
TEMPLE, BODY, AND ‘THE MAN WITHIN’¹

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INTRODUCTION

There is a verse by Paul in his message to the Corinthians which has throughout history stimulated profound thoughts in many Christians: “Do you not know that you are God’s temple and that God’s Spirit dwells in you?” (1Cor 3:16). A rhetorically similar question follows a little later: “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, which you have from God, and that you are not your own?” (1Cor 6:19). The topic occurs again in 2Cor 6:16–18.

The meaning of body was studied by Greek philosophers and the phenomenon of ‘body imagery’ was known among the people of the time. It is said that the body is a cultural entity on which religious ideology is imprinted, both as an artefact in itself and in relation to other bodies. Dale B. Martin developed considerably the understanding of body imagery in Antiquity by focusing on the ideological perspective in his influential work *The Corinthian Body*. His exploration of ancient ideologies of the body functions through the use of 1Corinthians as a window onto the Greco-Roman world of the body.² The term *body* is central in his book, and other categories are to a greater or lesser extent related to it.

Corinth was rich in temples, and Paul’s references to them are significant. His reflections on the relationship between temple and body bind anthropological thinking and theological argumentation together. That kind of relationship is directly addressed by Nijay K. Gupta by asking the question, “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple (1Corinthians 6:19)? Paul Beyond the Individual / Communal Divide.”³

¹ This article was supported by Estonian Science Foundation / Estonian Research Council Grant no. ETF8665.

² Dale B. **Martin**, *The Corinthian Body* (Chelsea, Michigan: Book Crafters, 1995), xii.

³ Nijay K. **Gupta**, “Which ‘Body’ is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)? Paul beyond the

Paul's Corinthian correspondence offers an additional unusual anthropological characteristic. In 2Corinthians 4:16, "the inner man / the inner human nature" and "the outer man / the outer human nature" are contrasted to each other, whereas it is merely the inner human being, *the man within*, that is being renewed day by day. All three expressions (temple, body, and the man within) are used by Paul in original ways to describe human beings from different points of view. In addition, Corinth provided a multicultural context in which Paul's discussions on the nature of the individual, social, earthly or heavenly bodies, etc., took place.

Most of the members of the Christian community in Corinth—the hearers and readers of Paul—were Greek, Jewish, and Roman by birth. Their previous religious convictions varied, and in any case Paul had to think what his addressees had in their minds, and how to approach them. In the salutation Paul describes two types of readers, the Corinthians and all Christians everywhere (1Cor 1:2), and called at least some of them saints, not because they had reached some undefined level of piety, but because they had received the Holy Spirit. Soon the readers found a temple metaphor abundant in religious associations. Paul, a devoted Jew, who had grown up in Hellenistic Tarsus but also had the splendour and impact of the second temple of Jerusalem in his eyes and mind, felt a need to make his theology understandable to his Jewish and Greek recipients.

I focus on the area where Greek and Jewish ideas on the body, temple and inner aspects of human beings intersect. My research question is: how are the three concepts—the temple, the body, and the inmost self of the human being—related to each other.

Corinth was the town where the correspondence between Paul and the community took place, and therefore I will start my study not with Jerusalem but with Corinth. For a long time the temple in Jerusalem has been regarded as the only prototype for Paul's metaphor. Today the idea that Paul already had a wider complex of motifs about the temple in mind is well founded.⁴ It is obvious that contextually Corinthian temples were

Individual/Communal Divide" – *Catholic Biblical Quarterly*, 72 (2010), 518–536.

⁴ Christfried Böttrich, "Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes". Tempelmetaphorik und Gemeinde bei Paulus" – *Gemeinde ohne Tempel. Community without Temple*. Eds. Beate Ego, Armin Lange and Peter Pilhofer. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 118 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1999), 411–425, refers to the non-Jewish members of the community and writes (p. 414): "Doch seine heidenchristlichen Adressaten

also important factors, and influenced Paul when he formulated his metaphor.

First I explore the possible influence of the environment of Greco-Roman Corinth on the early Christian community. Second, the Jewish background of the temple imagery at the time of the rise of Christianity should demonstrate its influence on Paul's temple imagery. Third, I study what kind of connection Paul created between bodies, temples, and Christian belief. Finally, an attempt will be made to locate the specific Pauline phrase "the inner man" in his discourse of theological anthropology.

HELLENISTIC TEMPLES, STATUES, AND IMAGINATIONS OF THE COMMON FOLK

My aim here is to assess the Corinthian cultural and religious environment that Paul had to take into consideration. After that, I discuss how he related these premises, his Jewish traditions and his message with each other.

The Greek city of Corinth, the history of which reaches back to the 8th century BC, was destroyed in 146 BC, but its reconstruction began in 44 BC. With its temples, Roman Corinth was still reminiscent of past glory. Public temples functioned as vehicles for promoting the central value systems that held ancient societies together. When Paul visited Corinth, even the ruins of the temples of Apollo, Hermes, Heracles, Athena, Poseidon, Asclepius and Aphrodite exercised their influence upon local people and visitors much more powerfully than they do today, two thousand years later. The beauty of these buildings inevitably influenced the meaning of the word "temple". For example, a temple for the worship of Aphrodite, the goddess of love, was located at the top of the Acropolis, and its beauty governed the city's panorama.

Ancient Corinth was known as the city of Aphrodite and had gained a reputation as a centre for sexual promiscuity. Strabo spoke of a thou-

mussten viel eher die Gestalt und Funktion der zahlreichen Tempel in ihrer unmittelbaren Umgebung assoziieren. Allein für Korinth lässt sich aufgrund des archäologischen Befundes sowie durch den Bericht des Pausanias eine stattliche Anzahl von Tempeln im Stadtgebiet nachweisen".

sand sacred prostitutes at the temple of Aphrodite on Acrocorinth.⁵ The temple was in ruins by Paul's time, but the memory of the place was probably vivid with its symbolic impact and emotional flavour. Though not as a central issue, prostitution is still deeply connected with the human body and I describe some of these words, which are meaningful for the topic. John R. Lanci points out that though references to *ἐταῖραι* are problematic, the meaning and history of the word nevertheless favours the translation 'companions', and thus it is significantly different from prostitutes (*πόρνη*). Men and women called *ιερόδουλοι* were sacred slaves who worked in towns and villages dedicated to a god or goddess as "serfs of divinity", while others were donated to a deity as sacred maintenance staff.⁶ There is even evidence that *hieroduloi* were women honoured for the efficacy of their prayer and were not identified as sacred prostitutes, dedicated to the sexual service of the goddess of love.⁷

It is possible, however, that if religious rituals involving sexual activities existed, those who practiced them would not have understood what they did to be prostitution. The references of Strabo and other authors to prostitution may be interpreted in more neutral terms, and one may suppose that the service of *ιερόδουλοι* simply had something to do with both sacred sex and devoted prayer. Women, however, had in any case a visible role in the cultic life of Corinth, and some social impact of this phenomenon on the mentality of the citizens could not remain unnoticed. As an additional example of how many different meanings the human body possessed, a shrine dedicated to Asclepius should be mentioned. It was popular among people with health problems. Clay copies of human body parts were hung around the temple by worshippers who sought help. This was no surprise, since the idealised young male (*κοῦρος*) was nude, and statues of gods and goddesses, heroes and heroines were regularly sculptured in the nude.⁸ Statues and reliefs exposing gods and heroes in human

⁵ David G. Horrell and Edward Adams, "The Scholarly Quest for Paul's Church at Corinth: A Critical Survey" – *Christianity at Corinth. The Quest for the Pauline Church*. Eds. Edward Adams and David G. Horrell (Louisville, London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 1–43, 7.

⁶ John R. Lanci, "The Stones Don't Speak and the Texts Tell Lies: Sacred Sex at Corinth" – *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth. Interdisciplinary Approaches*. Eds. Daniel N. Schowalter and Steven J. Frisen. Harvard Theological Studies, 53 (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 2005), 205–220, 210.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 213.

⁸ John Dominic Crossan and Jonathan L. Reed, *In Search of Paul. How Jesus' Apostle*

form shaped public space within and outside temples. Taking this into consideration, we can focus on “how gendered bodies and sexual differences are communicated visually and symbolically in the art and artefacts” of the ancient world.⁹ It is not easy to describe ancient views on the body, but one element that has a bearing on Paul’s ideas was the phenomenon of power. Normative sexual behaviour in the Roman Empire at the time of Paul was based on control and power, sometimes subjugation and humiliation. Temples, statues and other artefacts were part of the picture one needs to explain how the social reality was constructed.

People with Greco-Roman background merely had to look around them to see the temples and to reflect what the temples were and what they meant. The sensitive and cognitive aspects of religion contain aesthetic, logical, practical, emotional and social elements. The historic context of the city had an inescapable influence on the social construction of its citizens’ reality. Society profoundly shapes the way in which people experience their everyday reality, and religious imagination is a part of that reality. Everyday life in a city of such architectural richness influenced citizens’ emotional and cognitive development. Here it is useful to recall Berger’s and Luckmann’s contribution that “the sociology of knowledge must first of all concern itself with what people ‘know’ as ‘reality’ in their everyday, non- or pre-theoretical lives. In other words, common-sense ‘knowledge’ rather than ‘ideas’ must be the central focus of the sociology of knowledge.”¹⁰ Statues of gods as visible elements of religious imagery contributed significantly to the social construction of reality. The symbolic world of humans is often based on what they see, since powerful visible public phenomena and images are easily interpreted as already legitimated.

The city that Paul visited and in which he founded a Christian community¹¹ has acquired a distinctly Roman character. Epigraphic evidence

Opposed Rome’s Empire with God’s Kingdom (London: SPCK, 2005), 260.

⁹ Lanci, “The Stones Don’t Speak and the Texts Tell Lies”, 216.

¹⁰ Peter L. **Berger** and Thomas **Luckmann**, *The Social Construction of Reality. A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (London: Allen Lane, 1966), 25.

¹¹ According to Horrell and Adams, “The Scholarly Quest for Paul’s Church at Corinth”, 11, the very young Christian groups probably met in private homes (1Cor 16:19; Rom 16:5) and did not use so-called “club-rooms” used for meetings by clubs and voluntary associations called *collegia*. It is difficult to estimate the size of these communities in

suggests that civic religion was dominated by Roman cults, including the imperial cult, favoured by the city's elite. There is considerable evidence of the existence of an imperial cult in first-century Corinth. At least sixty-two inscriptions make reference to the imperial cult, beginning with an altar to the Divus Julius, and a statue in the middle of the forum erected to the Divus Augustus.¹² As regards social stratification in the Christian community, I make reference to studies by Horrell, Adams and Theissen that the early Christians came from all social levels, both high and low.¹³ There is every reason to imagine that people with different knowledge, education and interests constructed differing views of the meaning of temples, mankind, piety, decency, good behaviour, etc.

Dominant visible objects such as temples, statues, reliefs and also ritual activities (offerings, games, festivals) were used as 'building material' in constructing the main ideas and beliefs of the Greco-Roman religion. Such imagery nurtured Corinthians' minds with "common-sense knowledge" prevailing in the society as a whole and occurring also in the religious communities of the time. It is highly probable that Paul picked up ancient patterns of the temple concept, which would also have been familiar to his pagan-Christian addressees.¹⁴

homes, but an estimate of somewhere between forty and fifty persons as a base figure makes the group at one place visually well perceivable as one "body."

¹² Nancy **Bookidis**, "Religion in Corinth: 146 B.C.E to 100 C.E" – *Urban Religion in Roman Corinth* (see note 6), 141–164, 156.

¹³ David G. **Horrell** and Edward **Adams**, "Social Stratification in the Corinthian Community: A Contribution to the Sociology of Early Hellenistic Christianity" – *Christianity at Corinth* (see note 5), 97–105, 98. Gerd **Theissen**, "Soziale Schichtung in der korinthischen Gemeinde. Ein Beitrag zur Soziologie des Hellenistischen Urchristentums" – *Studien zur Soziologie des Urchristentums*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 19 (Tübingen: J.C.B. Mohr [Paul Siebeck], 1979), 231–271, emphasises that Paul testifies to a smaller number of influential people in the community, does not contest their importance but notes their excessive self-consciousness (p. 234), that Paul himself baptised respectful people whose names were known and worth mentioning in the epistle, such as Crispus, Gaius and Stephanas (p. 263f.), and that the analysis of the social stratification of the community is quite complicated.

¹⁴ Böttrich, "Ihr seid der Tempel Gottes", 422, is of the opinion that Paul "greift auf diese Konzept zurück, weil er mit Tempelmetapher nicht allein Judenchristen anzusprechen, sondern auch Heidenchristen zu erreichen vermag."

HEBREW HERITAGE IN THE BACKGROUND OF THE TEMPLE MOTIF

Both non-Jewish and Jewish members of the nascent Christian community in Corinth were rooted in the surrounding culture and its symbolic universe. However, at least some of the Jewish members had the opportunity to visit Jerusalem, but probably most of them knew something about their own Holy Sanctuary in Jerusalem. Those who had visited Jerusalem could tell others what the second temple looked like.

Independently from the pilgrimage experiences of pious Jews, their own national narrative of God's presence in his temple was a living story. It is well attested that both the Hebrew Bible itself and its Septuagint version bear witness to the notion of the sanctuary/tabernacle as the *locus* of God's presence. In Isaiah 6:1–5, the prophet recounts seeing the Lord seated on a throne, and that a hem of his robe filled the temple. Whereas here, in Isaiah 6, the whole earth is full of Lord's glory and the temple does not contain God but the hem of his robe alone, 2Chronicles 7:1 tells how the glory of the Lord filled the temple. These passages are consonant with the belief that God lives in heaven, he comes down if he wants to (Psalm 144:5), and his name shall be in the temple (1Kings 8:27–30). God consecrated his house (the temple) and put his name there forever (1Kings 9:3). Even if it was not the case in the earliest history of Israel's belief, then surely in later times God was not believed to live in the temple, but his glory and spirit were present there—until people had not turned aside from following God the Lord. If that were to happen, God may let his house become a heap of ruins (1Kings 9:6–9). The temple was an instrument of the presence of God and not literally a dwelling.

There is a less discussed topic, namely the tension between the notion of the sanctuary as the place of God's presence and of the belief in God's "indwelling" in the community of Israel as a whole. The motif is visible in Ezekiel 37:26–27, Leviticus 26:11¹⁵ and Zechariah 2:10 [14]. Tabernacle, the portable sanctuary, is paralleled with God himself, who will walk

¹⁵ Ezek 37:27 (LXX): "My dwelling-place (κατασκήνωσις) shall be with them." In Lev 26:11 God's indwelling / tabernacle (יִשְׁכְּנֵנִי) is interpreted by LXX as a metaphor for the covenant: "I will place my dwelling (covenant) in your midst (καὶ θήσω τὴν διαθήκην μου ἐν ὑμῖν)."

among his people and be their God (Lev 26:12). In later times this duality also emerged in rabbinic sources, where “the *Shekinah* is said to have left the Temple at the time of its destruction and followed the people of Israel into exile.”¹⁶ In his study, Serge Ruzer pays attention to the interplay between the communal and individual aspects of the “human tabernacle” idea, and attempts to contextualise a special aspect of this sub-motif—the perception of the death of a righteous individual as damaging the Jerusalem sanctuary itself or even comparable to its destruction.

The Jerusalem temple was basically regarded as holy throughout the history of Israel. The Maccabean war was caused by the desecration of the Temple by the Syrians and had the aim of liberating, cleansing and consecrating it anew. At that time a new perspective concerning the human body appears. The pious Jews were more ready to deliver their bodies to death than to become polluted by eating swine’s flesh (ὑεῖον κρέας). The story of the martyrdom of Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother is coloured by the belief in re-gaining the members of the destroyed body (tongue and hands; 2Maccabees 7:10f.) and probably the whole person: one cannot but choose to die at the hands of mortals and to cherish the hope God gives of being raised again by him ... (2Maccabees 7:13f.). The new ideas of the time probably did not represent a belief in the resurrection of the body in the way later developed by Paul. In any case, however, a kind of belief in the restoration of the bodily existence becomes visible. The body of a believer was regarded as worthy of that, and the hope for consecration of the temple and restoration of the body appear at the same time.

At the time of the rise of early Christianity, the Qumran community already had some history, and despite its remote location one cannot deny its spiritual influence. Since there seems to be no direct link between Qumran and the early Christian movement, only a short note should be made here. One of the elements of their belief was a conviction that the ‘presence’ of God, the Spirit of God, was no longer bound to the temple in Jerusalem but to the true and pure Israel represented by the community. On the one hand the community was believed in a certain way to replace the temple of Jerusalem. On the other hand, there was also

¹⁶ Serge Ruzer, “From Man as *locus* of God’s Indwelling to Death as Temple’s Destruction. Notes on the history of a motif” – *Revue Biblique*, 119 (2012), 383–402, 384.

an expectation of a renewed Temple in the last days.¹⁷

In harmony with this view is an adaptation of the biblical outlook in the form that now it is not the people of Israel, but rather a minority community of *electi* that constitutes a substitute for the Temple.¹⁸ According to the *Rule of the Community* (e.g., 1QS 5; 1QS 11; cf. 1QH 4:17–26), these chosen people have received the gift of the Spirit. It is the gift of the Spirit and its cleansing effect that allows an individual to overcome the base weakness of the flesh, reach perfection, and “become [part of] the temple.”¹⁹ Thus it may be said that the community did not consider itself to have broken with the temple, but they transferred a complex of ideas from the Jerusalem temple to the community. Temple worship “was now performed through the community’s observance of the Law and through its own liturgy and cultus.”²⁰ Thus it was in Qumran that the community members were expected to observe the Law and form the (new) temple.

The development of Jewish religious thought had paved the way for a unique dual understanding of how God’s presence takes place both through the temple/tabernacle and by his dwelling in / among the community. The Jewish members of the Corinthian community may have shared some elements of these views. Paul fruitfully utilises temple-imagery and presents himself as an actor for the benefit of the temple. Paul says that he himself, like a master builder, had laid a foundation in Corinth, and other builders could build on it. Though no one can lay any foundation other than the one that had already been laid—that foundation being Jesus Christ—Paul nonetheless participates in the construction of the new temple (1Cor 3:10f.). The completed building was, however, a long way off.

Paul’s hermeneutics helped his readers to understand that they

¹⁷ Christian **Rowland**, *Christian Origins. An Account of the Setting and Character of the most Important Messianic Sect of Judaism* (London: SPCK, 2002), 39.

¹⁸ Ruzer, “From Man as *locus* of God’s Indwelling to Death as Temple’s Destruction”, 385.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, 386. There are modifications within Hellenistic Jewish thought like Philo’s idea of the internalised spiritual temple. In distinction between body and spirit, the latter was regarded by Philo as a ruling element. Ruzer adds that in this context, “a distinction between the temple and the eternal tabernacle, with the latter not necessarily involving sacrifices, sometimes becomes instrumental” (*ibid.*, 387).

²⁰ Bertil **Gärtner**, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament. A Comparative Study in the Temple Symbolism of the Qumran Texts and the New Testament* (Cambridge University Press, 1965), 18.

themselves are the building called “God’s temple” (1Cor 3:16), and therefore already nearly complete, since God’s Spirit has already taken up residence therein. While Paul told both his Jewish and gentile readers that “you are God’s temple”, the Jerusalem temple was still in its splendour. For the Jews, this novel use of temple imagery may have caused confusion and raised ideas of the third temple, “already ‘up and functioning’. It is said, however, that only its foundation had been laid”²¹, and that its success would depend both on the builders and on God (1Cor 3:5–15). In the ears of the Greek followers of Christ, such connections to the temple in Jerusalem remained unclear, since their symbolic world was familiar with Greek temples.

In his speeches about the temple, Paul surely had the Jerusalem temple in mind, but not only that. The Gentile experience of temples must also be considered in conjunction with this imagery.²² One should bear in mind the two quite different concepts of the temples in approaching Paul’s utterances concerning the body and a temple.

HUMAN BODIES, THEIR VALUE AND MEANING

Paul became known as a creative user of body imagery who utilised the qualities connected with the body in the ancient Greco-Roman and Jewish symbolic universes. On the one hand, the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple in Jerusalem were devoid of statues of any kind. On the other, Hellenistic temples were rich in divine statues, i.e. images of gods and goddesses in human shape. Dale B. Martin placed special emphasis on the comparison of ideological systems and the logic underlying these ancient discourses on the body. In this article I use Martin’s specification, according to which ideology refers to the relation between language and the social structure of power.²³ This is well sui-

²¹ Kenneth E. **Bailey**, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes. Cultural Studies in 1 Corinthians* (London: SPCK, 2011), 132.

²² Martin **Vahrenhorst**, *Kultische Sprache in den Paulusbriefen*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 230 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 15, even says that “[b]ei seinen Leserinnen und Leser dürfen wir sicher davon ausgehen, dass ihnen der Jerusalemer Tempel und sein Gottesdienst weniger vor Augen stand, als die Tempel der Stadt, in der sie lebten, mit deren Kultvollzügen sie aus der Zeit vor ihren Lebenswende vertraut waren.”

²³ Martin, *The Corinthian Body*, xiv.

ted to the analysis of Paul's anthropology in the Corinthian context. On the one hand, I do not agree with his theses that the theological differences reflected in 1Corinthians all resulted from conflicts between groups rooted in different ideologies of the body. On the other hand, I accept his approach that different stances taken by Paul and "the Strong" on various subjects—prostitution, marriage, the resurrection of the body—spring from their different assumptions regarding both the individual human body and the social body—the church as the (social) body of Christ.²⁴

Berger and Luckmann did not confine themselves to the description of peoples' everyday knowledge of the surrounding world. They tried to explain the formation of meanings and institutions in complex social interactions. Paul preached good news and added new aspects to the customary meanings of words. If new religious movements with novel views of reality appear, the re-formation of customary beliefs and changes in institutions begins. Paul's activity led to changes in the symbolic universe among "the church of God that is in Corinth"²⁵, which in turn required actions for its legitimation. On the one hand, Greco-Roman temples and sculptures of gods, as well as human beings, were natural components of the surrounding world with their customary meaning. On the other hand, Corinthian correspondence demonstrates that in Pauline house communities some elements of the familiar symbolic universe became transformed. Paul incited the minds of his readers to openness for new meanings and thus "it is reasonable to study cognition in conjunction with the culture and social setting in which the individual mind is nurtured."²⁶

If bodies are compared to temples, the holiness and purity of the temples should also be transferred to human bodily life. In the discourse on Hebrew belief, the human body was regarded as open to the dangers that may lead to contamination. Paul's thought is in harmony with the Old Testament Scripture, according to which in sexual intercourse the whole

²⁴ *Ibid.*, xv. "The Strong" are those better educated people who stressed the hierarchical arrangement of the body and the proper balance of its constituents, whereas "the Weak", the majority, saw the body as a dangerously permeable entity threatened by polluting agents. The latter belonged to the lower-status, less-educated part of society.

²⁵ 1Corinthians 1:2.

²⁶ Petri **Luomanen**, "The Sociology of Knowledge, the Social Identity Approach and the Cognitive Science of Religion" – *Explaining Christian Origins and Early Judaism: Contributions from Cognitive and Social Science*. Eds. Petri Luomanen, Ilkka Pysiäinen and Risto Uro (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2007), 199–229, 225.

body, that is the whole person, becomes one flesh with the sexual partner (Gen 2:24 LXX: καὶ ἔσονται οἱ δύο εἰς σάρκα μίαν). This positive appraisal is in fact balanced by warnings and prohibitions in Leviticus. It is no surprise that Paul's reproach in 1Cor 5:1 finds its direct ideological basis in Lev 18:7f.²⁷ Belief in the profound fundamental connection between two human bodies and the danger that follows if the respective divine statutes and ordinances are violated stems from the time before Greek influences in Hebrew thought became evident.

Fornication is the sin that is against the body and damages the self that is destined for resurrection.²⁸ Other sins do not necessarily take the believer by force away from the body of Christ and join him or her to another body, but fornication does. It is what at least partially was practiced at the temple of Aphrodite, decorated with sculptures and justified by the ideology of love. In 1Corinthians Paul explained what the gift of love means and it is not a type the cult of Aphrodite represented.

Eating is an aspect of bodily life too, but Paul did not parallel eating with sexual behaviour. He claims that food is meant for the stomach (part of the body) and the stomach for food, and pays little attention to the Old Testament dietary rules.²⁹ The body as a whole is, however, subordinated to other legalities. The crucial comparisons are between *the stomach* that is to be destroyed and *the body* that is to be raised. The body is meant not for immorality but for the Lord, and the Lord for the body (1Cor 6:13). According to the words of Kenneth Bailey, the advice given is: "Do not damage the body with immorality because the body goes with you beyond death—it will be raised."³⁰ Human sexuality is part of the inner core of the whole person called *the body*, and that body will be raised. Therefore warnings should be taken seriously since *that whole person*—the body—will be affected negatively by immorality. The body is affirmed to be "for the Lord" in the first place, and Paul adds even more precisely that "You are

²⁷ Lev 18:7f.: "You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father, which is the nakedness of your mother; she is your mother, you shall not uncover her nakedness. You shall not uncover the nakedness of your father's wife; it is the nakedness of your father."

²⁸ Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, 192.

²⁹ With regard to the relationship between the body and food, Paul deliberates here differently from what is believed to be important by the author(s) of 2Maccabees 7.

³⁰ Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, 185.

not your own”, that is, you belong to the Lord (1Cor 6:19f.). For you were bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body.

Paul pays attention to the differences between what he expected from women as church members and which roles they seem to play. There is a tension between the ideology described in 1Cor 7, and the libertine examples described in 1Cor 5–6. But what about regulated sexual relations within marriage? On the one hand, celibacy is preferred and marriage is described as a means for those who do not possess the gift of celibacy.³¹ On the other, the main opposition in 1Cor 5–7 seems to have been between celibacy/marriage and immorality.³² Regulated sexuality was not a problem for Paul, but deviations from the Law were. General regulations were equally binding on men and women, but in Corinth there were more problems with women. Paul’s preaching in Corinth may have contained claims known to us from his epistle to Galatians 3:27f. that there is no longer male and female. If this claim refers primarily to social gender, pneumatic Corinthian women may have believed that they had transcended sexual differentiation in every sense of the word (1Cor 11:2–16). In that case, by removing their veils as symbols of subordination, they seemingly changed their status by becoming like men, and took part in the body politic. Paul reacted by giving permission to pray and prophecy, but to keep female conventional appearance.³³ It is interesting that in Corinth some women of religious importance were simultaneously *ιερόδουλοι* at the temple of Aphrodite, while others of spiritual authority were active in Pauline house churches.

Paul was concerned with women like divorcées, widows and virgins. If women were especially attracted to the ascetic teaching, they may have sought to dissolve unions with their (believing) husbands on the basis of

³¹ The main reason for this preference is not the ideal of asceticism as such but the belief that *parousia* is at hand (1Cor 7:29–31), and Paul gives herein practical advice for a shorter period of time.

³² Paul’s words came as a shock to those Corinthians who thought that their abstinence from sex was by far the best precaution against immorality. One can, however, imagine what kind of inner tension the decision for continence may have provoked in the city of Aphrodite.

³³ 1Cor 11:5f. In 1Cor 7:24 Paul suggests that in “whatever condition you were called, brothers and sisters, there remain with God.” It is possible that Paul wanted to damp down the effort of women to become androgynous by imitating the male appearance.

the fact that sex desecrated their holiness.³⁴ The tie between asceticism and religious authority was especially significant for women. Based on an attempted reconstruction of the historical milieu and the teaching of 1Cor 7, one can suppose that “women holy in body and spirit” contrasted themselves to the *ιερόδουλοι*, strived for equilibrium with men, for more respectful social status, and realised their personal calling as God’s temple (1Cor 3:16).

Paul’s own authority has perpetually been in danger, but nevertheless he legitimated the authority of women by regarding them as spiritually active members of the community. Elisabeth A. Castelli pays attention to the conditions in which Paul worked, and why his asceticism is ambivalent towards history and his own possibilities. She approves Daniel Boyarin’s claim that Paul’s asceticism emerges in direct conversation and debate with the ideological world of first-century Judaism, “a world in which embodiment was not only a human condition but also a complex site of relationship to the divine.”³⁵ It is no surprise that the body also has an ambivalent meaning in Paul’s worldview.

The word *body* designated both human physical existence and also referred to the collective, social body. This double meaning of the word was probably more understandable to the readers of Paul. For that reason, they were taught that “their corporate body (the church) is the place where they are to glorify God. No doubt the individual body of the believer is a key aspect of Paul’s focus here”³⁶, but he was unmistakably also referring to the communal body of Christ. To defile the human body is to defile the sanctuary that is the body of Christ.

Scholarship has been interested in the relationship between the individual and communal sides of Paul’s “body-terminology.” In 1Cor 6:15 he claims that the bodies of the Corinthians are members of Christ. “Should I therefore take the members of Christ and make them *members of a prostitute* (πόρνης μέλη)?” Never! Paul’s primary concern here is with the purity of the church—the body of Christ—which is threatened by the

³⁴ Margaret Y. MacDonald, “Women Holy in Body and Spirit: The Social Setting of 1 Corinthians 7” – *Christianity at Corinth* (see note 5), 161–172, 169.

³⁵ Elisabeth A. Castelli, “Disciplines of Difference: Asceticism and History in Paul” – *Asceticism and the New Testament*. Eds. Leif E. Vaage and Vincent L. Wimbush (New York, London: Routledge, 1999), 171–185, 181.

³⁶ Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, 188.

defilement brought about by sexual immorality. In 1Cor 6:19 Paul combines a singular noun and a plural genitive pronoun (τὸ σῶμα ὑμῶν) and says that the body of all of the congregation's members is "a sanctuary of the Holy Spirit within you which you have from God."³⁷ Nijay K. Gupta says that such a combination of words was capable of having a distributive meaning, i.e. "the body of each of you."³⁸ This is also the easiest way to understand Paul's description of the body in Rom 8:23. And again, the combination in 1Cor 3:16 of being God's temple and having the *pneuma* indicates that Paul understood the Corinthians as being God's temple in the sense that they really possessed the *pneuma*. It is the *pneuma* that is shared by and present in all believers in Christ. One and the same *pneuma* that is present in the bodies of all baptised believers turns them "all into a single body."³⁹

Paul chose the word ναός in 1Cor 3:16; 6:19 and 2Cor 6:16⁴⁰ even though the word was used for pagan shrines.⁴¹ The reason may have been that the term was flexible and could be used for communicating the presence of God in both the individual and the group. Therefore Paul's choice allowed it "to be meaningful as 'temple' in 1Cor 3:16, and in 6:19 to imply that 'the body is the shrine of the Spirit that dwells therein.'⁴² The Corinthians *are* a ναός—a sanctuary and/or a shrine—of the indwelling Holy Spirit which has at least three aspects.

First, the image of the temple appears to have been used here to show that the presence of God had been removed, according to Jewish belief, from the Jerusalem temple to the 'new' people of God, the Christian Church.⁴³ Second, Paul was conscious of the problem of idolatry and thus

³⁷ It is true that textual history testifies also to a plural form τὰ σώματα, which may indicate that the copyists found that a singular noun was not appropriate.

³⁸ Gupta, "Which 'Body' Is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)?", 522.

³⁹ Troels Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul. The Material Spirit* (Oxford University Press, 2010), 171.

⁴⁰ In 2Cor 6:16, Paul writes, 'what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For we are the temple of the living God.' This means that Christians are now the true temple of God, separate from non-believers.

⁴¹ In 2Cor 6:16, Paul quotes freely from Ezek 37:27 and Lev 26:11–12 and combines phrases in the manner of contemporary Jewish exegesis. Neither of the Old Testament texts agrees exactly with Paul's version.

⁴² Gupta, "Which 'Body' Is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)?", 523.

⁴³ Gärtner, *The Temple and the Community in Qumran and the New Testament*, 50, refers to

his emphasis in 2Cor 6:16 that the temple of God should not have any agreement with idols, as represented by the sculptures of Greco-Roman temples, and this also pertained to local temples. Third, the use of ναός instead of ἱερόν sharpens Paul's focus, since ἱερόν refers to the whole temple, while ναός normally designates the 'Holy place', the dwelling place of God. Paul's choice of the word ναός offered semantic flexibility and was acceptable to both the Greeks and the Jews. The word communicated that the state of holiness expected of the innermost part of the temple was now applied to the community of believers.

Gradations of relationships appear: the believers—with their personal bodies—are in Christ⁴⁴ and at the same time they are a sanctuary/temple of the Holy Spirit from God. As in 1Cor 3:16 the communal temple is the *locus* of God's spirit "among them" in harmony with 2Cor 6:16,⁴⁵ it is correct to read that 1Cor 6:19 focuses on the individual bodies of the Corinthians. In regard to the word *body*, corporate Christology and individual Christology are inseparable. Paul's claim that "you are not your own" is best understood as an apostle's reaction against the human inclination to regard the body as a private possession.⁴⁶ Though humans are entitled to govern over their individual bodies, they are in fact bought with a price, which means that there is a co-existence between individual and corporate bodies, and therefore every individual person is responsible for the individual and the corporate body—the body of Christ. Within the individual body is the Holy Spirit (from God), and that same body, by being in Christ, becomes the body of Christ.

The three texts of Paul have the following points of contact. Emphasis

a parallel in Qumran where the presence of God, *Shekinah*, was believed to have been removed from the official Jerusalem temple to their community of believers. I am not going to argue here for any direct connection between Qumran and Pauline Christianity in Corinth in terms of influence, but refer to a parallel phenomenon.

⁴⁴ According to 2Cor 5:17, if anyone is in Christ (ἐν Χριστῷ), there is a new creation.

⁴⁵ The nearness of God through the divine spirit fulfils the "new covenant" prophecy of Ezek 37:27 and Lev 26:11f., where God promises to make a habitation among the people.

⁴⁶ It is important to understand Paul's discourse in the context of the threat of polluting the body of Christ. The physical body is, in some sense, a barrier that separates the realm of purity inside from the world outside. Intercourse with a prostitute breaks that barrier, takes the members of Christ and makes them members of a prostitute (1Cor 6:15).

is placed on identifying the temple of God with the community. The individual body of the believer is an important aspect, as emphasised in 1Cor 6:19f. The identification of the temple with the members of the community means that the Spirit of God ‘dwells’ in the congregation.⁴⁷ With this background in mind, it seems certain that since Paul regards the temple of God as holy, the body of the believer is holy too. Fornication damages this temple, but regular marriage is no obstacle to glorifying God in the body. This means that the ‘dwelling’ of God in the congregation and the holiness this fact implies are closely connected with the demand for purity. In Paul we have “a commingling of the concepts of the body of the individual, the group and Christ with a significance for each one.”⁴⁸ This discourse rejects Epicurean and Stoic thoughts wherein the Spirit (of God) unites only with the soul.

THE ENIGMATIC ‘MAN WITHIN’

Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you (1Cor 6:19)? Are there any means to know more about where the Holy Spirit ‘dwells’? In Antiquity, temples were not merely holy places, but also stores of valuable items. Of these, the Jewish tabernacle, a portable sanctuary⁴⁹ constructed by Moses at Sinai and primarily associated with people’s wilderness wandering, is of particular significance.⁵⁰ The tabernacle was divided into three zones of increasing holiness: the courtyard, the holy place and the holy of holies. The Holy of Holies housed only the ark containing the “testimony”, assumed to be the tablets of the Law.⁵¹ The covering of the ark was the place where God promised to communicate with the representative of the community, the high priest. In other words, “the tabernacle was the place where God was present among his people (Exod. 25.8), where he met with them and communicated with

⁴⁷ In particular 1Cor 3:16 and 1Cor 6:19 emphasise this connection clearly.

⁴⁸ Gupta, “Which ‘Body’ Is a Temple (1 Corinthians 6:19)?”, 527.

⁴⁹ Various expressions are used in referring to the tabernacle, such as “tent”, “tent of meeting”, “tabernacle of the testimony.”

⁵⁰ An account of the construction of the tabernacle is found in Exodus 25–31.

⁵¹ John H. Hayes, “Tabernacle” – *The Oxford Companion to the Bible*. Eds. Bruce M. Metzger and Michael D. Coogan (Oxford University Press, 1993), 729–730, 729.

them (25.22; 29.43–46).⁵² The Greek σκηνή (LXX: Exodus 26:1, made with ten curtains) means a covered place, a tent, a dwelling place, house and temple, and serves as a cover or a container.

The metaphoric phrase (ἡ ἐπίγειος ἡμῶν οἰκία τοῦ σκηνῶν / our earthly tent) appears in 2Cor 5:1. For Paul, the “tent” here and “the building from God, a house not made with hands” are certainly references to the human body, which is reminiscent of his earlier discourse with the Corinthians in 1Cor 15:35–55 in general and 15:47–49 in particular. In both passages Paul uses the term ἐπίγειος to refer to what is “earthly” and thus strengthens the identification of our earthly tent with the body (τὸ σῶμα), which in 2Cor 4:16 bears the name “our outer nature” / “our outer man” (ὁ ἕξω ἡμῶν ἄνθρωπος). In that case it is not surprising that this earthly tent (2Cor 5:1) will be destroyed in the same manner as the outer nature is wasting away (2Cor 4:16). According to the metaphor (1Cor 15:36ff.), the seed is a “body” that must first die. That body dies naked (bare), and God gives it a new body different from the one that dies, and yet each seed has “its own body.” There is both continuity and discontinuity in this parable. God brings about resurrection and transformation.⁵³

The inner nature (the inner man / ὁ ἕσω ἡμῶν [ἄνθρωπος]) does not waste away, but is at the same time renewed day by day. With the plural “we” Paul seems to refer to the connection between the individual and the communal among the Corinthians, who are assured to inherit a building from God, a house not made with hands,⁵⁴ eternal in the heavens. The metaphoric inner person / inner man represents an aspect of the human person which is designed and destined for a future time (2Cor 5:1–10.17), the *eschaton*. The phrase “the inner man” seems to describe what the individual

⁵² *Ibid.*, 730. Questions about whether an edifice as elaborate as the tabernacle existed in the wilderness in the way it is described are not relevant here. What matters is its symbolic significance for the Jewish people of the first century, proselytes and perhaps god-fearers.

⁵³ Bailey, *Paul Through Mediterranean Eyes*, 458.

⁵⁴ It seems not to be a mere coincidence that in the Markan tradition (Mark 14:58) Jesus is accused of saying he will destroy the handmade (χειροποίητος) temple and build a new one not made by hand (ἀχειροποίητος). Without seeking to read too much into this similarity and claiming any direct dependence, I want to make more space for the conviction that the oral traditions of the Jesus movement may well have been more widespread and well-known than form criticism and literary criticism have commonly admitted.

should be, in distinction from what he actually is. The expression occurs in Romans 7:22 and is only there identified with the mind (νοῦς).

Romans cannot be used as a basis to explain what Paul taught to the Corinthians. We are, however, justified to find therein an aid to better explain unique patterns of Paul's worldview. The contrast between the "inner man" and the "members" of the body in Romans 7 is similar to that between the inner and outer man in 2Cor 4:16.⁵⁵ In parallel with that claim, Paul says that nothing good lives within me, that is, in my flesh (= members; Rom 7:18).⁵⁶ The "I" of which Paul speaks here is the "flesh". The flesh, however, is called *my flesh*. How can the flesh, *my flesh*, be *me* or *my-self*? This is probably not the case in the usual sense of the word. It seems that according to Paul, the human being is not only contradictory but also split. The νοῦς of Romans 7:23, 25 is a particular aspect of ὁ ἕσω ἄνθρωπος—namely that of thinking, judging, willing and deciding. The νοῦς here is that *self* which is the subject of the willing (Rom 7:15f.) and which somehow dwells in the body. Here Paul says that *in his inmost self* he delights in the Law of God (7:22), which is in harmony with the law of his mind (7:23).

In Romans 7 Paul draws a map of the properly functioning mind. The remarkable thing about Romans 7 is that the mind is no longer debased as he had described it in Rom 1:28. The mind is functioning again. It has been proposed that "this must be the result of man's assimilation to Christ in baptism (Rom 6:5)."⁵⁷ It is true that according to Paul baptism is an important single event, but in addition to that single event there is a dynamic factor that operates permanently on a daily basis. The Tabernacle once housed the Law. The human body is now capable of housing the letter of Christ, the location of which is the human heart. Paul says: "And you show that you are a letter of Christ, prepared by us, written not with ink but with the Spirit of the living God, not on tablets of stone but on tablets of human hearts" (2Cor 3:3).

⁵⁵ In more detail see how Engberg-Pedersen, *Cosmology and Self in the Apostle Paul*, 167, analyses the topic.

⁵⁶ ἐν τῇ σαρκί μου.

⁵⁷ George H. van Kooten, *Paul's Anthropology in Context. The Image of God, Assimilation to God, and Tripartite Man in Ancient Judaism, Ancient Philosophy and Early Christianity*. Wissenschaftliche Untersuchungen zum Neuen Testament, 232 (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 379.

SUMMARY

The three concepts—the temple, the body, and the inmost self of the human being—are related to each other in many and quite complicated ways in both Hellenistic and Hebrew symbolic worlds.

First, in terms of the context of Paul's Christian community, temples in Corinth were rich in divine statues, i.e. images of gods and goddesses in human shape. They represented the governing ideology that was communicated to the citizens and contributed to the social construction of reality, but Paul qualifies all of these as merely visible cultic objects devoid of any important meaning for true believers. For the Jews, in contrast, the tabernacle in the wilderness and the temple in Jerusalem were holy, since they represented the presence of God in Israel. In addition to that was the belief that God 'dwelled' in Israel. Paul's claim that believers in Christ were the temple of God was similar.

Second, temples also had a social and sociological point of contact with Paul's thought. In the temple of Aphrodite the service of the *hierodouloi* was a publicly known activity, and these women had remarkably visible roles in the cultic life of Corinth. Paul paid much attention to women, and tried to regulate their public service within the community of believers. It seems that some of them, by removing their veils as symbols of subordination, sought to change their status and achieve a higher position in the community, where the body politic was part of the social structure of power. Paul advised them to preserve their female appearance and remain in the condition in which they were called. As to the body politic, he claimed that married women had authority over the bodies of their husbands (1Cor 7:4).

Third, Paul regarded human bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit within them. Like the temples, human bodies belong to God, for they were bought with a price. The symbolic world is often based on what people see. In his speeches about the temple Paul undoubtedly had the Jerusalem temple in mind, but also Hellenistic buildings in Corinth. Paul's choice of the word *ναός* offered semantic flexibility and was acceptable to both Greeks and Jews. The outward human body is visible like the temples, statues and reliefs. Paul introduced new aspects and shifted some elements of the symbolic world by placing emphasis on that which we do not

see or do not see clearly (1Cor 13:12 and 2Cor 4:18). The body of the resurrected Christ is the “image” that “we shall also bear.” But we do not see this new image of the human body now.

On the basis of the considerable significance of the body both in Greco-Roman and Hebrew symbolic worlds, I would claim that the body is like a common denominator or a link between the concepts of the temple, the individual human body and the community. Paul used the word *body* to designate the human physical existence and refer to the collective, social body and made this double meaning understandable to readers. For that reason they were taught that “their corporate body” (the church) was the place where they were to glorify God. Paul’s metaphoric extension of the individual body to the body of Christ rests upon Jewish belief in the special relationship between God and his people. The aspects of the concept of *body* are corporate Christology and individual Christology, therefore purity is required of both. Fornication defiles the body, but regulated marriage does not; Christian wives and husbands can even transfer holiness to one another.

Fourth, although one should be careful not to read too much into it, the hierarchy of holiness is somehow reflected in Paul’s teaching. Israel believed that God consecrated his house, the temple. The human body must be the temple of the Spirit owned by God (1Cor 6:19–20). The Holy of Holies—the most holy part of the temple—was the *locus* of communication between God and Israel. Likewise *the man within* that delights in the law of God represents the holiest aspect or part of the (bodily) human being. This inner human being (the man within) does not waste away but is renewed day by day. This inner human being is contrasted but not opposed to the human body, and seems to be synonymous with the heart that houses the mind (νοῦς)—and, metaphorically speaking—a letter of Christ, written with the spirit of the living God (2Cor 3:3).