of Festus, the procurator who sent Paul to Rome in A.D. 62.

The preceding prosopography shows that outsiders were the insiders of the early church. In the "expatriate strategy," it is not necessary to convert the dominant elements of a culture in order effectively to evangelize the entire culture.

A case study about the development of health in a Peruvian village illustrates that expatriate and cross-cultural elements of society can be viable targets of outreach. A waterboiling campaign conducted in Los Molinas, Peru, a peasant village of 200 family units persuaded only the marginalized families (eleven) to boil water.<sup>38</sup>

From the viewpoint of the public health agency, the local health worker, Nelida, had a simple task: to persuade the housewives of Los Molinas to add water boiling to their pattern of daily behavior. Even with the aid of a medical doctor who gave public talks on water boiling, and fifteen village housewives who were already boiling water before the campaign, Nelida's diffusion [of knowledge] campaign failed. During her two-year campaign in Los Molinas, Nelida made several visits to every home in the village but devoted especially intensive efforts to twenty-one families. She visited each of these selected families between fifteen and twenty-five times: eleven of these families now boil their water regularly.<sup>39</sup>

Nelida met three types of subjects. The *Custom-Oriented Adopter* was the sickly-indigenous woman who had already accepted the boiling of water because the prevailing social custom declared that boiled water was for sickly people and unboiled water was for those who were well. Healthy people did not worry about small germs in water. Instead, they worried about real threats to health such as "poverty and hunger."<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>Everett M. Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations* (New York: The Free Press, 1995), 5. The Peruvian waterboiling case study was first presented by Wellin in 1955.

<sup>39</sup>Ibid., 2.

<sup>40</sup>Ibid., 4.

The *Rejector* typifies the housewife who resisted any change in her water custom. Why would a housewife boil (and then cool) water? Cold water is for healthy people. The *Outsider* is the third type of housewife. She is obvious by her

. . . highland hairdo and stumbling Spanish. She will never achieve more than marginal social acceptance in the village. Because the community is not an important reference group to her, [the outsider] deviates from the village norms on health innovations. With nothing to lose socially [the outsider] gains in personal security by heeding Nelida's advice . . . She is grateful to Nelida for teaching her how to neutralize the danger of contaminated water, which she perceives as a lowland peril.<sup>41</sup>

Rogers asks why the diffusion of waterboiling failed. He notes that Nelida chose to work with the “wrong housewives,” the sickly and outsiders. “The village opinion leaders, who could have activated local networks to spread the innovation, were ignored by Nelida.”<sup>42</sup> Rogers advances that Nelida was too “innovation-oriented” and not “client-oriented.” Her message of germ theory was not suited to the needs of the village.

If we substitute the gospel for waterboiling, a very similar pattern to Paul's choice of the expatriate community emerges. Nelida did the right thing by befriending those in the village who would accept her new innovations rather than accommodating her message to the power structures within the community. Is it unlikely that the indigenous villagers would “never” accept outsiders? Perhaps, if the larger world were not rapidly exerting macro-pressures upon Los Molinas in the form of media, education, additional government programs, and increased “traffic.” In a closed system experiencing pressure from without, it may *not* be in the best interest of the innovator to bring one more change to the leaders. In both Philippi and Ephesus, it seems that the innovation brought about by the apostles was actually used by the power structures to heighten their resistance to outside ideas. Given the macro-pressures which would eventually break open a closed indigenous system from the outside, it was best to work

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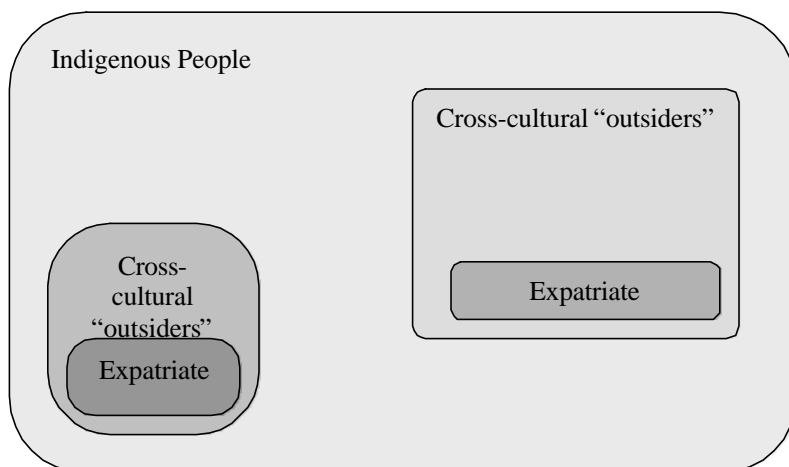
<sup>41</sup>Ibid., 3.

<sup>42</sup>Ibid., 5.



with the fringe community. As Los Molinas changed, the outsider's customs, including waterboiling, would eventually be examined and accepted, especially if the quality of life and attitude of the "outsiders" improved over time.

Had the health officials "targeted" the expatriate or cross-cultural community in the village, the diffusion of knowledge may have taken place more rapidly among the outsiders. Although this approach is the opposite of Roger's process of rapid diffusion through accommodation to power structures in a social system,<sup>43</sup> it appears to be the preferred model by the apostle Paul. Too much accommodation to indigenous power systems may not result in transformed people. Inadequate nurture and development of the "church of the outsiders" results in a weak and ineffective church, unable to endure or expand over time. Paul Bowers has advanced that Paul worked extensively to build up the spiritual, social, and economic strength of the expatriate church, even after leaving the region.<sup>44</sup> The following diagram pictures both large and small groups of cross-cultural people. The gospel enters with the expatriate community and passes through these cross-cultural people, expanding over time to the indigenous people.



As promised, it is necessary to revisit Stephen Neill's assertion that Paul's expansion of Christianity was entirely unique. I must counter that the first expansion was entirely common, for it appears that most

<sup>43</sup>Ibid.

<sup>44</sup>Paul Bowers, "Fulfilling the Gospel: The Scope of the Pauline Mission," *Journal of the Evangelical Theological Society* 30 (1987): 185-98.

cultures have indigenous elements that are either xenophobic or neutral. Similarly, most groups have individuals who have become cross-cultural through marriage, business, or education. Another study might trace a history of mission success by working with the fringe, the outsider, and the cross-cultural elements of indigenous groups. I conclude with two observations to challenge our missiological thought today.

First, the world is becoming globalized. Mission in the 21st century will take place in a context where nearly every country has a sizable number of English-speakers. Implicit in Stephen Neill's description of Paul's unique mission is that church-planting was "easier" because of the God-fearers who were already favorable toward morals and teachings from the Jewish rabbi. Macro-pressures had already uprooted citizens, slaves, and others, as observed in the ready allegiance to burial societies, guilds, and cults. In our globalized world today, similar pressures and interchange exist which make the expatriate both open to new ideas and vulnerable to groups that may distort truth. Expatriate churches can often be planted within three years as totally self-supporting local congregations. In some regions where indigenous work has yet to produce significant church growth, expatriate churches are flourishing. Planting such churches that intend to expand over time into the local community is a strategy to be considered.

Second, an understanding of the expatriate world brings a community focus back into the New Testament. As Paul wrote to encourage these new communities, he was dealing with real social pressures that were bearing upon the disciples. The background of Galatians may not be the introspective conscience of the west, plagued by the burden of the law. Rather, it appears to be the Galatian God-fearing believer, pulled in a tug-o-war between synagogue and Christian community with pride-filled champions in the synagogue seeking "to pull you in that they may shut you out." Just as the synagogues were often expatriate centers with facilities for travelling Jews, so the new communities were encouraged to practice hospitality and order. As these small communities were strengthened, they began to make strong inroads into the indigenous community.