

THE IMAGE OF *TEMPLUM DEI* IN PELAGIUS AND AUGUSTINE¹

Rafał Toczko

Abstract

In the writings of Pelagius and Augustine one finds a number of interpretations of the Pauline metaphor of *templum Dei*. Augustine used the metaphor of *templum Dei* on many occasions, and he did it in a way very similar to Pelagius's. Both writers recognized its twofold meaning, concerning both an individual Christian and the Church. But when Augustine started his polemics against Pelagius he came up with new, different interpretations of the Pauline metaphor. This paper argues that this is not a mere coincidence.

The evidence presented suggests that Augustine must have read Pelagius's *Expositiones* to the Pauline *Letters to Corinthians*. In reaction to these readings, the bishop of Hippo also modified his understanding of the image of *templum Dei*. This development, which started already around 411, is particularly evident after the year 416. During these years, Augustine underlines the fact that in the absolute sense, *templum Dei* may describe only the eschatological reality, the kingdom of God, and not the present, wounded state of being. One of the most important testimonies is Augustine's *Letter 187* where one finds direct polemics against Pelagius. It is also shown that,

¹ I would like to thank David G. Hunter and two anonymous reviewers of *Augustiniana* for their invaluable remarks and well-deserved critics of the first version of this paper. In terms of methodology, this paper was inspired by the works of M.-F. Berrouard, 'L'exégèse augustiniennne de *Rom.*, 7,7-25 entre 396 et 418, avec des remarques sur les deux premières périodes de la crise "pélagienne",' *RechAug* 16 (1981), pp. 101-96 and R. Dodaro, '«*Ego miser homo*»: Augustine, the Pelagian Controversy, and the Paul of *Romans* 7:7-25,' *Augustinianum* 44 (2004), pp. 135-44. The first draft of this paper was written independently of G. Azzali Bernardelli, "'Templum Dei estis" (1 Co 3,16). Osservazioni sugli sviluppi dell'esegesi e del lessico dell'abitazione divina negli scrittori africani da Tertulliano ad Agostino,' [in:] *Cultura latina cristiana fra terzo e quinto secolo. Atti del convegno, Mantova 5-7 novembre 1998*, Firenze 2001, pp. 45-170. Although Azzali Bernardelli's text has the merit of presenting Augustine's ideas in the context of classical and Christian writers, it is also its main flaw. This 'continuity' perspective disables Azzali Bernardelli to see Augustine's use of the analyzed metaphor in its own proper historical and theological context. Clearly, Tertullian and Cyprian did not have to fight with Pelagius.

I have used Brepolis.net tools to trace all the occurrences of the three passages of Pauline epistles to Corinthians, and of the expression '*templum Dei*' in all grammatical variants in Augustine, and searched it on my own in the works of Pelagius. Clearly, it was not possible to present and comment on all the occurrences. Thus, in this paper, I refer to those among them that exemplify most aptly and vividly notions present in Augustine's works.

at some point, Augustine started to prefer other images. To support this thesis, numerous testimonies from Augustine's and Pelagius's works are presented and discussed.

Key Words

pelagianism, exegesis, St. Paul, God's temple, ecclesiology

It has become almost commonplace in research on the Pelagian controversy to mention Augustine's exegesis of Pauline *Letter to Romans*.² Although this scriptural text is crucial for the history of Pelagius's condemnation, constant repetition of this fact may hinder other valuable insights and perspectives. In the writings of Pelagius and Augustine, one can find the Pauline image of *templum Dei* from the *Corinthians*³ as well. This metaphor, as has been demonstrated by a few scholars, can have different referents.⁴ However, with the

² Cf. No.1 above and W.S. Babcock, 'Augustine's interpretation of *Romans* (A.D. 494-396),' *AugStud* 10 (1979), pp. 55-74; M.G. Mara, 'Note sul commento di Agostino alla lettera ai Romani,' *Augustinianum* 25 (1985), pp. 95-104. P. Frederiksen, 'Beyond the Body/Soul Dichotomy: Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and the Pelagians,' *RechAug* 23 (1988), pp. 87-114; J. Wetzel, 'Pelagius Anticipated: Grace and Election in Augustine's *Ad Simplicianum*,' [in:] *Augustine. From Rhetor to Theologian*, ed. by J. McWilliam, Ontario 1992, pp. 121-132, J.P. Yates, 'Romans 2:14-15 in the Latin tradition before the Pelagian controversies,' *Augustiniana* 58 (2008), pp. 27-74.

³ Provided here in Pelagius's version from *expos.* (=A. Souter, *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul*, v. II (Text) Oxford 1926). 1 Cor 3:16-17: "Nescitis quia templum Dei estis? Et Spiritus Dei habitat in uobis? Si quis autem templum Dei uiolauerit, disperdet eum Deus: templum enim Dei sanctum est, quod estis uos."; 1 Cor 6:19-20: "An nescitis quia corpus templum Dei est, quod in uobis sancti spiritus est, quod habetis a Deo? Et non estis uestri: empti enim estis pretio magno. Glorificate et portate Deum in corpore [uestro]."; 2 Cor 6:16: 16 "Qui[s] autem consensus templo Dei cum idolis? Vos enim estis templum Dei uiui, sicut dicit Deus: Quoniam inhabitabo in illis, et in[tra] eos ambulabo, et ero illorum Deus, et ipsi erunt mihi populus".

⁴ J. Ratzinger, *Volk und Haus Gottes in Augustins Lehre von Kirche*, München 1954, pp. 237-254; C. Mohrmann, '«Domus dei» chez saint Augustin,' [in:] *Etudes sur le latin des chrétiens* 2, Roma 1961, pp. 73-79; D. Sanchis, 'Le Symbolisme communautaire du Temple chez Saint Augustin,' *Revue d'ascétique et de mystique* 37 (1961), pp. 5-30; 137-147; M.-F. Berrouard, 'Le chrétien, temple du Christ,' [in:] *Bibliothèque augustinienne. Œuvres de saint Augustin* 72, Paris 1977, pp. 828-829; A. Giacobbi, *La Chiesa in San Agostino, I. Mistero di comunione*, Roma 1978, pp. 153-158; M.-F. Berrouard, 'Le vrai Temple de Dieu,' [in:] *Bibliothèque augustinienne. Œuvres de saint Augustin* 71, Paris 1993, pp. 908-909; G. Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*; E. Lamirande, 'Domus, domus dei,' [in:] *Augustinus-Lexikon* 2, Basel 1996-2002, pp. 602-5.

exception of D. Sanchis, no one has shown the validity of reading Augustine's interpretation of this metaphor in the light of his anti-Pelagian activity. In this paper, we argue that apparent changes occurred in Augustine's interpretation of this metaphor. This article argues that these changes were motivated by his controversy with Pelagius, and that they were repeated in discussions with Julian of Eclanum. It will be seen, however, that these developments were not to be used in many texts of exhortatory and apologetic nature, or those directed against Arians.

1. Pelagius

Pelagius wrote *Expositiones XIII epistularum Pauli* before 409 in Rome.⁵ The plural form of *expositio* might have been used on purpose. Commenting on some Scriptural verses, he presented views of different exegetes without naming them. Thus, the public was not certain which ideas belonged to Pelagius – a characteristic that became the basis of many accusations.⁶ In *Expositiones*, one may find some of the theses ascribed first to his disciple Coelestius in 411, and then to Pelagius⁷ – that of human sinlessness, similarity to God, and natural righteousness. It is certain that Augustine read the *Commentary on Romans* already in 411, probably with the rest of these “short notes” on the Pauline epistles, as he describes them.⁸ The main lines of Pelagius's exegesis of the image of *templum Dei* are presented below.

1.1. *Templum Dei* in *Expositiones*

Commenting on 1 Cor 3:16,⁹ Pelagius observes that the Spirit of God may live in individuals as well as in the Church. He also offers

⁵ I follow the dating of Th. De Bruyn, *Pelagius's Commentary on St Paul's Epistle to the Romans*, Oxford 1993, p. 11; Y.-M. Duval, 'Pelage en son temps: Données chronologiques nouvelles pour une présentation nouvelle,' *Studia Patristica* 38 (2001), pp. 95-118.

⁶ Augustine underlines *ambiguitas*, *calliditas*, *uersutia*, or *astutia* of Pelagius on many occasions, e.g. Aug., *gr. et pecc. or.* 1,6,7; 2,16,17; *ep.* 194,10,46; *ep.* 19*,2.

⁷ Cf. O. Wermelinger, *Rom und Pelagius*, Stuttgart 1975, pp. 70-77. On the problematic question of Coelestius's doctrine of sinlessness cf. R. Dodaro, 'Note on the Carthaginian Debate over Sinlessness (Augustine, *Pecc. Mer.* 2.7.8-16.25),' *Augustinianum* 40 (2000), pp. 187-202.

⁸ Aug., *De peccatorum meritis et remissione* 3,1,1.

⁹ A. Souter, *Pelagius's Expositions of Thirteen Epistles of St. Paul*, v. II (Text) Oxford 1926, p. 144. (Later written in shorter form: Pel., *expos.*)

some thoughts on the ways of violating *templum Dei*: we can sin against God's temple in us by corporal sin, or, on the level of the Church, by heresy. Pelagius discerns two aspects of the metaphor: the first one being an individual, and the second one the Church. In the exposition of 1 Cor 6:19-20¹⁰ Pelagius inserts a line referring to *templum Dei* inside of us. The context of this insertion is the Pauline discussion of continence, and Pelagius claims that we cause serious pain to God by fornication, corrupting his temple in us.¹¹

Commenting on the verse: *Glorificate et portate deum in corpore [uestro]*, Pelagius introduces some ideas that Augustine would challenge after 415, and which will later be known as "Pelagian". However, when *expos.* were written, such remarks were common in ascetic writings, and they should not be read as *prima facie* heterodox.¹² We find the same exhortatory tone of moral advice in Ambrose, Jerome, and Augustine's early writings. Pelagius insists on the fact that the right way to glorify God in the body is to practice good deeds. Furthermore, we ought to hold on to God by cultivating his image in us. *Imago* is used in *expos.* quite often as a synonym for *exemplum* and *forma*. Therefore, what he indicates in his writing is the need to follow Christ's example, to imitate God, a foundational idea of his teaching.¹³ Besides this and the emphasis on human action, which is a *locus communis* of his

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 158-159.

¹¹ Cf. Tertullianus, *De pudicitia* 19,25; Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 82-91. Pelagius seems to know the differentiation between venial and mortal sins, that he probably took from Ambrosiaster. Fornication was a mortal sin. See discussion of this passage in S. Thier, *Kirche bei Pelagius*, Berlin 1999, p. 278-282.

¹² Just as it has been proven that his Christology was orthodox at that time, cf. A. Dupont, 'Die Christusfigur des Pelagius. Rekonstruktion der Christologie im Kommentar von Pelagius zum Römerbrief des Paulus,' *Augustiniana* 56 (2006), pp. 321-372; Idem, 'The Christology of the pre-controversial Pelagius: A study of *De natura* and *De fide trinitatis*, complemented by a comparison with Libellus fidei,' *Augustiniana* 58 (2008), pp. 235-257; R. Dodaro, 'Sacramentum Christi: Augustine on the Christology of Pelagius,' *Studia Patristica* 27 (1993), pp. 274-280. That his *Libellus Fidei* was read as the text of either Augustine or Jerome, and as such used during liturgy in later times is also noteworthy, cf. P.J. van Egmond, 'Haec fides est: observations on the textual tradition of Pelagius's *Libellus fidei*,' *Augustiniana* 57 (2007), pp. 345-385.

¹³ Pel., *expos.* 1 Cor 7:25; 2 Cor 4:5; 5:18; Rom 6:14-15; Eph, 5:27; 1 Tm 2:6; About the democratic dimension of this call to imitation, cf. J.-M. Salamito, *Les virtuoses et la multitude. Aspects sociaux de la controverse entre Augustin et les pélagiens*, Grenoble 2005, pp. 50-54; 175-176. On the difference between Pelagius's teaching on *imago Dei* and *similitudo Dei*, cf. S. Thier, *op. cit.*, pp. 119-126, who rightly criticizes G. Greshake for confusing them.

writings,¹⁴ we should notice that Pelagius does not force his ideas upon the scriptural text.

Pelagius's comment on 2 Cor 6:16¹⁵ is relatively long, judging by his standards of brevity. He starts his exegesis with a surprisingly 'Augustinian' understanding:¹⁶ God dwells everywhere, but especially in those who fully enjoy his grace (*eius gratia se perfruuntur*). He explains somewhat obscurely that he means: "those who prepare for him the clean *hospitium* of their hearts". Such phrasing has an ambiguous meaning. Should we conceive grace as a reward for human act of preparation or are we prepared in the aftermath of God's action?¹⁷ Later on, Pelagius explains the words "Only they will be my people" by stressing that God is in everyone by nature but only in few by their will¹⁸ because he is not the God of the dead but of the living (Lk 20:38). Pelagius understands the people of God as "those who are His servants according to their will, not only according to their nature".¹⁹ It is noteworthy that he uses the distinction between the living and the dead, which will later occur in Augustine's interpretation.

Pelagius further explains that by 'people of God' and '*templum Dei*' he means those whose hearts are clean (*cor mundum*). In this context, 'clean' is explained as a synonym for 'sinless', because *omnis qui peccat immundus est, immundus enim apud Deum omnis iniquus*.²⁰ The exegete describes such people using also the terms 'saints' or 'sincere'.²¹ Hence, Pelagius sees the possibility of achieving sanctity while still on earth – as was common in the ascetic writings of that time. According to him, only the sinless people, who voluntarily obey

¹⁴ Pel., *expos.* e.g. comments on 2 Cor 9:3; 1 Tm 1:5; 1:19; 2:15; 2 Tm 2:15; 4:8; Tit 1:15-16; and *passim*. It is most often juxtaposed with the idea of being saved by sole faith, J.-M. Salamito, *op. cit.*, pp. 178, 179 and *passim*, calls it wittily "inclination to meritocracy".

¹⁵ Pel., *expos.*, p. 267.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*: "Cum ubique sit Deus, tamen in illisi proprie habitare se dicit, qui eius gratia [se] perfruuntur et qui mundum ei praeparant sui cordis hospitium".

¹⁷ S. Thier, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-115, thinks that Pelagius seems to point at the harmony of God's grace and human will here. For Augustine the clumsiness of Pelagius was a conscious operation, aimed at deceiving the catholic judges, e.g. Aug., *ep.* 179,10; *ep.* 188,3,1; *gr. et. pecc. or.* 1,37,40; 2,17,19.

¹⁸ "Deus enim natura omnium est, uoluntate paucorum: 'non est' enim Deus mortuorum sed uiuorum". Cf. Pel., *expos. Rom.* 1:8: "Natura Deus omnium est, merito et uoluntate paucorum".

¹⁹ "Et ipsi erunt mihi populus. Qui uoluntate serui sunt, non natura tantum".

²⁰ Pel., *expos.* 2 Cor 6:17: "Et immundum ne tetigeritis".

²¹ Pel., *ep. ad Dem.* 5, 8; Idem, *expos.* Php 1,9-11. Augustine insisted on admitting distinction between the two, see Aug., *gest. Pel.* 11,26.

God's commands, can be called His temple. Thus, the temple of God is not identified with the terrestrial Church, it consists only of those who enjoyed God's grace. Because of this gift, they were willing to believe and to clean their hearts for His dwelling.²²

Commenting on 2 Cor 5:19, Pelagius makes one reference to the words *inhabitabo in illis* from 2 Cor 6:16. He uses Paul's sentence *Quoniam quidem Deus erat in Christo* to express his understanding of the presence of God. Pelagius gives a threefold definition: 1) God is in all creatures because of his infinity, 2) God is dwelling in a special way in saints because of sanctification, and 3) because of the fullness of his divinity, God is in Christ.²³ In this passage, Pelagius has established a connection between the image of the temple of God and the problem of the presence of God. Augustine, as we will see, seems to accept this perspective.

Could Augustine have read this paragraph of *expos.*? In *Sermo* 152 (preached after 417),²⁴ he explains the line *Christus pro nobis peccatum fecit* (2 Cor 5:21) in exactly the same way as Pelagius had done²⁵. Both Pelagius and Augustine say that *peccatum* is to be understood according to the law of the Old Testament as *hostia pro peccato oblata*²⁶. Although the understanding of *peccatum* as *hostia*

²² This teaching might be read in the context of Pelagius teaching on *praedestinato*, cf. Pel., *expos.*, Eph 1:5; Rom 8:29; 9:10; S. Thier, *op. cit.*, pp. 128-136.

²³ Pel., *expos.*, p. 261.

²⁴ La Bonnardière 417, Kunzelmann 418, Perler 419. I refer to the following works on chronology, mentioning the authors' last names only: A. Kunzelmann, *Die Chronologie der Sermones des hl. Augustinus*, [in:] *Miscellanea agostiniana*, Rome 1930, pp. 417-520; S. Zarb, *Chronologia Enarrationum S. Augustini in Psalmos*, Malta, 1948; M. Le Landais, 'Deux années de prédication de Saint Augustin: introduction à la lecture de l'*In Iohannem*,' *Revue des Études Augustiniennes* 28 (1953), pp. 9-95; H. Rondet, 'Essais sur la chronologie des *Enarrationes in psalmos* de saint Augustin,' *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 61 (1960), pp. 111-127 e 258-286, Idem, 'Essais sur la chronologie des *Enarrationes in psalmos* de saint Augustin,' *Bulletin de littérature ecclésiastique* 65 (1964), 110-136. A.-M. La Bonnardière, *Recherches de chronologie augustinienne*, Paris 1965; O. Perler, *Les voyages de saint Augustin*, Paris 1969; M.-F. Berrouard, 'La date des *Tractatus I-LIV in Iohannis Evangelium* de saint Augustin,' *RechAug* 7 (1971), pp. 105-168; H.J. Frede, *Kirchenschriftsteller. Verzeichnis und Sigel*, Freiburg 1995, VL 1,1; P.-M. Hombert, *Nouvelles recherches de chronologie augustinienne*, Paris 2000; J. Lössl, 'Dating Augustine's *Sermons* 151-156: Internal Evidence,' [in:] Augustinus, *Sermones in epistolas apostolicas*, ed. G. Partoens, Turnhout 2008, pp. XXIII-LV.

²⁵ Aug., *Sermo* 152,11.

²⁶ So Pel., *expos.*: "hostia pro peccato oblata peccatum vocabatur in lege", p. 262, and Aug., *Sermo* 152,11 (CCL 41,45): "In lege peccata uocabantur etiam sacrificia quae pro peccatis offerebantur". Then they both make a citation from Lev 4:29, although in a bit different wording: "et imponet manum super caput peccati sui" (Pelagius); "ponant manus suas sacerdotes super peccatum" (Augustine).

is also to be found in Ambrosiaster, the wording of Augustine is almost identical to that of Pelagius. To conclude, if Augustine had read Pelagius's notes on 2 Cor 5:21, we can suppose that he also noticed the sentences located a few lines above. Particularly, when in Pelagius's *De natura* Augustine found further reference to the image of *templum Dei*.

1.2. *Templum Dei in De natura*

The text of Pelagius's *De natura* was transmitted only partially in Augustine's *De natura et gratia* (*nat. et gr.*). Scholars claim that it was written during the Roman years of Pelagius, probably at the same time as *expos.*²⁷ In *nat. et gr.* 64,77, Augustine provides us with the citation from *De natura*, where Pelagius had quoted three sentences of Xystus.²⁸ Pelagius followed the new fashion of searching arguments for one's case in the texts of respectable ecclesiastical writers.²⁹ Although Augustine was reluctant to use this technique,³⁰ he devoted the last fifteen paragraphs of his polemic against *De natura* to refuting Pelagius's arguments *ad auctoritatem*. While Pelagius inserted phrases of Lactantius, Hilary of Poitiers, Ambrose of Milan, Xystus and even

²⁷ *pace* Y-M. Duval, 'La date du *De natura de Pélage*. Les premières étapes de la controverse sur la nature de la grâce,' *REAug* 36 (1990), pp. 257-283, also W. Löhr, 'Pelagius' Schrift *De natura*: Rekonstruktion und Analyse,' *RechAug* 31 (1999), pp. 135-194.

²⁸ In the maxims of Sextus, a book of ethical and ascetic character, Western Christianity wanted to see the work of Pope Xystus. This piece of information can be obtained from, Rufinus of Aquileia, who translated them. It is no secret that Pelagius put some of these sentences into his work *De natura*. In Augustine's citations from the book of Pelagius we find only three maxims of Sextus/Xystus, but that doesn't mean that Pelagius was reluctant to insert more of them into his work. Jerome tells us that it was widely read in Rome at that time. It was R. F. Evans in 1968 who wanted to establish some deeper influence of this popular work on Pelagius. As was often his technique he focused on showing parallels of thoughts, exact or more loose, between the two. He concluded that those parallels show an even deeper dependency of Pelagius on Origen and his environment, cf. R. F. Evans, *Pelagius. Inquiries and reappraisals*, New York 1968, pp. 44-65. N. Cipriani, 'La morale pelagiana e la retorica,' *Augustinianum* 31 (1991), pp. 309-327, has proved that Pelagius didn't know Greek, and most of his ideas can be found in Cicero and Quintilian so he probably learned them at school. One should add, that W. Dunphy, 'Rufinus the Syrian: myth and reality,' *Augustiniana* 59 (2009), pp. 118-150, opened a new discussion on how deeply Rufinus of Aquileia had influenced Pelagius.

²⁹ M. Vessey, 'The Forging of Orthodoxy in Latin Christian Literature: A Case Study,' *J ECS* 4 (1996), p. 499.

³⁰ E. Rebillard, 'Augustin et ses autorités: l'élaboration de l'argument patristique au cours de la controverse pélagienne,' *Studia Patristica* 38 (2001), pp. 245-263.

Augustine³¹ to present his teaching as orthodox, Augustine tried to show that Pelagius had misrepresented their ideas. Augustine's method was mainly based on rereading those quotations from Fathers through relevant scriptural citations. With this method, Augustine was able to demonstrate that Pelagius had interpreted something unscriptural from them. He also criticized Pelagius for his insufficient rhetorical skills and limited knowledge of the Bible.³²

The second citation from Xystus's work *Sententiae* includes the image of *templum Dei*: "Templum sanctum est Deo mens pura et altare optimum est ei cor mundum et sine peccato".³³ Augustine does not quote Pelagius's own introduction to this citation nor any of his comments on it. Nonetheless, even the choice of this sentence is meaningful, since it shares some of the features of Pelagius's exegesis presented above. Pelagius, after Xystus, establishes a connection between becoming God's dwelling and having a clean heart. They use the adjective 'clean' (Pelagius – *cor mundus*, Xystus – *mens pura*) and underline its purely moral meaning by joining it with the expression 'sinless' (*sine peccato*).³⁴ Both Pelagius and Xystus understood the image of *templum Dei* as forcing an individual to cleanse his heart. Both authors seem to say that because we are able to achieve this blessed state, God can really dwell in us, who are his saints.³⁵

Augustine answers by raising a question that unites *argumentum ad auctoritatem et ad ignorantiam*: even the pious do not know the time and place of accomplishing this task of cleansing hearts. Augustine does not know whether we can achieve perfection as a

³¹ R.F. Evans thought that Augustine attacked Pelagius after reading *De Natura*, where his name was used to underline orthodoxy of the author. He couldn't have found any new ideas in this work that he hadn't already known – Evans says. Even if it was not the sole cause it could have been one of the motives. See R.F. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 85-89.

³² Cf. R. Toczko, 'Heretic as Bad Rhetorician: How Augustine Discredited Pelagius,' *AugStud* 42:2 (2011), p. 211-231.

³³ Aug., *nat. et gr.* 64,77 (CSEL 60,291). Sententia 35 is similar: "You possess within yourself something similar to God, and because of that in you which is similar to God you are to manage yourself as if you were the temple of God", see R.F. Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 50.

³⁴ R.F. Evans *op. cit.*, pp. 54-55, presents it as the claim to cultivate purity in worship on the part of Pelagius. He compares it to other citations of this author, but we do not have to go as far as Evans to conclude that Pelagius's thought was deeply rooted in the maxims of Xystus. On the contrary, he was using the authority of Xystus only in the course of patristic argumentation to transfer his thinking on the Roman brethren more easily.

³⁵ The further citations that Pelagius draws from Jerome reinforce this argument, cf. *De natura et gratia*, 65,78-66,79.

result of God's dwelling in us, but he doubts it. The bishop claims, however, that one fact cannot be disputed: Jesus Christ is the only one responsible for our achievement of perfection. Augustine comments in 415 were developed *in extenso* in his later works.

2. Augustine

We know from the *Confessions* that Augustine was reading Paul already in Milan and Cassiciacum, and that he started studying his work more thoroughly some time later, during his presbyterate in Africa.³⁶ It is not easy to say anything certain about his previous contact with this part of the scriptures.³⁷ However, the first discussions of passages including the image of *templum Dei* occur in the early 390s. In this section, we will discuss when and in what ways Augustine's understanding of the image of God's temple changed.

2.1. *Templum Dei in the individual*

The context in which *templum Dei* is understood individually seems to be mostly pastoral. In the early stages of his ecclesiastical career, Augustine criticizes some Christians for whom sins consist only of external deeds, where one person hurts another. Bad thoughts, desires that do not lead to the trespassing of the commandments, are not qualified as *nefas* by those men. Augustine, on the contrary, distinguishes between the sins against human beings and sins against God. The most notable sins against God are the ones described as "wrecking God's temple in oneself".³⁸ Besides sins of thought, also

³⁶ Aug., *Confessiones* 7,21; As to his readings during presbyterate cf. N. Cipriani, 'L'altro Agostino di G. Lettieri,' *REAug* 48 (2002), pp. 253-257.

³⁷ Cf. P. Fredriksen, 'Beyond the body/soul dichotomy. Augustine on Paul against the Manichees and Pelagians,' *RechAug* 23 (1988) p. 89.

³⁸ Aug., *Sermo* 278,6-7 (PL 38,1271): "Quomodo ergo duo sunt praecepta, sic et duo genera peccatorum. Aut enim in Deum peccatur, aut in hominem. Peccatur autem in Deum, etiam corrumendo templum eius in te: etenim Deus redemit te sanguine Filii sui.[...] Si tibi non parcis propter te ipsum, parce tibi propter Deum, qui te fecit templum suum. Templum enim Dei sanctum est, inquit, quod estis uos; et: Qui templum Dei corruperit, corrumpet illum Deus. Quae peccata homines quando faciunt, putant se non peccare, quia nulli homini nocent". English translation by E. Hill, in: *The Works of St. Augustine: A Translation for the 21st Century* (later WSA) III/8, 1994, p. 53. I follow the dating and argumentation of S. Poque, 'Les lectures liturgiques de l'octave pascale à Hippone d'après les traités de S. Augustin,' *Revue bénédictine* 74 (1964), pp. 237-8, who made justified corrections in Kunzelmann's chronology. Poque proves that *Sermo* 278 was preached around 400.

“immoderate use of something that is a concession to human beings”³⁹ belongs to this type of sins. Augustine names these vices as: fornication and drunkenness,⁴⁰ gluttony,⁴¹ avarice, and envy.⁴² He makes use of Paul’s threat: “Quisquis templum Dei corruperit, corrumpet illum Deus” (1 Cor 3:17), introduced by persuasive: *nemo se fallat*.⁴³ In this context, Augustine describes both our soul and our body as *templum Dei*. For instance, hatred does damage our spirit, by cultivating it we destroy ourselves inside,⁴⁴ whereas sins of the flesh, like adultery, damage our bodies, which are the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19).⁴⁵

It is noteworthy that this teaching is repeated mainly in Augustine’s sermons, concerned with pastoral problems.⁴⁶ All such passages occur prior to the Pelagian controversy. At one point in 395 or 396, Augustine’s teaching clearly resembles that of Pelagius.⁴⁷ He forbids his brethren to celebrate Easter by getting drunk. Here, drunkenness (*immunditia uinolentiae*) is described as filth in the temple of God.⁴⁸ Then, the preacher focuses on the problem of holiness stating that: “Complete and perfect happiness, indeed, consists in being quick to understand and in living a good life, but if you cannot manage both, it is better to live a good life”.⁴⁹ He concedes the possibility that someone may manage both: to achieve perfect happiness and to keep

³⁹ *Sermo* 278,9 (PL 38,1272): “Si autem tua intemperantius usus fueris, numquid uideris nocere alicui, quia uteris tua? Sed eo ipso concessio immoderatus utendo, corrumpis in te templum Dei”. English translation by E. Hill, *WSA* III/8., p. 54.

⁴⁰ Aug., *Sermo* 278,8.

⁴¹ *Sermo* 252, dated 395-396; *Sermo* 278.

⁴² *Sermo* 353,1, dated 391-396.

⁴³ *Sermo* 278,10; *Sermo* 353, 2.

⁴⁴ *Sermo* 82,3, dated 408/9 (Frede).

⁴⁵ *Sermo* 82,13.

⁴⁶ There is yet another, obvious context in which Augustine makes use of *templum Dei* imagery from the letters to Corinthians, namely the Anti-Donatist one. But it is repeating the lines that we have shown here. Augustine (interpreting Cyprian) claims that baptism given by a heretical bishop is valid, as the one given by bishop who is avaricious. Avarice means corrupting the temple of God, but that doesn’t mean that the one who is vulnerable to such a sin cannot baptize. The sanctity of the sacrament is guaranteed by the action of the Holy Spirit – not God’s ministers. So if avarice doesn’t stand in the way of a valid baptism, neither does schism. Cf. Augustine, *De baptismo* 4,4,6; 5,24,34; 6,8,12; 7,11,21.

⁴⁷ *Sermo* 252,12, (PL 38, 1171-1179).

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 1179: “Si autem immunditia uinolentiae impleas templum Dei, sonat tibi Apostolus, quisquis templum Dei corruperit, corrumpet illum Deus”.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*: “Plenitudo quidem est et beatitudo perfecta, ut cito quisque intelligat et bene uiuat: sed si forte utrumque non potest, melius est bene uiuere, quam cito intelligere”. English translation by E. Hill, *WSA* III/7, 1993, p. 140.

God's temple clean.⁵⁰ Nevertheless, this does not necessarily imply that the temple inside of us stays clean throughout an entire lifetime. In *Sermo* 278, preached around 400, Augustine mentions the possibility of cleansing it in the act of penitence.⁵¹ This thought occurs in Pelagius as well.⁵² Furthermore, both authors insist on the capability of human beings to observe God's commandments and to keep His temple inside of us clean and unspoiled.⁵³

In one of the *Homilies on the Gospel of John*, preached in 407-408, Augustine reflects on the subject of a perfect place for prayer. Coming to the conclusion that we should pray in a holy place, he repeats 1 Cor 3:17 only to ask: "Do you want to pray in the temple? Pray in yourself. But first be the temple of God, because he will listen to anyone praying in his temple".⁵⁴ Here, we see another trace of thinking for which Pelagius was later criticized.⁵⁵

However, in *In Iohannis euangelium tractatus* 48, preached during the years of the Pelagian controversy,⁵⁶ Augustine warns his listeners not to think of themselves as the dwellings of God. According to Augustine, this kind of thought could lead to ungrounded claims to be as Christ, *i.e.* to be not only God-like, but divine. It sounds like an immediate response to Pelagius's repeated exhortation to imitate Christ. One ought to observe that the bishop of Hippo presents us here with an idea that is exactly opposite to the one preached in 407-408. Augustine no longer says: "become the temple of God, so you can pray in the temple". Now he states: "God is in you because you were

⁵⁰ On the theme of purification of heart and its development in Augustine's writing cf. G.C. Ceriotti, *De fide et symbolo. Intelligenza della fede*, [in:] *Fede e Vita*, SEA 91, pp. 18-22.

⁵¹ *Sermo* 278,10, English translation by E. Hill, WSA III/7, p. 55. He cites Mt 6:12.

⁵² Refuting the Novatians, cf. Pelagius, *expos.*, 2 Cor 7:10, 12:21; Idem, *Ep. ad Dem.*, 17; C. Garcia-Sanchez, *Pelagius and Christian Initiation: A Study in Historical Theology*, Ann Arbor 1978, p. 104 ff.

⁵³ *Sermo* 278,10, (PL 38, 1273): "Deus arguit, exigens de te integritatem templi sui et incorruptionem habitationis suae".

⁵⁴ Aug., *Io. eu. tr.*, 15,25, ed. R. Willems (CCSL 36, 161): "In templo uis orare? In te ora. Sed prius esto templum Dei, quia ille in templo suo exaudiet orantem". English translation by E. Hill, WSA III/12, p. 291.

⁵⁵ Cf. Aug., *De gestis Pelagii* 6,16-6,10, and Jerome, *Dialogus aduersus Pelagianos* 3,14 where both authors are citing the prayer from *De Vita Christiana*. See also R.F. Evans, 'Pelagius, Fastidius, and the pseudo-Augustinian *De Vita Christiana*,' *JThS* 13 (1962), pp. 74-79. There is no certainty that Pelagius was the author of this work, but Jerome had no doubts about it.

⁵⁶ La Bonnardière: 419-421, Berrouard: 414.

made a temple of God”.⁵⁷ The imperative ‘*esto*’ used before has been removed. Now the preacher does not command anyone to be God’s temple, because it is not us who make the temple. On the contrary, the temple is made of us. We participate in God, because we are his servants, unlike the Lord who is equal with the Father.⁵⁸

2.1.1. *Templum Dei* as the human soul (*homo interior*)

In some texts, Augustine attributes the image of *templum Dei* more precisely as the human heart or soul. This interpretation occurs quite early; *De magistro* (from 389) starts with a philosophical discussion on the nature of language as a sign. Speaking to Adeodatus, Augustine mentions the special use of speech made during prayer. Augustine combines three citations from the New Testament: Mt 6:6, 1 Cor 3:16, Eph 3:17 and one from Ps 4:5-6. It occurs that God wishes us to pray in his temple, by which Augustine understands the “innermost court of the rational soul which is called the interior man (*homo interior*)”.⁵⁹ He describes it even more accurately by calling it temple of the soul and chamber of the heart.⁶⁰

De fide et symbolo, written in 392 or 393,⁶¹ provides us with another interesting testimony. Interpreting in an allegorical sense the line of the Creed in which we say that Christ sits on the right hand of the Father, Augustine calls the human heart the real temple of God. However, he does not mean by it every heart, but only the one that is purified of the terrestrial lust and error.⁶² Here, Augustine is close to Pelagius’s exhortation to clear our heart for God’s indwelling, as well

⁵⁷ Augustine, *Io. eu. tr.* 48,10 (CCSL 36, 418): “In Deo es, quia Deus te continet; Deus est in te, quia templum Dei factus es”. English translation by J.W. Rettig, *Tractates on the Gospel of John 28-54*, Washington 1993, p. 236.

⁵⁸ In this passage we can also discern the context of „reciprocity of inhabitation”, as Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 163-168, calls it.

⁵⁹ Aug., *De magistro* 1,2, ed. K. Daur (CCSL 29, 158): “Deus autem in ipsis rationalis animae secretis, qui homo interior uocatur, et quaerendus et deprecandus est; haec enim sua templa esse uoluit”. English translation by R.P. Russell in: Augustine, *The Teacher*, Washington D.C. 1968, pp. 8-9. Cf. Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 158-162.

⁶⁰ J. Ratzinger, *op. cit.*, pp. 37-38, draws attention to the fact, that at this stage, Augustine excludes the ecclesiological interpretation of this passage, because he omits the expression *per fidem*: “Faith, Church and sacraments are still quite out of sight. The inner splendor of God’s temple belongs solely to metaphysics” [my translation].

⁶¹ Aug., *Retractationes*, 1,16,18.

⁶² Aug., *De fide et symbolo*, 7,14. Cf. D. Sanchis, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

as to the traditional, philosophical understanding of contact with the divine.

So far, only one more example has been found where Augustine uses this metaphor in such sense. In *Enarrationes in Psalmos* (*en. Ps.*) he states that pagan temples are false, and Christian ones are true, because we, unlike them, are the temple of God, and our souls are the altars.⁶³ Strictly speaking, the whole person is a temple, but particular emphasis is put on the soul as the most important and the most holy part of it. This testimony is also dated in the year 393.

In his later works, Augustine refrains from using the image of the *templum Dei* to describe the human soul.⁶⁴ Instead, he more frequently stresses the alternative meaning: that God dwells in the human body. He maintains this interpretation especially in his discussions against Manicheans and against Julian. Therefore, this change in Augustine's interpretation could be explained by his later avoidance of any Manichean-like notions.

2.1.2. *Templum Dei* as the human body (*homo exterior*)

Manicheans claimed that the soul was fashioned by God and the body by an evil mind.⁶⁵ Thus, a human body cannot be described as the temple of God, but rather as the prison of the soul. In the *Ad Faustum Manicheum* 20,15, written in 397-398, Augustine tries to convince his addressee of the absurdity of such a division. He cites 1 Cor 3:17 together with 1 Cor 6:19 to show that it is not only our soul that is the temple of God, but our body as well. While fighting the body-soul dichotomy, Augustine argues that the human body is capable of being *templum Dei*, which is parallel to Pelagius's thinking.

This context can be also found in *Contra Iulianum*. This does not come as a surprise, since Julian, attacking Augustine, claimed that

⁶³ Aug., *en. Ps.* 94,6. Dated 393. This metaphor was also present in one maxim of Xystus.

⁶⁴ I agree with M.-F. Berrouard, 'Le chrétien, temple du Christ,' in: *Bibliothèque augustinienne. Œuvres de saint Augustin* 72 (1977), pp. 828-829, that Augustine very rarely speaks of Christians as of God's temple, and when he does, it is mostly in a polemical context. Azzali Bernardelli, *op.cit.*, p. 162, does not recognize it. One mistake occurs in Azzali Bernardelli's reference to *De natura et gratia* 64, 77. It is not Augustine who cites Xystus, but it is Pelagius, quoted by Augustine, cf. W. Löhr, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

⁶⁵ Aug., *Contra Iulianum* 1,5,17 (PL 44, 651). Augustine thus characterizes this standpoint of the Manicheans: "Putantes atque affirmantes, de gente tenebrarum, quam malam naturam dicunt Deo bono coaeternam, habere originem corpora, et esse etiam ipsa immutabilia mala".

the old bishop had never ceased to be Manichean.⁶⁶ In order to defend himself from such accusations, Augustine took up the theme from his *Contra Faustum* and used the Pauline imagery of God's temple. However, his interpretation had changed since the 390s. Already in the first book, Augustine reinforces his interpretation with many citations from Basil's works that he calls anti-Manichean. He observes that the body is only starting to be God's temple, but actually it is not His temple yet. It has been corrupted in paradise by the prevarication of Adam, and can be cured only in heaven, becoming uncorrupted and immortal again.⁶⁷

In Book 6 of *Contra Iulianum*, Augustine is more precise. Firstly, he repeats the passage from *De nuptiis et concupiscentia* I,18,20 which Julian inserted in his book against Augustine. Augustine now writes that the scriptures call our bodies the temples of God, but that we should not read it in an absolute sense. We call the external man (*homo exterior*) sanctified not because he is truly sanctified at the moment, but because he has received the hope (*spes*) of the future sanctification. Thus, the body is called *templum Dei* only because of this hope, not "on account of our present sanctification".⁶⁸

In the following paragraph, he uses the significant verb *coepere* to express his changed idea of the state of the human body.⁶⁹ Our bodies only *start* to belong to the temple of God, but as the carnal drive is contrary to the spirit, only grace can provide them with perfect chastity. However, this will happen only in heaven.⁷⁰ The baptized are the temple of God, but again: it "is being *built* during this time, so it may be dedicated at the end", "it already bears this name", "it is

⁶⁶ For the assessment of the validity of these accusations, cf. M. Lamberigts, 'Was Augustine a Manichean? The Assessment of Julian of Aeclanum,' in: J. van Oort, O. Wermelinger, G. Wurst, *Augustine and Manichaeism in the Latin West: Proceedings of the Fribourg-Utrecht International Symposium of the International Association of Manichaean Studies (IAMS)*. Leiden-Boston-Koeln 2001, pp. 113-136.

⁶⁷ Aug., *Contra Iulianum* 1,5,16-17.

⁶⁸ *Ibidem*, 6,13,40 (PL 44,844): "Quamuis ipse exterior sanctificatus sit, et spem futurae incorruptionis acceperit, propter quod et templum Dei merito dicitur: sed hoc non solum propter praesentem sanctificationem, sed propter illam spem dictum est, de qua dicitur, et nos ipsi primitias habentes spiritus ingemiscimus, adoptionem exspectantes, redemptionem corporis nostri". English translation by R.J. Teske, *WSA* I/24, 1998, p. 501.

⁶⁹ *Ibidem*, 6,14,41 (PL 44,844): "Et ideo quamuis casta sint corpora, cum desiderii peccati membra non seruiunt, propter quod ad templum Dei pertinere coeperunt: est tamen quod gratia in tota ista aedificatione perficiat." Frequently utilized to present his idea of Church after the break of the Pelagian controversy.

⁷⁰ Aug., *Contra Iulianum* 6,13,40-6,14,41.

being constructed".⁷¹ Augustine marks clearly, and without much subtlety: "Let no one be so foolish as to think that anyone who has been baptized is already perfect".⁷²

While opposing Julian, Augustine faces the problem of avoiding the threat of Manicheism. It is perhaps for this reason that the same concept that was used thirty years earlier is used again: to mark the continuity and veracity of his anti-Manichean stand. But the image of the temple of God as a description of the human body in the *Contra Iulianum* is presented in the context of the theory of grace, which outdates the previous concept of *Contra Faustum*. Augustine now shares his new understanding, reached during the years of fighting with Pelagius, that an individual can become perfect only in the kingdom of God.

2.2. *Templum Dei as the Church*⁷³

At the early stages of his ecclesiastical career, Augustine seems to present the traditional apologetic image of the Church as the temple of God, which is closely linked to Pelagius's interpretation. In *Contra Faustum* 13,13, Augustine faces the question of how one may find the true Church. He straightforwardly answers that it is easily discernible because of its holiness (1 Cor 3:17), and because it is "set on the hill" (Mt 5:4), which he interprets as numerous, and filling the whole earth (Daniel 2:34-35). Thus, the glory, holiness and (spiritual) welfare of the terrestrial Church are arguments for its truth and divinity. At this

⁷¹ *Ibidem*, 6,14,42 (PL 44,846): "Habent ergo iam baptizati quid agant in se ipsis, hoc est, in Dei templo, quod aedificatur hoc tempore, ut dedicetur in fine". English translation by R.J. Teske, *WSA I/24*, p. 503. The idea of the dedication of the temple of God is also used by Augustine in the context of his later concept of Church. See further.

⁷² *Ibidem*: "Nemo igitur ita desipiat, ut unumquemque baptizatum ideo existimet iam esse perfectum, quia dictum est, templum Dei sanctum est, quod estis uos: et, nescitis quia corpora uestra templum in uobis est spiritus sancti, quem habetis a Deo?"

⁷³ P. Borgomeo in his elaborate work, *L'Église de ce temps dans la prédication de Saint Augustin*, Paris 1972, failed to recognize the importance of the image of *templum Dei* in Augustine's reflection on "Church of his times". Although A. Giacobbi, *La Chiesa in San Agostino. Mistero di comunione*, Roma 1978, pp. 153-158, recognizes the fact that metaphor of *templum Dei* was symbolizing terrestrial Church, he refrains from admitting any shift in Augustine's thought. It is rather strange, since D. Sanchis, *op. cit.*, already in 1961 presented his brief, but thorough and exact study on this subject. He observes that this collective meaning of *templum Dei* as the Christian community occurs suddenly in 393-394 and, therefore, he suggests, it should be linked with his monastic enterprises (pp. 13-14).

time Augustine showed neither hesitation nor doubt concerning the possibility of such blessed existence on earth, although he must have already heard about the Donatists and their ideas.

By 396 Augustine appears reluctant to endorse the idea of salvation through faith, i.e. the justification of the unbaptized. In *De diuersis quaestionibus ad Simplicianum* I,2,2, he distinguishes between the grace of receiving faith and the grace of rebirth through the Holy Spirit in the sacrament of baptism. The temple of God is formed of those who are not only conceived but also born. In this image 'conception' means receiving faith, and 'being born' represents receiving the sacrament of baptism. In this passage, the author strives to underline the idea that we receive this sacrament as a gift without previous merits on our side. This resembles Augustine's future anti-Pelagian arguments. However, Augustine's metaphor of conception and birth is contrary to his later usage of the image of terrestrial *peregrinatio*, and of the Church as an unfinished building.

Augustine's interpretation begins to change as early as 411, when he refrains from calling the Church God's temple. He then looks for metaphors to support his arguments. Once this new direction is chosen, as will be shown by ample testimonies, his position becomes irreversible.

*Proteges eos in tabernaculo tuo. Quod est tabernaculum? Ecclesia huius temporis; tabernaculum ideo dicitur, quia adhuc in hac terra peregrinatur. Tabernaculum enim habitaculum est militum in expeditione positorum. Ipsa dicuntur tabernacula. Domus non est tabernaculum. Pugna in expeditione peregrinus, ut saluus factus in tabernaculo, gloriosus recipiaris in domum. Erit enim in caelo domus tua aeterna, si modo bene in hoc tabernaculo uixeris.*⁷⁴

We should not exclude the anti-Donatist context as a motive for such a formulation in 411. However, at exactly that time⁷⁵, Augustine

⁷⁴ Aug., *en. Ps.* 30/2, *Sermo* 3,8, ed. E. Dekkers, J. Fraipont (CCSL 38, 218-9). "You will shield them in your tent'. What tent is that? The Church in this present age. It is called tent because the Church is still traveling on earth; for a tent is where soldiers live while they are on active service. Their lodgings are called tents. A tent is not one's home. So then, traveler, fight while you are on active service, so that after being saved in your tent you may be welcomed gloriously into your home. There will be an eternal home for you in heaven, if you have lived a good life here in this tent". English translation by M. Boulding in: Augustine, *The Expositions of the Psalms 1-32*, WSA III/15, 2000, pp. 353-354. Dating: Zarb: 411-12, Rondet: 412-415. Hombert: 411-412, who proved that there are clear anti-Pelagian traits in it, *op. cit.*, pp. 589-594.

⁷⁵ I am in general agreement with W. Dunphy on the subject of chronology of events in the year 411, which means that Coelestius was judged before the conference

was becoming aware that Pelagius also viewed the Church through the Pauline phrase: *sine macula et ruga*. In *en. Ps.* 95⁷⁶ another testimony of Augustine's self-restraint can be found. He says that we are only in the vestibule or atrium of His temple and that we are being built into it. There is an obvious anti-Donatist polemic in this text as well,⁷⁷ and if we believe in the dating of Zarb or Sanchis, it could also have something to do with Pelagius.⁷⁸ In *en. Ps.* 131 preached few days before *Enarratio* 95,⁷⁹ Augustine alters this interpretation by making a clear distinction between "tent/tabernacle" and "house":

*Quamquam aliquando dicitur tabernaculum Dei domus Dei, et domus Dei tabernaculum Dei, distinctius tamen accipitur, fratres carissimi, tabernaculum ecclesia secundum hoc tempus; domus autem ecclesia caelestis Ierusalem, quo ibimus. Tabernaculum enim tamquam militantium et pugnantium. [...] Quamdiu ergo habemus hostem cum quo pugnemus, tabernaculum Deo facimus. Cum autem transierit tempus pugnae, et uenerit pax illa quae praecellit omnem intellectum, sicut dicit apostolus: et pax Christi quae praecellit omnem intellectum; [...] cum uenerit illa patria, iam domus erit, nullus aduersarius tentabit, ut tabernaculum uocetur. [...] quid enim dicitur de illa domo? Beati qui habitant in domo tua; in saecula saeculorum laudabunt te. In tabernaculo adhuc geminus, in domo laudabimus. Quare? Quia gemitus est peregrinantium, laudatio iam in patria commanentium. Hic primo quaeratur tabernaculum Deo Iacob.*⁸⁰

with the Donatist in June 411, and that *Sermo* 294 was preached exactly that month. Cf. W. Dunphy 'A lost year: Pelagianism in Carthage, 411 A.D.,' *Augustinianum* 45 (2005), pp. 389-466. M. Gaumer, 'The development of the concept of grace in Late Antique North Africa its context within the Donatist and Pelagian debates,' *Augustinianum* 50/1, pp. 163-187, is convincing in his observations that a part of Augustine's arguments against Pelagius had been drawn from his previous polemics with the Donatists.

⁷⁶ Zarb: 412, Sanchis: 415, La Bonnardière: 407, Perler: 406-407.

⁷⁷ He calls his opponents frogs who croak in their marsh "we are the only Christians" (95,11).

⁷⁸ Cf. D. Sanchis, *op.cit.*, pp. 143-146. As he dates *en. Ps.* 95 on 415, it enables him to read it in the context of *De natura et gratia*. Controversial as it may seem, this scholar also observes that the image of *templum Dei* in *en. Ps.* 95, 131 and *sermo* 163 should be read in the anti-Donatist and anti-Pelagian context.

⁷⁹ In *Augustinus. Enarrationes in Psalmos 101-150, Pars 3: Enarrationes in Psalmos 119-133*, ed. F. Gori, 2001, CSEL 95/3 p. 8, Gori writes: "*en.* 131 prius quam *en.* 95 dictam esse colligitur ex ipso Augustino, qui laudat praesentem Seuerum Mileuitanum episcopum".

⁸⁰ Aug., *en. Ps.* 131,10, ed. E. Dekkers, J. Fraipont (CCSL 40, 1916). "'Tabernacle' indicates the Church in the present era; 'house' means the Church of the heavenly Jerusalem to which we are journeying. The word 'tabernaculum' is used of the tents of soldiers and all fighters. [...] As long as we have enemies to fight we pitch, a

Probably after he read *expos.*,⁸¹ Augustine admits in his commentaries on *Psalms* 121 and 122 that we are only called the temple of God, but we have not yet fully become one. This work is still in process and would only end after we die. He opposes the idea that Paul meant by the temple of God a material object, a building.⁸² The temple of God is made of living stones. He introduces the metaphor of *peregrinatio* as well.⁸³ In 414 Augustine comments on *Psalms* 137.⁸⁴ He distinguishes there between two temples: the lower and the higher. Our souls are like wind, therefore, when we pray our souls seem to be raised to the higher one among angels. But this temple is only built by God, and it is not made of stone. This theme returns a few years later in Augustine's *Sermo* 156.⁸⁵ Again he makes the restriction that although we are called living stones because we can move ourselves, we, as stones, are primarily moved by God's power. God still builds his temple, which will only be finished in heaven. Augustine adds around the same time in *Sermo* 163⁸⁶ that God's temple was started when Grace replaced Law, and it is still being built and awaits its dedication. In *De ciuitate Dei*, he repeats that this dedication will be postponed until the fulfillment of times⁸⁷ and that it is being built by God together with us as his helpers and its future inhabitants.⁸⁸

In the *exposition of Psalm* 83, preached probably in 414 or 415,⁸⁹ Augustine follows this interpretation of the terrestrial church

tent for God. But the time will come when our warfare will be over and that peace will reign which the apostle calls "the peace of Christ, which outshines every understanding" (Ph 4:7). [...]When that peace comes, our homeland will be our house, our home. [...]What are we told about that house? "Blessed are they who dwell in your house; they will praise you for ever and ever" (Ps 83:5(84:4)). Here in God's tent we are still groaning: there in his house we shall be singing praise. [...]Here on earth is a place where we must first seek a tabernacle for the God of Jacob". English translation by E. Hill in: Augustine, *The Expositions of the Psalms 121-150*, WSA III/20, p. 161.

⁸¹ Zarb: 412, La Bonnardière: 406-407, Le Landais: 414-415.

⁸² Aug., *en. Ps.* 121,4 (CCSL 40, 1803): *conquadrantur ut intrent in structuram sempiternam[...] spiritualiter aedificamur.*

⁸³ *Ibidem*, 122,4. He makes here another distinction: the terrestrial Church is temple of God *secundum fidem*, whereas in Heaven it will be his temple *secundum speciem*.

⁸⁴ Zarb: 5-12-414.

⁸⁵ Dated by scholars between 417 and 419.

⁸⁶ Aug., *Sermo* 156, J. Lössl: 417, cf. *Sermo* 163, Frede: 417.

⁸⁷ Aug., *De ciuitate Dei*, 15,19.

⁸⁸ *Ibidem*, 17,12. Those two passages are analyzed by Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 131-133, who pays attention to the synonymity of the expressions *domus*, *templum*, *ciuitas*, that has its origin in Tertullian.

⁸⁹ Dating of Zarb.

during the *peregrinatio*,⁹⁰ yet he reinforces it with a new metaphor of a wine press. In this metaphor, our bodies are put under pressure of temptations like in wine presses. We might only anticipate future joys of heaven together with the psalmist. It should be mentioned that in this text, when Augustine talks about those who dwell in God's house he means primarily members of the heavenly Jerusalem, not of the terrestrial Church, Zion on pilgrimage.⁹¹

Probably around the same time, Augustine wrote *Io. eu. tr.* 68,⁹² where he reflects on the places that Christ prepared for us in the Father's house. He distinguishes between two stages of preparation: God established the first one in the act of predestination, whereas God accomplishes the second by actual working-in-us.⁹³ Augustine cites 1 Cor 3:17 to prove that God's house can be nothing else but his temple, and 1 Cor 15:23-24 to prove that it should be understood as the kingdom of God. However, for now it has only the name, not the power of the kingdom. He concludes:

*Haec ergo domus Dei, hoc templum Dei, hoc regnum Dei, regnumque caelorum aedificatur, adhuc fabricatur, adhuc paratur, adhuc congregatur. In illo erunt mansiones, sicut eas adhuc parat Dominus; in illo iam sunt, sicut praedestinavit iam Dominus.*⁹⁴

In *ep.* 187, written in 417, Augustine continues to exploit this idea of the temporary state of our terrestrial being. He calls it again *peregrinatio*. There is a context of grace and of God's presence into which the metaphor is placed. First, Augustine states that God does not dwell in all people, although he is everywhere. Thus, he distinguishes between the presence of God in nature as its creator and in his people "through the indwelling of grace". If we take into account the time when

⁹⁰ Aug., *en. Ps* 83,8, ed. E. Dekkers, J. Fraipont (CCSL 39, 1152): Sed hic nidus est, et hic peregrinatio, et hic suspirium, et hic tritura, et hic pressura quia hic torcular.

⁹¹ Azzali Bernardelli reads *en. Ps.* 131 as a proof that terrestrial, universal Church is the temple of God. That is not correct. First, Augustine makes the distinction between the house and the tent of God (ch.10). Second, Augustine calls Christian God's temple, city and house in the contexts of something inhabited by God, and thus not fulfilling his own ends (ch.13). Third, there is a context of grace and predestination— only those, whom Saint Spirit gave the pledge will resurrect with him (ch. 15). Fourth, mind the distinction between Zion on Pilgrimage and heavenly Jerusalem (ch. 21)

⁹² Zarb: 414, Rondet: before 413.

⁹³ Aug., *Io. eu. tr.* 68,1.

⁹⁴ *Ibidem*, 68,2 (CCSL 36, 498): "This house of God, therefore, this temple of God, this kingdom of God and kingdom of heaven, is as yet in the process of building, of construction, of preparation, of assembling. In it there will be mansions, even as the Lord is now preparing them; in it there are such already, even as the Lord has already ordained them".

Augustine wrote it,⁹⁵ this discernment may be understood as a polemic against Pelagius. Augustine claimed that the heresiarch had never admitted that such a distinction was valid. For Pelagius – Augustine claims – God’s grace occurs exactly in the good nature of the creature. Thus, we owe to God only our power (*capacitas*) of will (*uolle*) and the power to act (*agere*). These two qualities were once given to human-kind, and since then they have nothing to do with grace⁹⁶.

Augustine shows exactly what kind of society he means when using his metaphor in the following passage:

*Propter hanc enim habitationem, ubi procul dubio gratia dilectionis eius agnoscitur, non dicimus: Pater noster, qui es ubique, cum et hoc uerum sit, sed: Pater noster, qui es in caelis, ut templum eius potius in oratione commemoremus, quod et nos ipsi esse debemus et, in quantum sumus, in tantum ad eius societatem et adoptionis familiam pertinemus.*⁹⁷

Here, we can see that the image of the temple of God is linked to the subject of God’s presence. The temple of God is in heaven. Even if sometimes the scriptures call the people of God his temple, they do not do it in the absolute sense. We should always bear in mind – Augustine says – “how much more so is his temple in heaven where there are the people of his angels, to whom we shall be gathered and made equal when, after the end of our pilgrimage, we receive what God has promised!”⁹⁸ It can be argued in this case that, the interpretation of the image of *templum Dei* as the existing Church has become problematic for him.⁹⁹

⁹⁵ Around the same year Augustine preached *Sermo* 152 (Lössl: 417), where he made use of Pelagius’s exegesis of 2 Cor 5:21. This line in *expos.* is found in the near vicinity of the discussion of God’s presence and the metaphor of *templum Dei* in 2 Cor 5:19.

⁹⁶ Cf. Pelagius, *Ep. ad Dem.* 3,1-3, 8,4 and Aug. *gr. et. pecc. or.* 14,15. Augustine seemed to misunderstand Pelagius’s teaching on this subject, cf. M. R. Rackett, ‘What’s wrong with pelagianism? Augustine and Jerome on the dangers of Pelagius and his Followers,’ *AugStud* 33 (2002), p. 235.

⁹⁷ Aug., *ep.* 187,5,16 (CSEL 57,94): “On account of this indwelling, in which we undoubtedly recognize the grace of love, we do not say, “Our Father who art everywhere”, though this is also true, but, ‘Our Father who art in heaven’ (Mt 6:9), in order that we may rather call to mind in prayer his temple”. English translation by R.J. Teske in: Augustine, *Letters 156-210*, WSA II,3, 2004, p. 237. Cf. Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, p. 140, who calls this letter “the first and only systematic statement on the subject of God’s presence in the patristic era” [my translation]. It sounds almost like D. Sanchis’s remark, *op. cit.*, p. 11, reference n. 23.

⁹⁸ Aug., *ep.* 187,5,16, English translation by R.J. Teske in: WSA II,3, p. 238.

⁹⁹ Azzali Bernardelli, *op.cit.*, pp. 147-151, seems not to recognize this fact.

At the end of the letter, Augustine stresses his point even more clearly:

*Cum uero eius habitationem cogitas, unitatem cogita congregationem que sanctorum maxime in caelis, ubi propterea praecipue dicitur habitare, quia ibi fit uoluntas eius perfecta eorum, in quibus habitat, oboedientia; deinde in terra, ubi aedificans habitat domum suam in fine saeculi dedicandam.*¹⁰⁰

This passage is strikingly anti-Pelagian and anti-Donatist, as it stresses the fact that perfect obedience is achievable only in heaven. The temple of God's first meaning is "the assembly of the saints and angels in heaven". When we are talking about the temple of God on earth, it can be used only as an inexact metaphor, a loose parallel. But even then, *templum Dei* neither designates an individual, nor a group of holy men, nor even the Church.

The first reason is that the Church is not really God's house but his tent. The word "tent" seems to be more suitable for a description of our earthly pilgrimage. The second reason is that, within the metaphor of a building,¹⁰¹ the act of its dedication will be at the end of the ages. Dedicating a building meant opening it, making it accessible, serving its purpose. But the Church is not perfect, and so it cannot perfectly serve its purpose of being the temple of God. However, the bishop of Hippo goes even further: it is not us who build the *templum Dei*. The reason why we can say that God is present in his Church is because he erects this building. So he is present as a laborer, as a dispenser of an operative grace, as the Holy Spirit who acts secretly inside of us so that we can become God's dwelling places – which will happen only after we die.¹⁰²

There are a few facts that allow us to suggest that in this letter, Augustine actually rejects Pelagius's ideas. Firstly, he himself mentions the anti-Pelagian character of this letter in his *Retractationes*. Secondly, there is the specific subject of *praesentia Dei* – the same

¹⁰⁰ Aug., *ep.* 187,13,41 (CSEL 57,118): "When you think of his dwelling place, think of the unity and the assembly of the saints, especially in heaven, where he is chiefly said to dwell because his will is done there by the perfect obedience of those who dwell there, and then on earth, where he dwells as he builds his house, which will be dedicated at the end of the age". English translation by R.J. Teske in: *WSA* II,3, p. 249.

¹⁰¹ D. Sanchis, *op. cit.*, pp. 4-6, rightly observes that Augustine had hardly any interest in temples as buildings.

¹⁰² Aug., *ep.* 187,8,26-27. Cf. Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 130-131, who underlines the fact that it is God, who possesses human soul through the action of the Saint Spirit.

which occurs in Pelagius's *expos.* (2 Cor 5: 19) where, as we have seen, he elaborates on the idea of *templum Dei*. Thirdly, there is a detailed rebutting of Pelagius's interpretation of the image.

2.2.1. Anti-pagan context

It should be pointed out that, especially in the *en. Ps.*, Augustine presents the image of the temple of God as the terrestrial Church using an apologetic tone. In this context, he reminds his brethren of the Church of martyrs that were the true temple of God. Each time the psalmist mentions God's heritage or kingdom endangered or attacked by someone, the exegete interprets it as prophecies of persecution of the Church.¹⁰³ Augustine goes on to say that the difference between pagans (or Jews) and Christians is that our temple is not made of stone and wood, but of human beings, that he calls living stones.¹⁰⁴ He cites 1 P 2:5 quite often to underline this shift.

In this context, Augustine also gives some pastoral warnings to his not wholly Christianized brethren. He exhorts his listeners to pray in the house of God among the fellow Christians, because they are the temple of God which Paul mentions: "all they who believe in Christ, and in such a way that they love".¹⁰⁵ He even turns against the Jews when he explicitly excludes the possibility that Paul or John (J 2:14-16) could have meant the temple in Jerusalem when speaking of God's temple.¹⁰⁶ The preacher exhorts all to pray for the power to become the living part of the body of Christ, a living stone in his temple.¹⁰⁷

We can observe that every time Augustine uses the citation concerning *templum Dei* in the anti-pagan context he applies it to the earthly Church, even after 411.¹⁰⁸ This does not come as a surprise,

¹⁰³ Aug., *en. Ps.* 78,4.

¹⁰⁴ Ibidem; *en. Ps.* 111,1; 121,4; 130,1.

¹⁰⁵ Aug., *en. Ps.* 130,1.

¹⁰⁶ Aug., *en. Ps.* 130,3. Azzali Bernardelli, *op. cit.*, pp. 154-155, totally omits this context. On the temple of Jerusalem's interpretation in Augustine, cf. D. Sanchis, *op. cit.*, pp. 9-10.

¹⁰⁷ Aug., *en. Ps.* 131,5.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. Aug., *en. Ps.* 64,8-9 that Azzali Bernardelli, pp. 153-154 interprets out of its eschatological context. Although Augustine says at the end of chapter 8: *Amate iustitiam et uos estis templum Dei*, we cannot not read it, as Azzali Bernardelli seems to do, as a proof that Augustine still perceived terrestrial Church as the temple of God. This chapter is dedicated to the psalmist's expression: *inhabitabit in atriis tuis*. Mind the future tense. Augustine was speaking about our expectations concerning heavenly dwellings. He introduces difference between the visible and spiritual goods. God's house is not to be perceived as abundant with terrestrial wealth but as *admirabile in iustitia*. So we have to practice righteousness to be called his temple. But Augustine

because the context is both apologetic and exhortatory. Augustine seems to direct his words to those who are not baptized yet, or those who are weak in faith. Persuading someone to be a part of the Church does not require much theological complexity. Neither does apologetics. This is not the place to manifest difference of opinion among Church writers. It is not an occasion to fight against heretics when you fight the pagan or invite someone to your community. All those occurrences are prior to 417, a year when Pelagius's case seemed to be peculiarly demanding for Augustine.¹⁰⁹

2.3. *The anti-Arian context (Templum Dei as the temple of the Trinity)*

For Augustine, 1 Cor 3:16-17 and 1 Cor 6:19-20 had a special importance in terms of discussing the unity of the Trinity. It is in this Trinitarian context that he cites them in *Enchiridion*:

*Deus ergo habitat in templo suo, non solum Spiritus Sanctus, sed etiam Pater, et Filius; qui etiam de corpore suo per quod factus est caput ecclesiae quae in hominibus est, ut sit in omnibus ipse primum tenens.*¹¹⁰

In the same context, the image of *templum Dei* is used in *De Trinitate* I,13. The argument may be presented as follows. Augustine introduces a few scriptural testimonies to prove that the Holy Spirit is equal to Christ. Subsequently, he admits that different readings of the Greek texts exist and that they can change their meaning in a way advantageous to his opponents. The passage ends with the citations from 1 Cor 6:19-20 and 6:15 where there are no philological doubts about the wording. Augustine states that Paul's view on the equality of Christ and the Holy Spirit is easy to interpret from these phrases: "Your bodies are the members of Christ", and elsewhere: "Your

says: *Ista sunt bona Domus Dei; his te para satiari. Sed ut inde satieris, cum peruen-eris, hoc te oportet esurire et sitire, cum peregrinaris.* Mind, that Augustine uses the word *peregrinor*, and once again the future tense of *peruenire*. We cannot read one sentence out of its context.

¹⁰⁹ Cf. O. Wermelinger, *op. cit.* pp. 94-164, J. Patout Burns, 'Augustine's Role in the Imperial Action against Pelagius,' *JThS* 30/1 (1979), pp. 67-83; M. Lamberigts, 'Co-operation of Church and State in the Condemnation of the Pelagians: The Case of Zosimus,' in: *Religious polemics in context*, ed. by T. L. Hettema, A. van der Kooij, Assen 2004, pp. 363-375.

¹¹⁰ Aug., *Enchiridion* 15,36 (CCSL 46,79): "God, then, dwells in His temple: not the Holy Spirit only, but the Father also, and the Son, who says of His own body, through which He was made Head of the Church upon earth". Cf. Azzali Bernardelli, p. 145 who presents it in the light of John 2:19 but is silent on the Anti-Arian context of this passage.

bodies are the temple among you of the Spirit".¹¹¹ Augustine shows no concern in explaining exactly in what sense the bodies are understood. The stress is put on the predicate, not on the subject. Paul puts the Holy Spirit in the same place as Christ in the parallel sentences. As in the *Collatio cum Maximino* and *Contra Maximinum*, the author inserts both citations from Paul only to show that the subject is either God (1 Cor 3:16) or the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 6:19), so "if the Holy Spirit were not God, we would not be His temple".¹¹²

In a word, when turning against the Arians, Augustine mentions *templum Dei* to prove that being God's temple means being a place of dwelling of the whole Trinity, and that there is a place inside of us for each of the three Persons. We can be *templum Dei* or *templum Spiritus*, and that is precisely what should be stressed. He does not explain in detail whether by *templum* he means individuals or Church, because it is of no importance to the polemics against the Arians.¹¹³ Neither are the other topics, like the state of perfection and the difference between terrestrial and celestial Church. The use of this image against the Arians did not change at all throughout the bishops' lifetime. It is not surprising, however, because the Arians had no contact with Pelagius, who attacked them as vehemently as Augustine. This context is independent of the strife between these two authors. Therefore, Augustine showed no sign of changing his interpretation. There was simply no need for it.

3. Conclusions

Both Augustine and Pelagius recognize the twofold meaning of *templum Dei*. It describes either an individual or the Church. Although Pelagius is more interested in the former, there is hardly any discrepancy between his interpretation and that of Augustine, at least in certain contexts. Clearly, the presbyter and later bishop of Hippo, fighting with Manicheans, Donatists and pagans, uses this image on a broader scale. Nevertheless, the difference is that of quantity rather than of quality. The theme of God commanding and human readiness to purify oneself for God's indwelling is present in both authors. The stress is placed on the avoidance of sins so as to not to corrupt the temple of God.

¹¹¹ English translation by E. Hill, Augustine, *The Trinity*, WSA I/5, 1991, p.73.

¹¹² Aug., *Contra Maximinum* 1,11 (PL 42, 753): "Neque enim nisi Deus noster esset, templum nos ipsos habere potuisset". English translation by R.J. Teske, Augustine, *Arianism and Other Heresies*, WSA I/18, 1995, p. 200. Cf. Aug., *Collatio cum Maximino* 14.

¹¹³ This topic occurs marginally also in *ep.* 187,5,16.

It is obvious, however, that Augustine changed his interpretation of 1 Cor 3:16-17, 1 Cor 6,16, and 2 Cor 5,19 over time. It may have been due to his Pelagian readings. In the same way as his reinterpretation of St. Paul's vulnerability to the fear of death, this interpretation is already present in 411,¹¹⁴ and then it only evolves in the course of events to become more manifest.¹¹⁵

It has been noted that Augustine reinforces the image of *templum Dei* or even substitutes it with the one that he sees as the most powerful and true: the image of the body of Christ and its members. This preference is understandable; Christ, as the head of the body, is already in heaven.¹¹⁶ Thus, in its true sense, the Church is not fully united with God until it finds itself at God's right hand along with the angels. This metaphor enables Augustine to avoid the troublesome themes of sanctification, purification of the soul or body, and other topics vulnerable to Pelagian and Manichean interpretations. Furthermore, it well suits the new reinterpretation of history presented by Augustine during the years of the Pelagian controversy. There is a clear border, an *eschaton* that divides the two worlds. The Christian community on earth is only a shadow of the glory of the next world. Thus, Augustine no longer sees in the Pauline image of *templum Dei* a living individual or even the earthly Church. It is rather the chosen, the predestined, the saints that were called and saved who are now in heaven together with the other citizens of the real Kingdom of God who may be justified to bear this name. Augustine's change of the main lines of his interpretation of these Pauline passages precisely during the Pelagian controversy is not to be viewed only as a chronological coincidence, since, as we have argued, those shifts occur only in the anti-Pelagian contexts.

Rafał Toczko

Department of Classics

Faculty of Languages, Nicolaus Copernicus University

Torun, Poland

¹¹⁴ R. Dodaro, "*Ego miser homo*", pp. 135-44.

¹¹⁵ These observations may also serve to revalidate some chronological conclusions of S. Zarb.

¹¹⁶ Cf. e.g. Aug., *en. Ps.* 121,4. The occurrences are really numerous, cf. P. Borgomeo, *op. cit.*, pp. 191-234, who gives a thorough interpretation of most of them. For a shorter commentary, cf. A. Giacobbi, *op. cit.*, pp. 143-153. It is not the only reason of this preference. This image fits better his conception of *Christus totus*, as the sole mediator of virtue. Cf. R. Dodaro, *Christ and the Just Society*, Cambridge 2004, pp. 72-114.