Tesis que para obtener el grado de
Doctor en Estudios del Mundo Antiguo
se presenta bajo el título:

Lo ético y el más allá del lenguaje:
la idea de sustitución vicaria
y la noción de "contravida" (ἀντίψυχος)
en 4 Macabeos

Ethics and the Beyond of Language:
Substitutionary Atonement
and the Concept of "Counterlife" (Ἀντίψυχος)
in 4 Maccabees

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Madrid 2014
Dedicated to the memory of my mother,
Pauline Elizabeth Doody (1955-2004)

Ω φύσις ιερὰ καὶ φίλτρα γονέων
καὶ γένεσι φιλόστοργος καὶ τροφεία
καὶ μητέρων ἀδάμαστα πάθη
(4 Maccabees 15.13)
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Preface and Acknowledgements:
For My Interpreters

Replacement, deputy, relief, proxy, surrogate, locum...

With these words and their kin my mother tongue, English, invites its speakers to voice the idea of the “substitute”: to name the person who stands in (sub-) the place (stituere, statuere) of another. Spanish, my adopted language, extends its own bidding: sustituto, suplente, relevo, representante… We have then in these terms, and their cognates in other languages, the means by which to imagine the substitute and “substitution”—the work she performs—but to really think and know and understand these concepts—to hold them to the light, to feel and smell and taste and hear them—this is a step which may prove, in the end, to be beyond our human pace to take.

Part of the problem, it seems, lies in the fact that in the word, substitute, we have only an approximation to the concept: sub-, according to some other lines in the dictionary, means “somewhat,” “nearly,” “more or less”: subantarctic. Or else it has the sense of “at a lower level or position”—subalpine—or denotes “subsequent or secondary action of the same kind”—sublet, subdivision. In which category, then, does the substitute fit? She does not come from below me, nor stands beside me; neither is she my inferior nor even of my kind, not “somewhat,” not “nearly,” not “more or less”: she is my shadow, in my skin, my ransom, my releasing even from the invisible bonds of the mirror. Alter ego and locum tenens, she occupies now the selfsame coordinates at which I was myself but a moment ago, or less, thus cutting me loose, freeing me up—but for what? If my substitute substitutes “for” me, then what “me” could be left?

There will be those who will say that I am being too (melo)dramatic, and that in any case the art of substitution is either just a metaphor or else extends to only one particular part of who I am: my work, my place on a committee, my position in a team. The beginning of a reply forms on my lips—relief—as if this effect or this condition of the substitution reveals, and guarantees, what has been at stake from the very beginning. And then I think of the risks my substitute—my guarantor, proxy, deputy, agent—would run for me, should I ever fall in bad faith…
I also reply with the one word of which consists the present thesis in its entirety: ἀντίψυχος, “my life in exchange for theirs” (4 Maccabees [4 Macc] 6.29), “a ransom for the sin of our nation” (4 Macc 17.21). Again in this word, as with substitute, we have a semantic indetermination that obscures what it would ostensibly make manifest: anti-, as we know from anti-aircraft, antibacterial, anticlimax, antipope, and so on, usually means “opposed to,” “preventing,” “the opposite of,” “a rival.” But how could it be that this substitute, this ἀντίψυχος, is opposed to, closed off to, the very opposite of the life (or soul, mind, spirit, etc.: ψυχή) for which it would offer itself? Some will argue that in Greek the ἀντι- is capable of other values beyond those of “opposite” or “against,” perhaps thinking of these lines in Bion of Smyrna: “And Echo calls back [ἲντεβόασεν], “Fair Adonis is dead!”” (Ep. Adon. 1.38; trans. Reed 1997: 125). Echo is here repeating what she has heard of the lament of Aphrodite for Adonis (-βοάω), but more than that—and as the Desires and all the mountains, the trees, the rivers, springs and flowers have all done up to this point in the poem—she seeks to express her solidarity with Aphrodite by giving voice to her own mourning. Is my substitute, then—my ἀντίψυχος—my Echo who cries with me, mourns with me: a presence who consoles me by whispering my pain—our pain—into my ear? But then the question will have become that of how best to translate Bion’s idiom into languages—modern English and Spanish—that would seem to have no room for it.

The historical-critical method can take one so far in this task of translating the ἀντίψυχος—that figure so close to me she is the echo of my very breathing, my sighing, my torment (ψῡχω)—but it clearly cannot paint the whole picture. Comparative philology knows, for example, of the following parallel with the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc 6.29 and 17.21 in the Old Testament book of Leviticus:

For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you for making atonement for your lives on the altar; for, as life [ἀντὶ τῆς ψυχῆς], it is the blood that makes atonement. (Lev 17.11)

“The life of the flesh…in the blood…that makes atonement,” then: such is one definition of the ἀντίψυχος that historical-critical philology yields. But then what would it mean that this parallel in Leviticus appears in the midst of a particular prohibition on eating blood (Lev 17.10-16)? Or that, at the same time that it affirms
that “the life of all flesh [πάσης σαρκος] is in the blood” (17.11; cf. 17.14), the text here makes a reference to the blood of *animals and birds* (17.13; cf. 17.15)—that is, to the particular *non-human* victims that are to become burnt offerings or sacrifices of well-being (e.g. 17.3-4)? Historical-critical philology helps one see, then, that the ἀντίψυχος is a sacrifice through whose blood, indeed—and through whose “death as an atoning sacrifice [τοῦ ἡλιστηρίου τοῦ θανάτου]”—“divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been mistreated” (4 Macc 17.22). But if there is a displacement around the ἀντὶ τῆς ψυχῆς or ἀντίψυχος between Leviticus and 4 Macc from *animal* sacrifice to *human* then that will require, at the very least, a turn from strict philology to the *ethical* and *political*—that is, to the consideration not just of *who* the ἀντίψυχος is but of *how to live* with her: how to deal with the “statute” mandating her sacrifice (cf. Lev 17.7), and how to bear the guilt for the shedding of her blood from within—or cut off from—the people of Israel (17.4, 16). For again: if one admits that the ἀντίψυχος has become a *human* sacrifice in 4 Macc, how are we now to understand the presence of the animal victim before the Lord in the middle of the camp, in the tabernacle (ἀπέν-αντι, Lev 17.4, 6)? How can one take, and refigure, one part of the metaphor and leave the other?

Expressed in these ways—as ideas that push the limits of language (whether English, Spanish, or Greek) and therefore of thought, or vice versa—the notions of substitution and of ἀντιψυχος (the work of the ἀντίψυχος) take on the character of philosophical *aporieae* as opposed to mere semantic, historical-critical or religio-scientific curiosities. This is, at any rate, the approach I have taken on the question in the present thesis, and I would therefore beg the indulgence of the reader as I seek to explain in more detail, and to justify, my framing of the problem in this way in the pages that follow. As for the particular use I make here of the guiding thread let out by Derrida and his “deconstruction”: I can only ask the reader to bear in mind throughout the course of this study what I have already signalled with regard to the travails of translation. From Bion we already have the idea of the ἀντί- as condoling *echo*; for ἀντὶ ψυχή, on the other hand—recognising its equivalence with blood in Leviticus to be inadequate—*we* could turn to other important influences on the

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1 In the light, for example, of Finlan’s very useful summary of the passage from Leviticus under discussion: “Blood, carrying the life-force, can somehow reverse the anti-life of sin and pollution. When the blood is poured on a ritually-polluted temple installation [cf. Lev 17.6], the life-force cleans
author of 4 Macc, as we shall see in this thesis—viz., Chrysippus and the Stoics—and translate it as the “pneuma integral to our nature”: as voice, sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch (Galen, De plac. Hipp et Plat. 3.10-11; quoted in Gill 2009: 413). But again the same problem returns: how could we capture, in a word or two of English or Spanish, this idea that the ἀντιψυχος would be the comforting echo not only of all my speaking but of my hearing, smelling, tasting, touching, and so on as well? If, in short, the question of the ἀντιψυχος can be thought of as a philosophical aporia, then perhaps some (minimal) elucidation of it can be found in seeking an adequate translation of the term. “[T]he thesis of philosophy is translatability,” said Derrida in another time and place (1988: 119-20 [120]): “that is…the transfer of a meaning or a truth from one language to another without any essential harm being done.” It is here, then—at the crossroads of translation and philosophy in which the ἀντιψυχος is to be found—that I would like to situate the present work.

* 

I cannot think of my thesis as a contribution to the interpretation of 4 Maccabees in particular and of Jewish and Christian origins more generally without thinking of all those people who, over the course of my life thus far, have helped me to understand myself and to make myself and my work understood. I remember here, in the first place, my Spanish teachers in Alcalá de Henares—Cristina and Cecilia in particular—without whom I would never have had the confidence to go on and continue my studies in Spain.

My grateful thanks also extend to my family in Spain—Felipe, Magdalena, David, Ana, and Jorge—who have never failed in their patience with and support of this new member in their company. One most certainly cannot survive let alone study in Spain without understanding the culture, history, traditions, and other peculiarities of the country, and for their unflagging willingness to explain all this to me from their perspective I am tremendously grateful to my in-laws. Along with my loved ones in Australia—Ray, Paula, Nathan, Elizabeth, and Anthony—my family in Spain have given me the space, security, and self-belief necessary to be able to understand myself away the anti-life, pollution” (2004: 41). If, in other words, blood is the “life-force” here and sin the anti-life, what place is there left conceptually for the ἀντι-ψυχος?
that little bit better as a person and a scholar—a luxury, it should be said, in these
difficult times. In particular, I would like to offer here a special thank you—totally
insufficient, and for that I ask his forgiveness—to my father, Ray, who has never
failed to model for me the image of the loving husband and devoted parent I hope to
live up to in the future.

In terms of the more scholarly aspects of this thesis I would like to record here my
immense gratitude to my supervisors both in Amsterdam and in Madrid. To Professor
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willing to host, and to supervise, my doctoral project. And to Professor Carlos
Segovia of the Universidad Camilo José Cela, most of all, who has taught me more
than anyone else the meaning and importance of simply getting down to work and
letting everything else take care of itself: words fail to express the appreciation and
admiration I feel for you as a scholar, educator, person, and friend. Wherever I go in
the future and whatever I do, I will never forget the master I had in Spain under whom
I had the privilege of working on this thesis.

Finally, to my wife Magdalena, in whose company I have had the great pleasure of
living and working these past three-and-a-half years: without you, quite simply, this
thesis would have been impossible. My fondness and tenderness for you know no
bounds. May this time we have spent together thus far—and the work we have
completed together in this thesis—be but a glimmering of the adventures that await us
in the years to come.

— C. J. D.

Amsterdam

14th March 2014
## Table of Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Códice Alejandrino / <em>Codex Alexandrinus</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AB</td>
<td>Anchor Bible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A.D.</td>
<td>anno Domini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AEC</td>
<td>Antes de la Era Común</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGJU</td>
<td>Arbeiten zur Geschichte des antiken Judentums und des Urchristentums</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AnBoll</td>
<td>Analecta Bollandiana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.</td>
<td>before Christ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B.C.E.</td>
<td>Before the Common Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BibInt</td>
<td>Biblical Interpretation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bis</td>
<td>dos veces / <em>twice</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BETL</td>
<td>Bibliotheca ephemeridum theologarum lovaniensium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BHT</td>
<td>Beiträge zur historischen Theologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BZ</td>
<td><em>Biblische Zeitschrift</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BZAW</td>
<td>Beihefte zur Zeitschrift für die alttestamentliche Wissenschaft</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ca.</td>
<td><em>circa</em>: hacia; alrededor de (respeto a una fecha) / approximately (regarding a date)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cap(s).</td>
<td>capítulo(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBC</td>
<td>Cambridge Bible Commentary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CBQ</td>
<td>Catholic Bible Quarterly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C.E.</td>
<td>Common Era</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cf.</td>
<td><em>confer</em>: compárese / compare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ch(s).</td>
<td>chapter(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CSJH</td>
<td>Chicago Studies in the History of Judaism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJD</td>
<td>Discoveries in the Judaean Desert</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DRAE</td>
<td>Diccionario de la Real Academia Española</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Disponible en línea en la página-web de la RAE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><a href="http://www.rae.es">http://www.rae.es</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EC</td>
<td>Era Común</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ed(s).</td>
<td>editor(es); editado por / <em>editor(s); edited by</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e.g.</td>
<td><em>exempli gratia</em>: for example</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
esp. especialmente / especially

et al. y otros (para libros o artículos con más de tres editores/autores) / and others (for books or articles with more than three editors/authors)

etc. et cetera: y lo demás / and the rest

f(f). and the following one(s)

fl. floruit: el periodo en que una figura histórica vivió y trabajó / the period in which an historical figure lived and worked

ExpTim Expository Times

(h)Heb. hebreo / Hebrew

HO Handbuch der Orientalistik

ibid. ibidem: en el mismo lugar / in the same place

id. idem: lo mismo (un autor o trabajo que se acaba de mencionar) / the same (an author or work just mentioned)

i.e. id est: esto es / that is

intro. introducción; introducido por / introduction; introduced by

JBL Journal of Biblical Literature

JECS Journal of Early Christian Studies

JSHRZ Jüdische Schriften aus hellenistisch-römischer Zeit

JSJSup Supplements to the Journal for the Study of Judaism

JSNTSup Journal for the Study of the New Testament: Supplement Series

JSOTS Sup Journal for the Study of the Old Testament: Supplement Series

JSP Journal for the Study of the Pseudepigrapha

LCL Loeb Classical Library

lit. literalmente / literally


http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/

LXX Septuaginta (el Antiguo Testamento griego) / Septuagint (the Greek Old Testament)

MnemSupp Mnemosyne Supplements: Monographs on Greek and Roman Language and Literature

n(n). nota(s) / note(s)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NovTSup</td>
<td>Supplements to Novum Testamentum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NRSV</td>
<td>New Revised Standard Version of the Bible (translation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Division of Christian Education of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America (1989)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NTS</td>
<td>New Testament Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OED</td>
<td>Oxford English Dictionary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>p(p).</td>
<td>página(s) / page(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pace</td>
<td>con el respeto debido (a alguien o a su opinión) / with due respect to (someone or their opinion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>par.</td>
<td>paralelo (usado para indicar paralelos textuales) / parallel (used to indicate textual parallels)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passim</td>
<td>algo que se encuentra &quot;aquí y allá&quot; en una obra particular / to be found “here and there” in a particular work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pref.</td>
<td>Prefacio; Preface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rev.</td>
<td>revisado (por) / revised (by)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RhM</td>
<td>Rheinisches Museum für Philologie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>Códice Sinaítico / Codex Sinaiticus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLEJL</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Early Judaism and its Literature</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SBLRBS</td>
<td>Society of Biblical Literature Resources for Biblical Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SemeiaSt</td>
<td>Semeia Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[sic]</td>
<td>así (usado para señalar que una palabra extraña o errónea aparece así en el original) / so; thus (used to show that an odd or erroneous word appears thus in the original)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SNTSMS</td>
<td>Society for New Testament Studies Monograph Series</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SP</td>
<td>Sacra pagina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STDJ</td>
<td>Studies on the Texts of the Desert of Judah</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>s(s).v(v).</td>
<td>sub verbo: bajo la(s) entrada(s) / under the heading(s)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ter</td>
<td>tres veces / thrice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ThH</td>
<td>Théologie historique</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
El resto de las abreviaturas usadas en este trabajo o son de uso común o, en el caso de los textos antiguos, están dadas en el lugar correspondiente en los índices.

The remainder of the abbreviations used in this work are either in more common use or, in the case of ancient texts, are given in the corresponding place in the indices.

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Figure 1: Maccheroni, Matrice de l’archéologie du signe, 1976 374
Figure 2: Newman, Adam, 1951-2 379
NOTA SOBRE LAS TRADUCCIONES /

NOTE ON TRANSLATIONS

Todas las traducciones inglesas de la Biblia, los deuterocanónicos católicos / apócrifos protestantes y 4 Macabeos están tomadas de la NRSV salvo otra indicación. Las traducciones españolas de la Biblia y los deuterocanónicos están tomadas de la última edición (la 4ª) de la Biblia de Jerusalén (Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 2009) a falta de toda otra indicación; en el caso de 4 Macabeos, están tomadas de la traducción de López Salvá (1982).

All English translations of the Bible, the Catholic Deuterocanon / Protestant Apocrypha, and 4 Maccabees are taken from the NRSV unless otherwise noted. Spanish translations of the Bible and Deuterocanon, on the other hand, are taken from the latest revision of the Biblia de Jerusalén (Bilbao: Desclée de Brouwer, 2009) save indication to the contrary; in the case of 4 Maccabees, they are taken from the translation of López Salvá (1982).
... [Y]a no puedo acudir a ninguna ética, a ninguna experiencia, a ninguna práctica, sea cual fuere —salvo la de un contravivir, es decir de una no práctica, es decir (quizá) de un habla de escritura.

... [E]sta palabra responsabilidad llega como de un lenguaje desconocido que sólo hablamos a regañadientes, a contravida y tan injustificados como cuando estamos en relación con la muerte, sea la muerte de Lo Otro o la nuestra siempre impropia. Por tanto, habría sin duda que volverse hacia una lengua jamás escrita, pero siempre por prescribir, para que se entienda esta palabra incomprensible en su pesadez desastrosa...

(Blanchot 1990: 29-30)

Si pudiéramos pintar la historia de tu piedad como en un cuadro, ¿no se estremecerían los espectadores al ver a una madre de siete hijos resistiendo, por causa de la piedad, los más variados tormentos hasta la muerte?

(4 Macabeos 17.7)

...I can no longer appeal to any ethics, any experience, any practice whatever—save that of some counter-living, which is to say an un-practice, or (perhaps) a word of writing.

But then, the word “responsibility”...comes as though from an unknown language which we only speak counter to our heart and to life, and unjustifiably, just as we are unjustifiable with respect to every death, to the death of the Other.... One would have thus to turn toward some language that never has been written—a language never inscribed but that is always to be prescribed—in order that this incomprehensible word be understood in its disastrous heaviness...

(Blanchot 1995: 26-7)

If it were possible for us to paint the history of your religion as an artist might, would not those who first beheld it have shuddered?

(4 Macabeos 17.7)
INTRODUCCIÓN:
4 MACABEOS COMO ÉCRASIS SEGÚN LA LÓGICA “DECONSTRUCTIVA”

Introducción

Como acontece en buena parte de la filosofía continental contemporánea, el texto apócrifo judío conocido como 4 Macabeos (en adelante 4 Mac) atestigua al fracaso del lenguaje de no saber cómo ofrecer una palabra ética ante el horror indecible. En el caso de la filosofía continental, la separación traumática entre el lenguaje y la ética viene con la Shoah; en el caso de 4 Mac, es también un holocausto —la muerte de mujeres y niños judíos inocentes por la Ley (v.g. 1.8-11)— que cataliza una crisis de significación moral en el discurso. Pero “Dios escucha también a los mudos [σιωπώντων]”, según el autor de 4 Mac (10.18) —escucha a los que se han callado (ἀπο-σιωπάω) después de que las palabras han dicho lo suyo— y la razón (λογισμός) persiste después de que el hablar se haya visto cortado (γλωττοτομήσεις, 10.19). Lo que sustituye por el lenguaje en esta obra, y expía por sus deficiencias, es un antilenguaje (ἀντιλέγειν, 8.2), una antiretórica (ἀντιρρητορεύσαντα, 6.1), una antifilosofía (ἀντεφιλοσοφήσαν, 8.15), una antipolítica (ἀντιπολιτεύμενος, 4.1): una antítesis (ἀντιθείς) de la “razón” al “deseo” en medio de la cual surge una idea de una “ofrenda a Dios” (3.16).

Después del lenguaje —después de la retórica, la filosofía, la política, la economía, la sexualidad y todos los demás intentos de dar testimonio del Otro— la figura que se presenta en 4 Mac es el ἀντίψυχος (6.29; 17.21), la antivida o contravida: el “rescate por los pecados de nuestro pueblo” por medio del cual “la divina providencia salvó al antes malvado Israel” (17.21-22). Pero, ¿cuál es la contrapalabra, la réplica, la represalia que busca este sustituto y sacrificio vicario que deja pasmado, y estupefacto, al autor de 4 Mac: que le deja señalando, estremeciéndose, hacia el cuadro que hubiera realizado de él, si hubiera sido “posible” (17.7)? Entre la razón y el deseo en 4 Mac —entre la “justicia”, el “coraje”, el “autocontrol”, el “juicio racional” y todas sus “emociones” divergentes, en la provincia extraña donde se hunde el argumento y fallan las palabras (“La cuestión es sumamente ridícula”, 2.24-3.1 [3.1]; cf. 1.5-6; 6.34-35)— se encuentra la contravisión de lo ético de que esta tesis se ocupará especialmente: el “contravivir” de la contravida, el ἀντίψυχος, que hace que la “responsabilidad” sienta —por fin— en toda su “pesadez desastrosa”.

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1. 4 Macabeos: una introducción general a la obra

1.1. Resumen breve del contenido de la obra

El texto apócrifo conocido como 4 Macabeos (4 Mac) narra la historia del martirio de siete hermanos, su madre y el sabio Eleazar, que habría tenido lugar supuestamente durante un período de persecución contra los judíos por parte de los seléucidas bajo el reinado Antíoco IV Epífanes (175-164 AEC). Estamos ante una adaptación o interpretación de acontecimientos que habían sido recogidos en el libro canónico 2 Macabeos (caps. 3-7), si bien es cierto que en 4 Mac vienen expuestos en forma de un tratado filosófico que trata de probar que la fe judía es una guía más segura a la virtud que cualquier forma de vida griega. Escrito probablemente alrededor de 90 EC por un judío de la diáspora, devoto de su religión y, además, bien versado en el pensamiento grecorromano, 4 Mac es notable porque constituye la reflexión judía más antigua que se nos ha conservado sobre las implicaciones religiosas y políticas del martirio (van Henten y Avemarie 2002: 47). Y, aunque, 4 Mac está basado en un relato originalmente incluido en 2 Mac, y quizás también en una historia perdida que fue escrita por Jasón de Cirene (2 Mac 2.23)1, únicamente esta obra nos permite acercarnos por primera vez al germen de la idea de que el sufrimiento y la muerte de la minoría justa tienen eficacia redentora vicaria para la mayoría.

1.2. La tradición textual

El texto de 4 Mac se nos ha conservado en varios manuscritos y en varias lenguas diferentes: siríaco, latín, eslavo antiguo, copto y griego. Sin embargo, como Anderson (1983: 2.532-3) por ejemplo ha señalado, la adaptación libre del autor de una variedad de figuras procedentes de la filosofía y la retórica griegas, sumada a la ausencia de semitismos a lo largo de la obra, su dependencia de citas de la Septuaginta y la competencia del autor en la lengua griega con el empleo de palabras y expresiones de uso nada común y que llega incluso a acuñar algunas nuevas (v.g. 1.29; 4.19; 9.19;

1 De este autor no sabemos nada más, por desgracia, aparte de lo que Schwartz (2008: 175) señala leyendo entre líneas: “‘Jasón’ es un nombre común, tanto entre judíos como no judíos; podemos suponer que éste era judío. Puede ser que las palabras ‘de Cirene’ indiquen que había abandonado su lugar de origen [la ciudad o la región: a saber, la Cirenaica]; pero... no revelan necesariamente nada más aparte de que la persona que lo menciona... provenía de otro sitio. Y hasta esto, incluso, no es totalmente cierto...”.
Por lo que se refiere a las lenguas distintas del griego, Bensly y Barnes (1895) han reunido el texto en siriaco. Hay que admitir que se trata de un testimonio bastante tardío —el códice más antiguo que forma la base de la traducción se remonta al siglo IX o X— pero Barnes lo valora como “fieL”, y por tanto “de algún valor para la crítica textual del libro” (Bensly y Barnes 1895: xiv). En general, esta traducción siriaca antigua del griego de 4 Mac coincide con el texto del Códice Sinaítico, y no con el Códice Alejandrino. Tanto Swete (1899: 3.900-902) como Hiebert (2005: 193-216) presentan listas de algunas de las variantes más interesantes sobre la base del siriaco que, aun cuando no se tendrán en cuenta de forma explícita en la presente tesis, al menos nos aportarán información en algunas lecturas discutibles que adoptaremos a lo largo de nuestro trabajo.

1.2.2. El latín

La primera paráfrasis de 4 Mac en lengua latina, la *Passio Sanctorum Machabaeorum*, está atestiguada por primera vez en manuscritos que datan del siglo IV (Hiebert 2005: 196, 211-16 [196]; id. 2012: 131). No obstante, a diferencia de la versión siriaca, la cual es fiel en buena parte al original griego y “puede ser la única traducción [de 4 Mac], importante desde la perspectiva de la crítica textual, que ha sobrevivido en su totalidad” (Hiebert 2005: 193), la *Passio* se aleja de su fuente griega de manera tan frecuente y hasta tal punto que las correspondencias temáticas entre los dos son difíciles incluso de encontrar, y más aún, por lo tanto, de analizar. Es más, el carácter profundamente cristiano de esta adaptación latina, *sed christianum*

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2 Por ejemplo, aunque signifique que nos anticipamos un tanto: en el recurso literario del cuadro imaginario de la “historia de tu piedad” en 4 Mac 17.7 —del cual haremos un gran uso en esta tesis, como el lugar donde la ética del lenguaje ha fallado, irremediablemente, y la pintura ya la ha reemplazado —el siriaco carece del ὡςπερ presente en A y S y también, con ese último, tiene ὀρθὸντες después de θεωροῦντες (Bensly y Barnes 1895: xx; Swete 1899: 3.902). La importancia de esto para nuestros propósitos es que el cuadro no es, en el siriaco, metafórico de ningún modo (ὁςπερ) —y que el traductor aquí, al contrario, está más bien haciendo resaltar lo visual del texto además de lo textual (ὁρθὸντες).
explicabitur sensu (“explicado en un sentido cristiano”), según Passio 1.1, por muy interesante que sea no se puede decir que sea muy útil para establecer el texto original de la obra.

1.2.3. El eslavo antiguo y el copto

La primera traducción de 4 Mac al eslavo, hecha por Máximo Triboles (“Máximo el griego”; ca. 1470-1555), aún espera a que los exegetas le presten debida atención, aunque Thomson ha aventurado unos comentarios preliminares. La característica más notable de esta versión, bajo su punto de vista, se refiere a la libertad que se ha tomado el traductor para condensarla. Como escribe Thomson, “al abreviar el texto Máximo ha alterado la propia naturaleza del libro, que ya no es un tratado filosófico... sino que se ha convertido en un informe de los sufrimientos de los macabeos” (1998: 868-9 [869]). En términos de fijación del texto, sin embargo, hasta el momento en el que se edite adecuadamente, es obligado reconocer que la traducción de Máximo resulta de difícil utilización. Lo mismo se puede afirmar de los fragmentos de una traducción copta (sahídica) primitiva de 4 Mac descubiertos por Lucchesi (1980; 1983) a principios de los años '80, si bien Miroshnikov (2014) subraya la necesidad de comenzar a hacer uso de tales fragmentos, que él mismo toma en consideración.

1.2.4. El griego

En suma, el texto en griego, lengua en la que fue redactada originalmente la obra, constituirá la base de nuestra investigación. Los manuscritos griegos forman tres grupos textuales claramente diferenciados: 1), el integrado por ciertos manuscritos de la Septuaginta; 2), aquel formado por ciertos manuscritos de los escritos de Flavio

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3 Debido a la calidad poco satisfactoria de las fotografías consultadas por él, Miroshnikov (2014: 73 n. 20) señala que no ha podido tener en cuenta tres fragmentos de 4 Mac —correspondientes a 4 Mac 1.1-6— que actualmente se encuentran depositados en la Biblioteca Nacional de París (131f. 114, 1321f. 171 and 1321f. 214). Sin embargo, su presentación y traducción del resto de esta versión copta de 4 Mac (que abarca a 1.7-16; 15.16-21; 16.14-23; 17.7-12 y 18.6-15) está bien hecho y se merece que nos detengamos un momento en ella. En particular notamos aquí su observación de que aunque el copto representa un compendio del griego de nuestro texto —un hecho que explica, hasta cierto punto, las lagunas en estos fragmentos comparados con la versión crítica establecida por Rahlfs (2006)— el copto “se distingue... de los compendios disponibles en otros idiomas [a saber, en el latín y el eslavo antiguo]” por el hecho de que lo abreviado en esta versión dista de ser la parte filosófica del texto (Miroshnikov 2014: 72). Pero aún así, y con respecto a nuestros propósitos aquí: a nuestro juicio este texto copta —que data de la “primera mitad del siglo X” (Miroshnikov 2014: 71)— no nos sirve en términos de fijar nuestro texto.
Josefo; y 3), el de los menologia, análogos orientales a los martirologios occidentales, que contienen oraciones y vidas de santos ordenadas según las observancias del calendario litúrgico (van Henten 1997: 58-9).

El texto griego estándar para el estudio de la obra, sin embargo, es la Septuaginta de Rahlfs (2006), quien hace una lista de las variantes al texto de 4 Mac que aparecen en los manuscritos más importantes, entre otros, los códices Sinaítico (siglo IV), Alejandrino (siglo V) y Venetus (siglo VIII o IX). Finalmente, a pesar de que no está recogido en la Vulgata, y de ahí que falte tanto en la apócrifa católica como la protestante, 4 Mac aparece como apéndice a la Biblia ortodoxa griega y también se le incluye frecuentemente las biblias de estudio y otras colecciones de la literatura apócrifa.

1.3. La autoría de la obra

La colocación de 4 Mac en algunos manuscritos entre los escritos de Josefo ha conducido a algunos estudiosos modernos a atribuirlo a este historiador judío. DeSilva (1998: 12, 14) señala a Eusebio como autor de esta falacia (Hist. eccl. 3.10.16), que fue seguida por Jerónimo (Vir. ill. 13; Pelag. 2.6) y por los recopiladores medievales posteriores de la obra de Josefo4. Sin embargo, el análisis detenido del texto opera en contra de tal afirmación. Townshend (1913: 2.653-85), por ejemplo, advierte que el autor de 4 Mac escribe de una manera florida totalmente distinta a lo que es habitual en el resto del corpus de Josefo, que usa las transliteraciones griegas indeclinables de los nombres hebreos en contraposición a la predilección de Josefo por sus formas declinables y que comete errores inconcebibles en Josefo (como en 4 Mac 4.15, donde llama a Antíoco Epifanes el hijo de Seleuco IV Filopátor, en vez de su hermano, cf. Josefo, A.J. 12.4), etc. Tomando partido por aquellos intérpretes modernos, pues, que dejan en suspenso la posible autoría de Josefo, y dada la ausencia de ningún dato concreto en el texto en sí, debemos contentarnos con dejar la cuestión abierta en la presente investigación. Con todo,

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4 Aquí vale la pena mencionar también el hecho de que tanto Eusebio como Jerónimo conocen 4 Mac por otro título —Περὶ αὐτοκράτορος λόγιον, “Sobre la supremacía de la razón”— el cual se ajusta mejor, quizá, a su contenido (cf. 1.7, 13, 30, etc.).
podemos aventurar que el autor evidentemente era un judío piadoso que se sentía cómodo expresándose en el registro literario y filosófico del mundo grecorromano.

1.4. Fecha de composición de la obra

La cuestión de la datación de 4 Mac es otra incógnita que resulta difícil de resolver con certeza. Dado que no hay ningún indicio en el texto en sí que nos permita fecharlo, los hermeneutas han tenido que recurrir a observaciones más generales basadas en el léxico empleado y las realidades históricas y religiosas que pueden reflejarse en la obra.

Como hemos mencionado anteriormente, es muy probable que el autor de 4 Mac haya usado 2 Mac como fuente. Esto supone un terminus post quem de 100-90 AEC, ya que resulta probable que 2 Mac se escribiera en esta década primera del siglo II AEC. No obstante, Anderson (1983: 2.533) ha indicado que la afirmación acerca de que Onías habría obtenido el sumo sacerdocio con carácter vitalicio en 4 Mac 4.1 podría implicar una fecha posterior al 63 AEC, dado que el ejercicio vitalicio de este puesto llegó a su fin con la caída de los hasmoneos. Bickerman (1976: 1.275-81) redujo el marco temporal aún más al notar que términos como θρησκεία, “religión” (4 Mac 5.7, 13; etc.) y νοµικός, “experto en la ley” (5.4; cf. γραµµατέως, 2 Mac 6.18) llegaron a ser usados solamente durante el reinado de Augusto (27 AEC-14 EC). Otro de los argumentos que aporta Bickerman parece de índole mucho más incierta, a saber: que el autor de 4 Mac, de una manera similar a Josefo, ha incorporado a sus fuentes históricas acontecimientos políticos corrientes en su día. Según Bickerman, la unión entre Siria, Fenicia y Cilicia mencionada en 4 Mac 4.2 (cf. 2 Mac 3.5) duró desde el 18 hasta el 54 EC, y por tanto la obra se debe datar a este período. No obstante, no sólo indican las pruebas literarias y epigráficas que la asociación de Siria, Fenicia y Cilicia persistió en realidad hasta 86 EC como mínimo (Klauck 1989: 668), sino también, como dice van Henten, no se puede deducir de una alusión a una situación histórica en concreto insertada en un texto que ese mismo texto fuera escrito precisamente en ese momento (1997: 74).

¿Qué pruebas se pueden aducir, entonces, para ir más allá de la observación muy general de que es muy probable que 4 Mac se escribiera alrededor del principio de la
Era Común? Ciertamente nos movemos aquí en un terreno movedizo, pero un examen breve de la relación que el texto guarda tanto con el templo de Jerusalén como la literatura cristiana primitiva puede resultar esclarecedor.

Van Henten (1997: 77) y otros estudiosos han sugerido que la carencia de referencias en 4 Mac al templo y a otras instituciones políticas en Jerusalén apuntan a una fecha post-70 EC, pero estas razones no son particularmente convincentes. DeSilva (1998: 15) y Huizenga (2009: 115-6), por ejemplo, han señalado que judaísmos florecientes, capaces de espiritualizar al templo y a la “patria”, tal y como hace el autor de 4 Mac, ya existían mucho antes del año 70. Bremmer (2008: 211) es mucho más incisivo en su observación en el sentido de que los únicos paralelismos realmente relevantes entre 4 Mac y la literatura cristiana primitiva que pueden encontrarse residen 1), en la palabra muy poco común ἀντίψυχος, “la vida dada por/para vida”, que aparece en la literatura coeva sólo en 4 Mac y en las epístolas de Ignacio de Antioquía (4 Mac 6.29; 17.21; Ignacio, Eph. 21.1; Smyrn. 10.2; Pol. 2.3; 6.1); y 2) en el sentido en el cual Eleazar, en particular, es tanto sacerdote como víctima en 4 Mac (5.4; 7.6, 12; 17.9; cf. la representación de Jesús en la Carta a los Hebreos; véase también Butterweck 1995: 24). Tomadas en su conjunto, todas las evidencias apuntan a una fecha para la composición de 4 Mac alrededor de la última década del siglo I EC, ya que, tanto las epístolas de Ignacio como la Epístola a los Hebreos, obras que parecen estar familiarizadas con nuestro texto, se datan hoy en día por reglas general en este período. Pero no podemos estar seguros en modo alguno, y por esta razón la horquilla que acabamos de mencionar, entre 90-100 EC, se tomará en este trabajo con la mejor posibilidad.

1.5. Lugar de composición de la obra

Alejandría en Egipto, la metrópolis griega donde también vivían muchos judíos, fue, por lo menos para la generación anterior de estudiosos, el lugar más probable de la composición de 4 Mac. Para exegetas como Townshend (1913: 2.657), el alto nivel de la helenización judía reflejada en la obra, sobre todo en la actitud acomodaticia del autor a los juegos, arte, tragedia y filosofía griegos, cuadra bien con la ciudad de Filón.

\[\text{Para más conexiones entre 4 Mac y Hebreos, véase deSilva 1998: 146-8.}\]
y de otros intelectuales judíos helenizados. Sin embargo, pese al hecho de que Hadas (1953: 117-8) haya hecho una lista persuasiva de las maneras en las que Filón y el autor de 4 Mac coinciden frente a ciertos filósofos paganos, por un lado, y el judaísmo palestino\(^6\), por otro algo que parecería sugerir su proximidad cercana, hay factores que obran en contra de la atribución de nuestro texto a la ciudad egipcia renombrada: la carencia en 4 Mac de la tendencia alegorizante que era característica de la escuela alejandrina judeocristiana, la ausencia de referencias a 4 Mac en los escritos de los Padres de la Iglesia de Alejandría como Clemente y Orígenes, etc. (Anderson 1983: 2.534-5; deSilva 1998: 18). La realidad es que el tipo del judaísmo helenizante representado en 4 Mac estaba muy extendido por la diáspora y, como Freudenthal (1869: 112-3) observa, autores como Jasón de Cirene, Pablo de Cilicia y Josefo lo atestiguan.

De un tiempo a esta parte se ha ido estableciendo un consenso por parte de los expertos que avala la hipótesis de van Henten (1994: 44-69) de que 4 Mac pudo tener su origen en Asia Menor, quizá en Cilicia (cf. 4 Mac 4.2), aunque la atribución tradicional de la obra a Antioquía, donde un culto cristiano de los mártires floreció desde fecha temprana, no se puede descartar (Rouwhorst 2005: 81-96). Los argumentos de van Henten resultan atractivos especialmente en los paralelismos que pueden establecerse entre el epitafio ficticio en 4 Mac 17.8-10 y ciertos tipos de inscripciones funerarias que se atestiguan mucho más ampliamente en Asia que en ningún otro lugar. Pese a estas correspondencias, las fuentes primarias que relacionan las reliquias de los santos con Antioquía —incluyendo el testimonio de una sinagoga, y posteriormente una basílica cristiana, erigida en las inmediaciones de sus tumbas, posiblemente en el barrio meridional de la ciudad— continúan siendo difíciles de desechar\(^7\). En esta tesis, entonces, preferiremos dejar abierta la cuestión del lugar de procedencia de 4 Mac, tal y como hemos hecho con las de su autoría y fecha. Para nosotros será suficiente, dado que este estudio se basará totalmente en consideraciones literarias y no tanto históricas, que admitamos simplemente que la obra fue escrita por un judío helenizado en uno de los centros intelectuales mayores del mediterráneo.

\(^6\) Para Hadas, los paralelos entre Filón y el autor de 4 Mac son expresamente tres: 1) un recelo de ciertas creencias estoicas, tales como el origen de la sabiduría, el lugar de las pasiones y la naturaleza del pecado; 2) la creencia en la providencia individual; y 3) la creencia en la inmortalidad del alma a diferencia de la resurrección de la carne.

\(^7\) Estos materiales primarios, que, forzoso es admitirlo, son bastante tardíos, han sido reunidos con gran sentido práctico por Cummins 2004: 83-6.
1.6. Contexto histórico y ocasión inmediata para la escritura de la obra

Como ya hemos visto, el grueso de 4 Mac consta de un relato, escrito por un judío helenizado de la diáspora del siglo I EC, de acontecimientos que supuestamente tuvieron lugar durante una época de persecución padecida por los judíos de Jerusalén bajo Antíoco IV Epífanes (175-164 AEC). Dos realidades históricas distintas subyacen al texto, por tanto: la situación en Jerusalén bajo el rey Seleuco y su sucesor Antíoco, por un lado, y la de los judíos de la diáspora en el momento en el que la obra fue escrita, por otro, y ambos se deben tener en cuenta desde el principio de esta tesis.

En cuanto empezamos a buscar en 4 Mac la historia del período macabeo y sus antecedentes, surge inmediatamente un considerable problema: nuestro autor no estaba interesado en escribir una obra historiográfica. De hecho, Anderson (1983: 2.537) llega al extremo de sugerir que el libro, “como una fuente de información sobre la historia externa del tiempo y lugar propios al autor o de los primeros años de las guerras macabeas”, es de “poco valor”. No sólo de poco valor, podemos añadir, sino también poco fidedigna. Como ya nos hemos aventurado a decir, dado que el proyecto del autor de 4 Mac es completamente apologético y filosófico, y no histórico e informativo, es más que probable que precisara de una sola fuente (2 Mac), y es este desinterés por los pormenores históricos lo que le lleva a cometer prominentes errores. Una equivocación que ya hemos señalado es la de llamar a Antíoco IV Epífanes el hijo de Seleuco IV, en vez de su hermano como en realidad era. Otros errores incluyen el de apelar al rey Seleuco “Nicanor” (4 Mac 3.20), en lugar de Filopátor; el de situar el gimnasio construido por Jasón “en la parte alta” de Jerusalén, cuando 2 Mac 4.12 relata correctamente que éste se ubicó bajo la acrópolis; y la confusión entre Apolonio y Heliodoro en la historia del asalto al tesoro del templo (4 Mac 4.1-14; cf. 2 Mac 3); etc. (Hadas 1953: 94-5, 110). Todos estas equivocaciones no nos deben conducir a desconfiar o desestimar al autor de 4 Mac totalmente. Más bien, nos llevan simplemente a reconocer que éste tiene otro propósito que le permite orillar la precisión histórica en favor de construir un marco general, escenario que estaba en consonancia con sus intenciones deliberativas generales.

A pesar de la libertad que nuestro autor se ha tomado al tratar de sus fuentes, sin embargo, subsisten algunas correspondencias con acontecimientos históricos
conocidos que se pueden entrever en una lectura minuciosa de su libro. Los martirios narrados en el escrito se ambientan bajo el fondo de lo que los estudiosos llaman “la crisis de la helenización” en Palestina en 175-164 AEC, una situación muy volátil en la cual las tensiones en la comunidad judía en Jerusalén aumentaron considerablemente mientras le afectó la presión de adaptar a la cultura griega circundante o rechazarla terminantemente (deSilva 1998: 37-43). A la muerte de Seleuco IV Filopátror en 175 AEC a manos de su ministro, Heliodoro (Apiano, Syr. 45), el mismo Heliodoro quien había sido encargado de saquear al templo (2 Mac 3.7, 38; cf. 4 Mac 4.4-5; Gera 1998: 109ff.), y la ascensión de Antióco IV Epífanes, la facción helenizante de los judíos se había impuesto. Luego, en 174, el rey nuevo aceptó un soborno considerable y sustituyó al sumo sacerdote conservador, Onías, por su hermano progresista, Josué (4 Macc 4.15-16; Habicht 1989: 8.347-8). El nuevo sumo sacerdote, utilizando ya la versión griega de su nombre, Jasón, llegó a refundar Jerusalén como una polis griega, probablemente llamada “Antioquía en Jerusalén” (2 Mac 4.9, 18-19; cf. 4 Mac 4.19; Grabbe 2002: 13-14). Varias innovaciones griegas se introdujeron después, tales como una lista de los ciudadanos, un consejo local y un gimnasio para los jóvenes de la ciudad (2 Mac 4.7-17; 4 Mac 4.20), pero Jasón no pudo mantenerse en el sumo sacerdocio: en 172 AEC fue reemplazado por Menelao, quien había ofrecido al rey trescientos talentos de plata más que Jasón para ocupar el cargo (si bien posteriormente no cumpliría regularmente con los pagos; 2 Mac 4.23-29).

Menelao y su hermano Lisímaco, no obstante, resultaron más perniciosos que Jasón para los judíos fieles de la ciudad. Ni siquiera procedían del linaje sumo-sacerdotal de los zadokitas, sino miembros de la tribu sacerdotal de los Bilgá (2 Mac 3.4; 4.23, 29), disminuyeron aún más el prestigio del sumo sacerdocio y alienaron al pueblo al robar al templo para pagar su deuda a Antióco (2 Mac 4.30-34, 39). Cuando el sumo

8 Según Bartlett (1973: 241), la respuesta que Heliodoro da a Seleuco en 2 Mac 3.38, mediante la cual sólo mandaría un “enemigo conspirador” a Jerusalén, porque “te volverá molido a azotes, si es que salva tu vida”, “quizá resulte irónico, dado que fue Heliodoro quien conspiró contra Seleuco y ocasionó su muerte”.

9 La importancia de la ascendencia de Menelao, es mucho más probable que provenga de la familia sacerdotal de los Bilgá (Ne 12.5, 18; 1 Cró 24.14) que de la tribu de Benjamín, ya que su hermano Simón ocupó el encargo sacerdotal del administrador del templo (y de hecho, la versión antigua latina de 2 Mac 3.4 y la versión armenia atestiguan esto, frente al testimonio de la versión griega), se refiere a que, como un no zadokita, Menelao fue el primer “outsider completo en ser designado el sumo sacerdote” (Schäfer 2003: 37-8 [38]; cf. Grabbe 2002: 14-15). Su nombramiento supone también otra capitulación a la pujanza del helenismo dado que, como oniada, Jasón era todavía un zadokita.
sacerdote y su sustituto actuaron para sofocar la creciente oleada de hostilidad a su reinado, la situación en Jerusalén casi derivó en una guerra total (2 Mac 4.40-50). Tras haber oído un rumor de la muerte de Antíoco (2 Mac 5.5; 4 Mac 4.22), y pensando que podría hacerse de nuevo con el sumo sacerdocio, Jasón volvió a Jerusalén de un exilio, pero las luchas internas subsiguientes entre los judíos fueron interpretadas por Antíoco como un levantamiento y él y su ejército regresaron rápidamente de una campaña en Egipto y asaltaron a Jerusalén. Hombres, mujeres y niños fueron masacrados salvajemente, el templo fue saqueado y se vio profanado con cultos ajenos, griegos y sirios\(^{10}\), y una represión severa de la observancia de la ley judía se impuso (2 Mac 5.1-6.11; 4 Mac 4.23-26). Es precisamente bajo este fondo de una violenta persecución judía en la que los mártires de 2 y 4 Mac hallan también su muerte.

Pasando ahora a la época del autor, en lugar de aquella presupuesta por el texto: ¿puede haber un entorno histórico específico que encaje bien con nuestra hipótesis, extraído de nuestras investigaciones texto-críticas, de que 4 Mac fuera escrito alrededor de 90-100 EC, quizá en Antioquía o en otro de los centros intelectuales mayores de Asia Menor? Como en el libro se trata de la reacción heroica de los mártires ante una persecución religiosa, la mayoría de los intérpretes han intentado datar su composición en un tiempo y en un escenario en los cuales la libertad del culto judío estaba siendo atacada. Pero observando la carencia general de amenaza y urgencia en el libro, tal como existen, por ejemplo, en 2 y 3 Mac, y también la falta de referencias a la situación de la audiencia en relación con la hostilidad religiosa, Anderson (1983: 2.533-4) señala que no es necesario encuadrar la obra en un período de persecución conocido, como, por tomar un paradigma, el que se desarrolló durante el reinado de Adriano (117-138 EC).

Mucho más provechoso como punto de partida de nuestra investigación, en todo caso, es la aseveración de Klauck (1989: 664) de que 4 Mac es un intento de tratar de la “situación cotidiana” de los judíos de la diáspora en la que éstos luchan para

\(^{10}\) En 2 Mac 6.1-6 leemos que, como parte de la inhibición del judaísmo, el templo fue profanado con la disipación y la prostitución, los sacrificios impuros y la colocación, encima de los altares, de “cosas prohibidas” por las leyes (vv. 4-5). Bickerman (1976: 69-71, 75) y Goldstein (1976: 143-52) sugieren que esas “cosas prohibidas” podrían constar de piedras, quizá meteoritos (cf. Dn 8.10-12), que representaban varios dioses tanto de las tradiciones griegas como las orientales.
determinar si deben o no, y hasta qué punto, integrarse en la sociedad grecorromana. Pero, según Bremmer (2008: 212-3), la aculturación y la helenización no son los únicos peligros del judaísmo que nuestro texto prevé. En realidad la cuestión crucial es: si 4 Mac pretendía fortalecer la resistencia contra la creciente oleada del relativismo y la asimilación irreflexiva, ¿cómo podemos explicar entonces los temas de la sustitución vicaria y la expiación vicaria que son tan palmarios en la obra (ante todo, como veremos a lo largo de esta tesis, en la figura del ἀντίψυχος [4 Mac 6.29; 17.21])?

¿Es posible que el autor de 4 Mac tuviera como objetivo en su escrito no sólo convencer a y acrecentar las fuerzas de sus correligionarios sino también simpatizar con el movimiento cristiano naciente? O, como Bremmer plantea: “¿Es... realmente imposible imaginar que en el período de transición alrededor de 100 EC un judío intentara convencer a sus correligionarios, quienes se sentían atraídos a Cristo, de la existencia de una[s] figura[s] comparable[s] en su propia tradición?” (2008: 212-3). Ya hemos indicado que la obra fue adoptada no sólo por Ignacio y por el autor de la Epístola a los Hebreos, sino también por otras comunidades responsables de otras epístolas pastorales. Otro indicio de que 4 Mac puede haber sido escrito en el marco de un alto nivel de interacción entre judíos y cristianos es la presencia en la obra de la historia de la aquedah o el sacrificio de Isaac (7.14, 19; 13.12; 14.20; 15.28; 16.20; 17.6; 18.11; cf. Gn 22.1-19), un motivo de la polémica judeocristiana bien atestiguado en la antigüedad tardía. El panorama de una influencia mutua continuada entre los judíos y los cristianos hasta bien entrado el siglo II EC concuerda bien con lo que sabemos de la situación de Antioquía en ese momento (Zetterholm 2003; Cummins 2001).

Es importante notar, por tanto, que el autor de 4 Mac probablemente sentía que su entorno constituía un doble peligro: el del atractivo de las maneras y costumbres griegas para los judíos, por un lado, y el de su interés por el cristianismo, por otro. La cuestión de en qué medida y de qué maneras los judíos deberían involucrarse en la cultura griega dominante —un tema capital en cierto modo en Jerusalén en los

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11 Para una perspectiva general de la influencia de 4 Mac sobre el Nuevo Testamento, que incluye aunque va más allá de la Epístola a los Hebreos, puede verse deSilva 1998: 143-9.
tiempos de Antioco y de los macabeos históricos— tenía aún vigencia en la diáspora. Tomando el paradigma de Antioquía, por ejemplo, que como ya hemos visto es el lugar más probable de composición de 4 Mac, aunque esta hipótesis no se haya probado definitivamente de ninguna manera: Zetterholm, teniendo la ciudad siria en mente, sugiere que la obra podría haber sido una producción del grupo de los “tradicionalistas religiosos” judíos y apologistas de la Torah que se sabe de las fuentes primarias estaban activos allí. Estos eran judíos que, en su día, preferían morir antes que sacrificar a los dioses griegos (Josefo, B.J. 7.50-51), de manera muy parecida a los mártires de 4 Mac. Sin embargo, también estaban suficientemente informados de la sociedad helenística (Zetterholm opina que estaban “aculturados” pero no “asimilados”) y del culto primitivo de Jesús (habiéndose visto expuestos a los cristianos judíos y gentiles en las sinagogas de la ciudad) de poder defender su posición e intereses y evitar que fueran completamente subsumidos (Zetterholm 2003: esp. 80-2, 86, 99, etc.).

Por lo que respecta a la ocasión más inmediata que probablemente dio origen a 4 Mac, algunos exegetas han sugerido que la obra, debido a su tono elogioso y encomiástico, fue compuesta o bien como un discurso en el aniversario de la muerte de los mártires, o bien en el momento de la celebración de alguna festividad judía, como la Hanukkah. Nos hemos referido ya a aquellas fuentes primarias que testimonian la presencia de una sinagoga en Antioquía que o bien albergaba las reliquias de los santos, o bien se construyó en, o alrededor de, su última morada. Si son creíbles, estas tradiciones pueden facilitar un escenario retórico verosímil para la obra, pero la falta de ningún paralelismo auténtico respecto de tal observancia anual en la tradición judía parece ir en contra de semejante contexto. La observancia de la Hanukkah continúa siendo la mejor posibilidad, incluso a pesar de la carencia total en 4 Mac de referencias a los héroes militares del alzamiento: un hecho que,

13 Hadas (1953: 107-8) propone una conmemoración basada en el ayuno anual en honor de Godolías, el gobernador de la población judía que había quedado en Judá tras el Exilio, quien fue asesinado por un fanático antibabilónico (2 Re 25.22-26; Jr 40.7-41.18; b. Ned. 12a), o bien basada en el de los diez sabios que sufrieron el martirio en la rebelión de Bar Kojba (Midr. Eleh Ezkerah), honrados hasta el día de hoy en el servicio de musaf en el Yom Kippur. Aunque el segundo paralelismo es potencialmente provechoso, dadas sus conexiones obvias con el pensamiento judío sobre la expiación, no es directamente relevante a esta discusión en torno a la ocasión específica que dio origen a 4 Mac, y por lo tanto se dejará de lado por el momento. Igualmente interesante, aunque en última instancia tangencial a nuestro presente interés, es la alusión de Darling Young (1991: 81) al culto de Abraham en Hebrón, que, según Josefo, tenía también muchos seguidores (B.J. 4.530-32, 554).
como propone deSilva (1998: 24), se puede explicar por una preferencia teológica por los mártires como agentes de la reconciliación de Dios en vez de los guerreros. Por otro lado, ni siquiera la idea de que la obra fue pensada para ser leída de manera colectiva debe darse por sentada; además de la observación de van Henten (1997: 64-5) de que la oración fúnebre (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος) era a menudo un pretexto para la propaganda política de aplicación más amplia, “elogiando al pueblo entero por medio de la conmemoración de los caídos”, hay que tener en cuenta también la sugerencia de Deissman de que 4 Mac fue concebido con la intención de dirigirse a un gran público y que hubiera sido tal vez difundido como “un libro en forma de un discurso”. Una analogía moderna (de los comienzos del siglo XX) en términos formales, escribe Deissman (1900: 2.151), sería el panfleto religioso, que conocemos habitualmente bajo el nombre de “tratado”, ya que éstos también poseen, muy a menudo, la forma de un discurso o un sermón, y eran compuestos de manera que tuvieran la mayor circulación posible.

1.7. La audiencia de la obra

La sutileza intelectual de 4 Mac apunta quizá también una procedencia antioquena, o, como mínimo, un ambiente cosmopolita de composición. Como ya hemos sugerido, el autor intenta demostrar la superioridad del estilo de vida judío como acicate para la virtud y la nobleza, y el texto indica tanto una sólida base en el judaísmo como un cierto grado de familiaridad con la filosofía griega y sus formas literarias por parte de su audiencia, tal como podía conseguirse mediante la exposición de las obras de los sofistas y los filósofos en los lugares públicos de cualquier centro urbano. Un aspecto que tiene especial relevancia para nosotros en el presente estudio es el hecho de que Stowers (1994: 60), y Moore y Anderson (2010: 197-8), afirman que la audiencia de 4 Mac, igual que su autor, formaban parte de la elite masculina dominante de su subcultura étnica, en tanto que Darling Young (1991: 67-81 [81]) conjetura que posiblemente, dada la representación heroica de la figura de la madre en la obra, “la obra se produjera teniendo una audiencia de mujeres en mente”.

14 Dice Deissman aquí: “Sie ist vielmehr von vornherein mit der Absicht der Publikation ausgearbeitet... Eine moderne Analogie sind etwa die religiösen Flugschriften, für die sich der technische Ausdruck „Traktat“ eingebürgert hat; sie sind recht häufig ebenfalls in die Form einer Rede oder einer Predigt gekleidet...”.

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Darling Young (1991: 68) especula con la posibilidad de que en la audiencia de 4 Mac “hubiera muy probablemente mujeres para quienes la madre, en su conducta virtuosa y su sacrificio, fue pensada como modelo a emular”. Pero por muchas alabanzas a la mujer que haya en el libro, como “madre de nuestro pueblo, valedora de la ley, defensora de la piedad” (4 Mac 15.29), etc., hay que enfrentarse al penoso hecho de que su destino es el suicidio (17.1). ¿Es éste el ideal al cual las mujeres en la audiencia debían aspirar? Darling Young (1991: 79) sugiere que tal fue el precio que la mujer tuvo que pagar por querer preservar su castidad (cf. 18.7-9), una posibilidad que habría parecido más inspiradora en su propio día de que lo que parece en el nuestro: mejor muerta que violada, en definitiva. Ilan (1999: 77-8) interpreta la autodestrucción de la madre afirmando que “[l]a madre en 4 Macabeos probablemente sirviera como un modelo de conducta legítimo para la forma nueva del martirio que se practicaba en la guerra de 66-73 EC —el suicidio en medio de la derrota”, pero esto parece ir demasiado lejos ya que los tipos de sacrificio más elevados no dependían, para el pueblo judío, del sexo, la educación o cualquier otra forma de situación social.

Mucho más probable es, en realidad, la sugerencia de Stowers de que el lenguaje del deseo y del autocontrol en 4 Mac puede indicar que se escribió por parte de un hombre judío de la elite para una audiencia de sus pares. De ahí, por ejemplo, el aspecto parentético del último discurso de la madre en 18.6-19, que para Moore y Anderson (2010: 195-8) tiene todo el carácter de un añadido tardío, un intento del autor de impedir que la imagen de la independencia femenina que se ha creado a lo largo del escrito, eche raíces demasiado hondas en su audiencia (véase la introducción imprevista de su esposo en 18.9, por ejemplo). El hecho es que, a fin de cuentas, 4 Mac, por lo menos en la forma en que se nos ha sido conservado, no demuestra “la subversión de la deferencia y la jerarquía” que Perkins (1995: 123) ha identificado en los hechos de los mártires cristianos primitivos, lo que tal vez hubiera sido la manera más satisfactoria de reforzar los argumentos de Darling Young de que fue escrito pensando en una audiencia de mujeres. Tal es también la conclusión de D’Angelo (2003: 157), por ejemplo, quien señala el énfasis de 4 Mac en los deberes familiares, el rechazo al adulterio y la sumisión de la mujer a su esposo como más pruebas a favor de que la obra defienda una política de sexo convencional y androcéntrica.
1.8. **La estructura de la obra**

En cuanto a la estructura del texto, hay un acuerdo general entre los estudiosos en sostener que 4 Mac se compone de dos partes principales —1.1-3.18 y 3.19-18.24— aunque no todos coinciden en las relaciones de estas partes entre sí. Las opiniones de aquellos que se decantan a favor de la estrecha interdependencia de las dos secciones parece tener una mayor base, frente a quienes abogan por una relación más flexible o quienes defienden, incluso, la autoría múltiple\(^\text{15}\). Según las convenciones retóricas de la diatriba antigua, la primera parte de la obra sirve para plantear la tesis de la cual se tratará más adelante —en este caso, “que la razón piadosa es dueña absoluta de las pasiones” (1.1)— mientras que en la segunda parte se aportan la demostración o las pruebas de esta tesis presentando la conducta piadosa y bondadosa de los mártires.

Según deSilva (1998: 25-6), quien expresa el consenso general entre los exegetas en cuanto a la estructura de 4 Mac, la obra puede desglosarse de la siguiente manera:

a) La tesis: “que la razón piadosa es dueña absoluta de las pasiones” (1.1)

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– Ejemplos tomados de la ley y la historia sagrada que apoyan la veracidad de la proposición (1.30b-3.18)

Normas alimenticias (1.33-34), sexuales (2.5-6) y económicas (2.8-9, 14), y también historias de figuras ilustres como José (2.2-3), Moisés (2.17), Jacob (2.19) y David (3.6-18), son puestas al servicio de los argumentos del autor según los cuales “la razón puede evitarle a uno ser esclavizado por el deseo” (3.2).

b) La “demostración narrativa” (3.19) de la tesis “con el ejemplo de la fortaleza de ánimo de quienes murieron por la virtud” (1.8)

– Entorno histórico de los martirios (3.19-4.26)

Aquí nuestro autor compendia, en un modo muy sorprendente y en el breve espacio de apenas dos capítulos, la historia que venía relatada con mucho más detalle en su fuente (2 Mac 2.32-6.11; véase más abajo para las implicaciones de su manera de resumir). En esta sección, en primer lugar, la historia de la traición de Simón está expuesta (4.1-14). Es esa traición lo que pone en marcha el cambio del gobierno y del sumo sacerdote, algo que lleva su vez a la ocupación de Jerusalén (4.21-26) y pone fin a la situación de la “gran paz” de la cual se gozaba anteriormente en la patria (3.20-21).

– Elogios de Eleazar (5.1-7.23), los siete hermanos (8.1-14.10) y su madre (14.11-17.6)

En esta parte central del escrito, deSilva (1998: 25) observa un movimiento repetido en tres partes que se entretejen 1) la “descripción vívida” (éκφρασις, en lengua griega ἔκφρασις) de las torturas de los mártires (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22); 2) la relación de sus sufrimientos con la tesis filosófica que el autor trata probar (6.31-35; 7.16-23; 13.1-5; 14.11-12; 16.1-2; etc.); y 3) el encomio de cada uno de los héroes (7.1-15; 13.6-7; 13.19-14.10; 17.2-6; etc.).

– Perorata al escrito entero (17.7-18.24)

Una recapitulación de los logros de los mártires (17.7-22; 18.3-5, 20-24) y una exhortación a seguirles los pasos (18.1-2) concluyen la obra, siendo ambas características de la forma de la enumeratio propia de la oración fúnebre antigua (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος; van Henten 1997: 64-5).
Las tres formas oratóricas principales que están presentes en 4 Mac —la diatriba filosófica, la oración fúnebre (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος) y el encomio— se puede agrupar en el denominado discurso “protréptico”, una forma particular de alocución “que mezcla la argumentación filosófica con ejemplos vividos de la filosofía en juego... todo ello con el fin de que la filosofía sea más creíble” (cf. 4 Mac 7.9; deSilva 1998: 28 y passim).

Un rasgo literario más de la obra que mencionaremos ahora aquí, y en el que profundizaremos más abajo, es la écfrasis (ἐκφρασις), o “descripción vívida”, como en las representaciones hiperrealistas de las torturas de los mártires (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22). Ésta es una faceta del escrito que curiosamente ha sido pasada por alto por los estudiosos pero que, sin embargo, será nuclear en nuestro trabajo.

Al principio de nuestra investigación sobre 4 Mac algunas observaciones se deben hacer sobre el tipo de historia que ofrece al lector. Ya indicamos más arriba que 4 Mac se presenta como una versión ampliada de acontecimientos relatados en 2 Mac 3-7, aunque se aparta de este último en varios detalles claves (en la refundición, por ejemplo, de tres personajes en 2 Mac 3-4 en uno solo en 4 Mac 4)\textsuperscript{16}. El hecho de que estas desviaciones se puedan explicar o no sugiriendo que los autores de 2 Mac y 4 Mac usaron una fuente en común —quizá la historia perdida de Jasón de Cirene mencionada en 2 Mac 2.23— tiene relativamente poca importancia para el objeto de nuestro trabajo. Lo que interesa mucho más para nuestros propósitos es el comentario de deSilva, según el cual dentro de las convenciones literarias antiguas, 4 Mac no es la “historia verdadera” (ἀληθής ιστορία) que 2 Mac pretende ser. Más bien, 4 Mac es “una narrativa que conserva algo de la historia básica mientras se desvía de la historia exacta para presentar una verdad transhistórica”: en otras palabras, un ejemplo de la historia “poética”, también conocida como ὡς ἀληθής ιστορία o πλάσμα (deSilva 1998: 29-30).

\textsuperscript{16} A saber, en 2 Mac 3.5, 7 se dice que Apolonio, hijo de Traseo, es el gobernador de Celesiria y Fenicia, mientras que en 4 Mac 4.4, 21 es Apolonio, hijo de Menesteo, quien tiene este cargo. Es más, en 2 Mac 3 a un cierto Heliodoro, del que se dice que es el responsable de los asuntos del gobernador, se le encomienda la tarea de apropiarse de los fondos del tesoro de Jerusalén para el uso del rey Seleuco. En 4 Mac 4, no obstante, es Apolonio, ahora gobernador de Siria, Cilicia y Fenicia, quien viene a confiscar el dinero del templo (4.6; van Henten 1997: 72-3).
Un corolario importante de esto es que 4 Mac, tanto si fue concebido originalmente como un discurso o como un tratado, nos ha llegado hoy en día como una especie de *novela*, en el sentido de que privilegia la verdad “poética” por encima de la verdad “histórica”\(^1\). Uno de los objetivos del presente estudio consistirá, por tanto, en tratar de comprender la verdadera naturaleza de 4 Mac y someterlo a un tipo de crítica literaria —en concreto, la deconstrucción (véase la sección [3] más abajo sobre la metodología empleada)— en vez de estudiarlo según los cánones de la crítica histórica: un paso que, se puede decir, sería un error categorial.

1.10. *El contenido filosófico de la obra*

Más arriba afirmamos que la defensa de la forma de vida judía en 4 Mac está informada totalmente por conceptos y palabras tomadas de la filosofía griega. ¿De qué índole son estas influencias? ¿Pueden atribuirse a una escuela en concreto? Históricamente los exegetas han estado divididos en estas cuestiones: muchos de ellos han puesto excesivo énfasis en ciertas partes del texto, a expensas de otras, intentando encajar los datos en una tradición filosófica singular. El pensamiento estoico, el peripatético y el platónico han sido propuestos, en un momento u otro, como la fuente en la que nuestro autor se inspiró, pero la propuesta más atractiva de los últimos tiempos en este respecto ha sido la sugerencia de deSilva de que 4 Mac representa una mezcla de las ideas populares que arremolinaban en los mercados del mediterráneo en el mundo grecorromano (1998: 51-2).

DeSilva llama al material usado por nuestro autor la “*koiné* filosófica” del mundo antiguo, sacando este término de Chadwick (1984: 6) quién lo acuñó para referirse a la combinación de la ética estoica, la metafísica platónica y la lógica aristotélica que formaban la base de la educación de las clases alfabetizadas en la antigüedad. Como ya hemos dado a entender, la propuesta de deSilva tiene el atractivo de poder explicar los gustos filosóficos eclécticos del autor de 4 Mac, quien no tiene ningún reparo en elegir las doctrinas de las diversas escuelas que considera las más prometedoras y en combinarlas en su manera idiosincrásica. De ahí, por tomar algún ejemplo, que el autor pueda tomar la idea estoica de la libertad de la persona sabia (4 Mac 2.21-23; 17)

\(^{17}\) Véase la discusión sobre la novela antigua y la clasificación de narraciones según su grado de veracidad histórica en Holzberg 1996: 15.
mientras rechaza el enfoque de esa escuela en la extirpación de las pasiones, prefiriendo en su lugar la idea platónica y peripatética que las emociones se deben controlar rigurosamente (1.28-30; 3.1-5; etc.).

1.11. El contenido teológico de la obra

En cuanto al contenido teológico de la obra, a muchos intérpretes les han llamado la atención las ideas de la sustitución vicaria y la expiación vicaria que se pueden encontrar en 4 Mac —las cuales, como ya hemos dado a entender, serán el sujeto de esta tesis— pero éstas no son, de ninguna manera, las únicas opiniones teológicas que el autor propugna dentro de la obra. Éste manifiesta también, por ejemplo, a lo largo del escrito, un interés por presentar la religión judía en los términos de la filosofía moral griega “popular” (la “koinê” arriba mencionada) para demostrar la superioridad de la Torah como guía hacia la virtud y la vida felíz. En un determinado momento, este acercamiento al pensamiento pagano lleva a nuestro autor a una nueva visión teológica sorprendente: en lugar de la doctrina de la resurrección de la carne que está puesta en los labios de los hermanos en 2 Mac (7.9, 11, 14, 22-23), el autor de 4 Mac prefiere la idea de la inmortalidad del alma (9.22; 14.5-6; 16.13; 17.12; 18.23), y de una recompensa o castigo correspondiente tras la muerte (v.g. 9.8-9; Anderson 1983: 2.539).

A pesar de que la idea de que la minoría justa puede representar, de alguna manera, a la mayoría ante Dios (de donde la noción de “sustitución vicaria”), y de que puede compensar sus pecados sufriendo y muriendo (de donde la noción de “expiación vicaria”), tenga sus raíces en el Antiguo Testamento (v.g. Is 53), es el hecho de que ésta halle una expresión tan sucinta en 4 Mac lo que reviste especial interés para nosotros en este estudio (v.g. 4 Mac 6.27-29; 17.19-22). En particular, nos centraremos en la figura del ἀντίψυχος, el “rescate”, o la “vida en intercambio” —literalmente, “la vida dada por/para vida”— un papel que nuestro autor entiende que ha sido desempeñado por los mártires. Precisamente estos dos temas, la sustitución vicaria y la expiación vicaria en 4 Mac, han estado en el meollo de numerosas investigaciones recientes sobre los orígenes del pensamiento soteriológico del Nuevo Testamento.  

18 Véase, por ejemplo, Williams 1975, quien argumenta que 4 Mac tuvo una influencia predominante,
2. Las interpretaciones de 4 Mac y el “giro postestructuralista”

2.1. Introducción

En esta sección de la Introducción resumiremos dos de los objetivos más importantes de nuestro trabajo como son: 1) la inclusión de 4 Mac en un género concreto de la literatura antigua en general y de la judeocristiana en particular, es decir, la ἔκφρασις (écfrasis; plural: écfraseis); y 2) el encuadramiento de nuestra tesis sobre 4 Mac en concreto en una corriente particular de la interpretación de la obra, esto es, desde una perspectiva postestructuralista recientemente desarrollada. Veremos, en primer lugar, cómo al menos ciertas partes de nuestro texto (v.g. 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22; etc.) —si no la obra en su totalidad— se compaginan bien con la definición general de una “descripción vívida” que sugiere la clasificación de las mismas como écfraseis. Más adelante veremos cómo algunos exegetas de textos bíblicos parecidos han tratado, con mayor o menor éxito, las cualidades turbadoras del género de la écfrasis, que incluyen la naturaleza polivalente de su imaginación, su lenguaje típicamente catacréstico y la relación del producto literario con su “modelo” pictórico. Finalmente, antes de ofrecer unas conclusiones preliminares que formarán la base de la siguiente sección acerca de la metodología, reseñaremos algunos estudios de 4 Mac que han intentado infundirle nueva vida a este texto olvidado y pasado por alto, sobre todo en el modo en el que lo interpretan con perspectivas que van más allá de las histórico-criticas usuales: o sea, como hemos dicho, desde puntos de vista postestructuralistas.

2.2. 4 Mac como écfrasis: la forma y textos comparables griegos y romanos

A los efectos de esta reseña de la literatura, el interés que hemos tomado aquí en las nociones de la sustitución vicaria y la expiación vicaria presentes en 4 Mac se puede reducir a una abreviación conveniente: un interés en las écfraseis del escrito. Como se demostrará, esta etiqueta retórica no sólo engloba adecuadamente nuestro tema —dado que incluso en una lectura sumaria de 4 Mac, por ejemplo, está claro que la forma domina la parte central de la obra elogiando a Eleazar, los siete hermanos y su acaso mayor que la de ningún otro texto, en la reflexión cristiana primitiva sobre el poder redentor de la Pasión de Jesús, y Finlan 2004: esp. 207-10, que refuta la posición de Williams y correctamente declara, en nuestra opinión, que 4 Mac fue un factor entre otros, si bien uno importante, en dar forma a esta teología.
madre (5.1-17.6; deSilva 1998: 25)—sino que también tiene la ventaja de sugerir un
punto de referencia más común con el cual comparar 4 Mac con los antiguos escritos
griegos, romanos, judíos y cristianos.

La figura literaria de la écfrasis ha sido definida, en un comentario reciente sobre la
carta neotestamentaria de Judas, como “una representación en la cual las cosas y las
narraciones de los acontecimientos se describen de una manera tal que parecerían
estar pasando ante los ojos” del oyente/lector (Webb 2008: 118). Como Nicolás de
Mira la define en su Progymnasmata del siglo V EC, un manual de ejercicios
preliminares para estudiantes de la retórica: “La écfrasis es una forma descriptiva de
hablar que hace presente muy claramente (o vividamente, ἐναργώς) lo que se
describe” (Prog. 11; traducción del autor del griego original en Spengel 1966: 2.68;
investigación se puede ver con más claridad en una nota explicativa que añade
Nicolás un par de líneas después, donde observa que “la palabra “claramente” se
agrega porque de esta manera la écfrasis difiere de la narración; la segunda hace una
exposición sencilla de la acción, mientras que la primera intenta convertir a los
oyentes en espectadores” (Prog. 11; traducción del autor del griego original en
Spengel 1966: 2.68; cf. Webb 2008: 119). En otras palabras, está claro que hay una
dimensión de la experiencia vicaria en la forma de la écfrasis: al emplearla, los
autores antiguos tenían la intención de transformar a los lectores u oyentes en
circunstantes, de implicarles más directamente en su contenido, y de hacer cobrar vida
tanto a la obra. En los manuales latinos también se trata el término de forma diversa, a
tiempo transliterado, a veces comparado a las técnicas de la evidentia, la illustratio o la
demonstratio. El autor de la Retórica ad Herennium define esta última como una
“demostración ocular”, o “cuando se representa en palabras un acontecimiento de tal
forma que parece que la acción se encarne y el sujeto pase vistosamente enfrente de

Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis) ha identificado tres etapas que coinciden en parte en el
desarrollo de la écfrasis que nos pueden ayudar a percibir cómo precisamente esta
estrategia de la descripción vivida se utilizaba en el mundo antiguo. Al principio,
sostiene que la écfrasis se usaba como una digresión o adorno en la cual describir
hermosas obras de arte y artesanía, paisajes, palacios, cuadros, y cosas similares. Tal es el caso de la famosa descripción del escudo de Aquiles en la Ilíada (II. 18.478-608). Después, a comienzos aproximadamente de la Era Común, la manera de representar pinturas, sobre todo como si estuvieran “ante los ojos”, evolucionó de una mera digresión a una forma literaria independiente. Uno de los ejemplos más conocidos de esta écfrasis autónoma es la Tabula de Cebes del siglo I EC (Parsons 1904), un escrito en el cual un anciano explica a un grupo de jóvenes el significado de una pintura —cuyas escenas se evocan en el texto de manera muy realista— que se situaba en un templo de Crono. Por último, con el renacimiento del arte de la retórica conocido como la Segunda Sofística en el siglo II EC, la écfrasis llegó a apreciarse como un instrumento para exponer un argumento y persuadir. Además del Progymnasmata de Nicolás, la técnica de la descripción vívida de personas, lugares, tiempos y acontecimientos también figura en otros manuales importantes de la retórica de la antigüedad: los de Hermógenes, Aftonio y Teón, por ejemplo (Becker 1995: 24).

¿Equivalen, entonces, las imágenes totalmente naturales, o écfraseis, en 4 Mac (v.g. 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22; etc.) a tantas “digresiones” en el texto? ¿Son puntos literarios centrales y autosuficientes, o son maniobras intencionadas en la estrategia retórica del autor? A pesar de su utilidad al nivel introductorio, el esquema de Aune de las tres edades de la écfrasis nos podría llevar a un trilema falso. ¿Tienen de verdad que encajarse las écfraseis en 4 Mac en sólo una de estas tres categorías: digresión, punto central o estrategia retórica? Ahora que nos hemos orientado a la naturaleza de la écfrasis en general —es decir, que hemos visto como, tenga el fin literario o retórico que tenga, está marcado siempre por la características de la “descripción vivida” y “demostración ocular”— nos será de ayuda sumergirnos en los debates bastante más particulares y especializados sobre cómo exactamente llega a funcionar. ¿Deberían considerarse de verdad los ejemplos de la écfrasis en la literatura antigua (y moderna) en general y en 4 Mac en particular como tantas “digresiones” explícitas del texto, líneas laterales, por así decirlo, meros adornos/ornamentos? Con respecto a 4 Mac una respuesta instintiva puede ser afirmativa: las secuencias de tortura en la obra (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22; etc.) sí parecen meras digresiones en el sentido en que, por lo menos para nuestras sensibilidades modernas, restan valor al argumento culto del autor para la nobleza de la “filosofía divina” de los mártires (7.9) y su sentido
práctico en cuanto a las luchas cotidianas de su público. Pero pensándolo bien: ¿por qué como lectores preferimos, o priorizamos, lo culto y filosófico a lo bárbaro y la violencia “insensata”? O en nuestro caso en concreto: si uno supone al principio que la conexión entre filosofía y violencia en la obra es “angustiosa” y, por lo tanto, “tenue en el extremo”, como hace Rajak (2001b: 111-13, 120), por ejemplo —es decir, si considera que la adición de las viñetas de tortura no añade nada al razonamiento sino, al contrario, lo hace “artificial”, “no muy profundo” y “ordinario y ecléctico”— esto es perder el modo en que la violencia de 4 Mac está más bien “intercalada” con la filosofía, de tal manera que no se puede separar la una de la otra (Streete 2009: 27).

Tal re-orientación a la de facto superposición en 4 Mac de lo que habitualmente ha sido entendido con su centro iluminado —su exposición razonada de la “filosofía”, o su “demostración narrativa de la razón moderada” (3.19)— y sus desvíos oscuros —sus coloridas escenas de violencia— coincide bien con las ideas que se ha recogido lo que podría llamarse la “nueva” mirada, en la crítica literaria contemporánea, a los importantes efectos de la écfrasis antigua. Queremos señalar, con tal “nueva” mirada, a los estudiosos que han tratado de recuperar la écfrasis desde rechazo de ella por parte de Lessing, en el siglo XVIII, por hacer borrosos los límites —de modo indeseable y problemático— entre la poesía, como arte diacrónico, y la pintura, como sincrónico (Krieger 1990: 200). Lessing creía que mientras el arquetipo de la “demostración ocular” que citamos más arriba —la descripción de Homero del escudo de Aquiles en la Iliada— proporciona “la única manera correcta de integrar descripciones en la narrativa” porque pone la primera al servicio de la segunda (de Jong 2012: 10), la representación hecha por Virgilio del escudo de Eneas en la Eneida facilita un ejemplo práctico de cómo no escribir una écfrasis: la experiencia poética aquí, en la opinión de Lessing, se ha convertido en una simulación “fría y aburrida”, y de segunda mano, de la experiencia visual (citado en Marshall 1997: 4.696). Una vez que Homero pinta a Hefesto en el proceso de forjar la armadura de Aquiles —logrando así mantener en movimiento el tiempo de su historia hasta en medio de la “digresión” ecfrástica— Virgilio se detiene en su relación para describir el escudo de Eneas y, por ende, sólo consigue perderse en la desviación, según Lessing. Pero las “decoraciones” de Hefesto, ¿están realmente al servicio de la historia de Homero, como pensaba Lessing? Mitchell (1995: 176-81 [180]) observa que, de hecho, el
escudo de Aquiles “representa mucho más del mundo de Homero que hace la *Iliada*” —un detalle que, una vez reconocido, haría que “[l]a relación de la epopeya a la énfasis... se volviera al revés” y el argumento homérico “se convirtiera en un fragmento de la visión totalizadora contenida en [el] escudo”. Algo diferente, por lo tanto, de una estricta “digresión”, una puesta en escena, o una táctica retórica fija realmente tiene lugar en la énfasis: “[é]ste es un sitio utópico que es tanto un espacio dentro de la narrativa como un marco alrededor de él, un umbral por el cual el lector puede entrar en y retirarse del texto como quiera” (Mitchell 1995: 178).

¿Cuáles es la lección, entonces, del escudo de Aquiles que podemos ahora proceder a aplicar a las énfasis en 4 Mac? Si el primero es, para Mitchell, “un imagetext que revela en vez de disimular su propia sutura del espacio y tiempo, de la descripción y narración, de la materialidad y representación ilusionista”, ¿no se podría opinar lo mismo de un pasaje como 4 Mac 15.12-22, por ejemplo? Esta pericopa está marcada por el mismo tipo de “aquí esta...” y “allí esta...”, “muy cerca hay...” y “no muy lejos vemos...” que Lessing aborrecía tanto en Virgilio (Marshall 1997: 4.696): pero, lo que es aún más importante, su énfasis viene tan *a posteriori* —después de las torturas de los hijos de la madre-mártir como son narradas en el texto— que apenas se puede decir que añada nada a la “demonstración narrativa de la razón moderada” (3.19) con que la obra (aparentemente) se preocupa. Y a pesar de todo, como ya hemos visto que Streete (2009: 27) comenta, “la tortura [en 4 Mac] es paródicamente la ocasión de hablar en contra del régimen dominante”: la violencia de la obra es, en otras palabras, la *sine qua non* de su “filosofía”. Las énfasis en el escrito bajo consideración, pues, reflejan *en miniatura* la tensión en el texto entre razón y violencia, narrativa y descripción, tiempo y espacio: como “descripción vívida” cada una funciona, en la formulación concisa de Scott, como un *sinedóquico* “añadido descriptivo [que] aspira a representar, a veces hasta *sustituir*, al mundo más allá del cual forma parte” (1994: 2; el subrayado es original). Como el *epitafio* en 17.8-10 —que resume la esencia de 4 Mac como una “oración fúnebre” (*ἐπιτάφιος λόγος*; van Henten 1997: 65), casi como un *epigrafé*— las énfasis de 4 Mac engloban los temas centrales de la

19 “El universo entero está representado en el escudo: la naturaleza y la humanidad; la tierra, el cielo, y el océano; ciudades en paz y guerra; el arar, la cosecha, y la vendimia; el pastoreo y la caza; bodas, muertes, incluso una escena de litigio... el mundo entero que es “otro” a la acción épica de la *Iliada*...” (Mitchell 1995: 180).
obra como “imagetext” o foto-grafía20. “La muerte por causa de la piedad” (15.12; cf. 17.7): estas palabras que abren la tercera secuencia de écfraseis en 4 Mac no sirven como una salida a otra desviación en el texto sino más bien como un resumen conciso del escrito entero.

2.3. Ejemplos judíos y cristianos de la écfrasis

Pese al hecho de que no parece que los judíos y cristianos primitivos hicieran suyo el género de la écfrasis, dado que ejemplos de écfraseis de estas comunidades son muy escasos, Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis) menciona tres en especial que son de interés: Ap 17.1-6; Apoc. Ab. 21.7-29.21; y Herm. Vis. 3-4 y Paráb. 6, 9. En esta subsección, por consiguiente, tendremos como objetivo determinar si las escenas de la descripción vívida en 4 Mac son del mismo tipo o no de las que aparecen en estos tres escritos coetáneos. También empezaremos a aventurar, cuando sea conveniente, unos comentarios preliminares sobre la utilidad, o no, de metodologías particulares que los estudiosos han usado para interpretar las écfraseis judías y cristianas, todo ello con miras a adoptar o adaptarlas —o a hacer caso omiso de ellas completamente— en lo que concierne a la presente investigación.

2.3.1. La naturaleza polivalente de la imaginaria ecfrástica: Ap 17.1-6

En Ap 17.1-6 tenemos una visión de la célebre Prostituta de Babilonia, un espectáculo que es excepcional en el Apocalipsis por ser totalmente estático, sin ningún tipo de movimiento. Aune (1998: 919ff.) destaca la caracterización de la mujer como una “prostituta”, y su postura sedente al lado de “aguas caudalosas” sobre una bestia con “siete cabezas” (17.1, 3), y sugiere que la escena es una écfrasis modelada sobre la imagen de la Dea Roma de los sestercios acuñados por Vespasiano en 71 EC, que pudo haber sido creada así mismo sobre otra escultura o bajorrelieve anterior. En

20 En el contexto de su búsqueda del “fototexto” (phototext) —las palabras que una imagen determinada parece exigir, o la imagen que unas palabras determinadas parecen exigir— Stafford considera el valor de la écfrasis como una manera de evitar los riesgos o del texto o de la imagen como una descripción simple y mecánica del otro: “El prefijo griego ‘ek’ significa ‘separable’, con lo cual écfrasis es un discurso que es ‘périégétique’, ‘qui “conduit autour”’, pero que también es un tipo de ‘hypotipose’” (citando Bernard Gibert; Stafford 2010: 52). Para expresar esto de otra manera, la écfrasis “tiene analogías importantes con la fotografía” en el sentido en que proporciona un registro fiel del momento (como “hipotiposis”) pero sin convertirlo en una nature morte (Stafford 2010: 204 n. 96).
estas monedas, la diosa aparece sentada sobre las siete colinas de Roma, y también aparecen en ellas representaciones de Tíber, dios del río, y de Rómulo y Remo amamantados por la loba (*lupa* se usaba también para referirse a una prostituta). Esta écfrasis en el Ap 17.1-6, pues, según Aune y Streett también, funciona como una parodia mordaz que termina por volver la propaganda romana en contra de sí misma (Aune 2006: 140; Streett 2009: 303).

Pero la correlación que establece Aune entre Ap 17.1-6 y las monedas de la Dea Roma —un hallazgo extraordinario, por cierto, dadas las dificultades obvias en relacionar una écfrasis en concreto con un modelo pictórico en particular— no nos puede llevar a descartar otras interpretaciones de la imaginería dentro de ellas, como Knight señala. La naturaleza polivalente del simbolismo en la écfrasis en general—su capacidad para afectar al lector “con una sinergia de alusiones históricas, literarias, míticas y arquetípicas”— hace que sea difícil “establecer una correspondencia estricta entre una imagen en el texto y un elemento del contexto histórico” (Knight 2005: 105-6). Esto mismo sostendremos en esta tesis para el caso de 4 Mac. Pero ello no significa necesariamente que la imaginería de la écfrasis se pueda desanclar de su contexto histórico específico en una especie de hermenéutica en la que todo valdría. Como veremos, en realidad lo que afirmamos es que las pruebas históricas “objetivas” no pueden considerarse como el sólo árbitro del significado del texto, especialmente cuando ese significado se produce en una variedad de niveles, como en 4 Mac, tales como la historia, la literatura, la diatriba filosófica, etc.

2.3.2. La écfrasis como un intento de “nombrar lo innombrable”:

Apoc. Ab. 21.7-29.21

En el *Apocalipsis de Abraham* del siglo I o II EC, el patriarca, habiendo subido a los cielos (15.4-5), es invitado a contemplar “bajo [sus] pies el firmamento” (en el texto eslavo *prostirtie*, literalmente la “extensión” bajo sus pies) y a tomar conciencia de la Creación prefigurada allí desde antiguo en dicha extensión (esto es, contenida inicialmente en dicha extensión [*protjazenie*]) (*Apoc. Ab. 21.1*)21. En 21.7 leemos: “Vi

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allí a una multitud de hombres, mujeres y niños, la mitad de ellos al lado derecho de la imagen [obrazistvo] y la otra mitad al lado izquierdo”. En el curso de los nueve capítulos siguientes, más o menos, Dios invita a Abraham: “¡Mira la imagen!” (26.7; cf. 23.1; 24.3; 29.4) a fin de que él entienda la explicación que se le ofrece del futuro tanto de su linaje como del mundo en general.

Una observación reciente de Schäfer sobre el Apocalipsis de Abraham llama la atención sobre un aspecto del texto el cual es sumamente importante al orientarnos en el estudio actual:

La narración entera del Apocalipsis de Abraham es una dramatización gráfica de la frase enigmática con la que empieza Génesis 15: “Yahvé dirigió la palabra a Abraham en visión [ba-mahazeh]”, con el conflicto aparente que encontramos ahí entre la palabra hablada y la visión contemplada, en otras palabras, entre una audición y una visión. (2011: 87; el subrayado y la glosa son originales)

La cuestión para nosotros, en otras palabras, es hasta qué punto y en qué detalle el mismo tipo de “enigma” o “conflicto... entre la palabra hablada y la visión contemplada” existe en las écfraseis de 4 Mac. Ya hemos notado más arriba (en la sección [2.2]), mientras establecíamos una perspectiva “nueva” sobre 4 Mac en la cual sus “descripciones vívidas” se desplazarían desde la periferia hasta el centro del texto, que efectivamente sí hay un cierto antagonismo en la obra entre tiempo y espacio, narrativa y descripción, filosofía y violencia, etc., y por lo tanto entre texto e imagen también. Es más, si la cualidad catacréstica de buena parte de la écfrasis en el Apocalipsis de Abraham indica que su autor se esfuerza aquí para nombrar algo que es, en el meollo, innombrable⁴ —es decir, la visión de Dios a la cual sólo se insinúa

las palabras eslavas prostōtie y protjaženie en relación con la preparación de las superficies/extensiones sobre las cuales pintar, Lunt señala que ellas “reflejan formas basadas en la palabra griega ten”, por consiguiente lo que no parece posible abundar en dicha imagen. Collins (2000: 35-6) ofrece otra discusión breve de los términos.

Miller define la catacresis como “un ejemplo del traspaso forzado o grosero de términos desde un terreno ajeno para nombrar algo que no tiene nombre propio en sí, puesto que no es un objeto perceptible por los sentidos” —de ahí la idea aquí mencionada de un intento de “nombrar lo innombrable” (Miller citado en Eaglestone 1997: 68). Para un ejemplo en el Apocalipsis de Abraham, véase 8.1, donde el acto de escuchar asume una cualidad visual muy curiosa: “la voz del Todopoderoso cayó del cielo en un torrente de fuego...” (el subrayado es mío).
en el Génesis—¿no se podría decir lo mismo de 4 Mac? Al recurrir a la palabra hablada, la escrita y la pintada, en vez de una de éstas solamente, y al mezclar metáforas e imágenes tomadas de los campos de la lectura, la audición y la visión, sugeriremos que nuestro autor trata también de alguna manera de expresar lo inexpresable.

2.3.3. **La écfrasis y el modo “alegórico” de su interpretación:**

*Herm. Vis. 3-4 y Paráb. 6, 9*

La naturaleza estacionaria y didáctica de las visiones en el Pastor de Hermas—especialmente en la *Visión 3-4* y la *Parábola 6, 9*—ha hecho que un cierto número de exegetas especule acerca de que la obra fue escrita bajo la influencia de las écfraseis de la *Tabula* de Cebes (véase [2.2] anteriormente; cf. Taylor 1901; id. 1903). No obstante, Aune intenta ir más allá de la cuestión de la influencia, y sugiere que “el verdadero problema [...] es si Hermas (como Juan en Ap 17) adaptó el género de la écfrasis basándose en relatos literarios de las visiones de las interpretaciones *alegóricas* de pinturas” (1998: 924; el subrayado es mío). Pero puesto que somos escépticos acerca de que se puedan resolver las cuestiones de la influencia y del modelo pictórico original de Hermas, ¿quiere decir que hemos llegado a un impasse en la interpretación del escrito desde el punto de vista de sus écfraseis?

Es el momento de preguntarse cómo debían entenderse las écfraseis en la concepción original del autor, un asunto al cual hemos aludido solamente hasta ahora al sugerir que con la Segunda Sofística la descripción vívida fue utilizada como un recurso principalmente retórico. Según Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis), la interpretación de la écfrasis podía haber sido “literal”—a saber, según el “valor nominal” de la obra de arte en sí—o “alegórica”, en la cual rasgos distintivos de la obra invitaban a los espectadores a que alcanzaran nuevos conocimientos morales (la *Tabula* de Cebes) o religiosos (el *Heracles* de Luciano). Por consiguiente, la relación entre el cuadro físico y la écfrasis literaria era, a menudo, bastante oportunista: el artificio de la pintura, o “escena” estática, era una manera conveniente y especialmente convincente
de hacer entender una idea más “profunda”23. Es por esta razón que la ausencia hoy en día de un cuadro (o parecido) físico en concreto, en relación o con Hermas o con 4 Mac (pero véase el cuadro imaginado en 4 Mac 17.7), no tiene por qué impedirle al intérprete leer un texto particular como una écfrasis. Una manera exacta en que semejante lectura puede desarrollarse, teniendo en cuenta el modo antiguo alegórico de la écfrasis en el cual el conocimiento pormenorizado de la superficie de un cuadro determinado no era el objetivo principal, sino las verdades más fundamentales ahí “dentro”, se sugerirá más abajo en esta Introducción (véase la sección [3] más abajo).

2.4. El “giro postestructuralista” en la interpretación de 4 Mac

Aunque contamos obviamente con algunas excepciones, los comentarios sobre 4 Mac se han visto, por lo general, limitados a las introducciones y las anotaciones insertas en los estudios bíblicos y a las ediciones de los textos apócrifos. Han sido muy pocos los exegetas que se han sentido lo suficientemente libres del peso de la tradición como para centrarse en “un texto que siempre ha quedado fuera del canon bíblico, aunque sigue merodeando en los márgenes de ciertos códices de la Septuaginta como un invitado poco grato en un banquete de bodas”, por traer aquí a colación la memorable caracterización de deSilva (véase el Prefacio de id. 1998). Más raro aún ha sido el exégeta dispuesto a abordar 4 Mac fuera de las categorías histórico-criticas tradicionales, más allá de detalles tales como su fecha, contexto, estructura, forma, etc.

Los estudios que conforman el núcleo de esta crítica sobre 4 Mac deben acogerse como contribuciones innovadoras a la interpretación de este texto importante, sobre todo en sus presupuestos metodológicos. Todos ellos, como el título de esta sección sugiere, pueden ser clasificados como interpretaciones de nuestro texto desde una perspectiva postestructuralista, una rúbrica amplia que abarca formas de lectura tales

23 Véase, por ejemplo, la explicación de la acción de la Tabula de Cebes ofrecida por Elsner (2007: 185-6): “En la Tabula de Cebes, una alegoría filosófica de un cuadro que recurre a fuentes eclécticas y pretende ofrecer salvación tanto a los espectadores de la imagen como a los lectores del texto, la aporia inicial de los espectadores ante el tema de una pintura se presenta como un reflejo de su aporia ante el problema de la vida misma (de la cual el entendimiento correcto de la imagen les salvará)” (el subrayado es mío). A grandes rasgos, pues, vemos aquí al autor y a los lectores de 4 Mac luchando, en las écfraseis en el texto, con una aporia muy parecida: ¿podría ser la vida misma que es el tema indescriptible por el cual el toma y daca de tiempo y espacio, narrativa y descripción, palabra e imagen es la única aproximación posible (cf. [2.3.2] más arriba)?
como “la deconstrucción, el neohistoricismo, la teoría poscolonial, la teoría queer y variantes académicas mayores de la tercera oleada del feminismo”24. Para comprender las implicaciones prácticas de todos estos enfoques críticos haremos aquí una breve reseña de cada uno de ellos al objeto de extraer más abajo algunas conclusiones preliminares. Como dice Moore de forma muy expresiva, los autores de estos trabajos han intentado “salirse del redil” de la crítica bíblica institucional y dar rienda suelta al texto, por así decirlo, y a su registro completo de significado fuera de las restricciones y las neurosis de los exegetas demasiado formalistas y positivistas (2010d: 2). De ahí el prefijo importante “post-” para indicar que estos trabajos crean un nuevo potencial interpretativo en un libro dejado muy a menudo de lado por parte de los exegetas bíblicos.

2.4.1. La deconstrucción del “yo” y del “otro”, de lo “judío” y de lo “griego” en 4 Mac

Un trabajo de Lieu (2002) nos facilita una introducción a lo que llamamos aquí un nuevo enfoque postestructuralista en la interpretación de 4 Mac. Como ya hemos dicho, este método, aplicado a nuestro texto, pone sistemáticamente en entredicho cualquier uniformidad ideológica con respecto a identidad de grupo, género, política, etc. que el autor o lector trata de imponer. A los efectos de esta tesis, la contribución más importante de Lieu se refiere a su análisis del modo en el cual el locus clásico de la dicotomía yo/otro en la antigüedad, griego/barbaro, es redefinido en 4 Mac — aunque de forma precaria todavía25 — como una distinción entre judío/griego.

Pero sería demasiado simple establecer una línea divisoria muy marcada entre “judío” y “griego” ya que Lieu (2002: 302) observa con toda razón que los límites en el mundo antiguo eran sitios de fluidez, negociación e intercambio: zonas de influencia mutua. De ahí, por ejemplo, que el autor de 4 Mac, un judío, no tenga ningún reparo en escribir en la lengua griega y en una manera literaria esencialmente griega, algo que al autor de la Carta de Aristeas, en otro lugar y momento, le habría resultado

25 Que el proyecto de Lieu es susceptible de ser descrito como deconstructivo es evidente a lo largo del ensayo, aun cuando reprende, con delicadeza, a los intérpretes que dice que “han llegado a estar obsesionados con de/constuir las fronteras permeables de ‘judaísmo y helenismo’”. “Formulada de esta manera”, responde, “esta oposición no es ni siquiera un ‘cráter secundario’ en las construcciones propias de los textos” (2002: 305).
“contranatural” (Cart. Aris. 44). El hecho es que la revisión constante de estas fronteras en los varios textos del período del segundo templo, según tiempos y lugares diferentes y los matices movedizos de la interacción cultural, “frecuentemente hace que sea muy difícil discernir claramente ‘el otro’ a quien se excluye” (Lieu 2002: 310). No sólo el otro, sin embargo, sino también el “yo”: esto es, la identidad del grupo cuyas experiencias en común dieron origen al texto. Y aunque la preocupación mayor de Lieu en su estudio es hacer un llamamiento a la revisión de la noción de la “separación de los caminos” entre el “judaísmo” y el “cristianismo” en general, su consejo de prestar mucha atención a los límites del texto como manera de entender mejor las estrategias retóricas del mismo viene a ser un llamamiento a la revisión del “mapa” de la interpretación de 4 Mac en particular.

2.4.2. 4 Mac y los “estudios de la masculinidad”:

el enfrentamiento entre Antíoco y los mártires
como un certamen de “virilidad auténtica”

Moore y Anderson (2010) comienzan su ensayo con un panorama de las virtudes cardinales del mundo antiguo, la prudencia (φρόνησις, 4 Mac 1.2), la templanza (σωφροσύνη, 1.3), la justicia (δικαιοσύνη, 1.4) y el valor (ανδρεία, 1.4), y luego las sitúan en el contexto de 4 Mac, concretamente como manifestaciones de lo que el autor llama “la razón piadosa” (ὁ εὐσεβής λογισμός, 1.1). Ahora bien, en un paso exegético appreciable, avanzan al redefinir la ανδρεία como “virilidad” —de ἀνήρ, “hombre”— desestabilizando de este modo las interpretaciones histórico-criticas convencionales. “Tanto como cualquier otra cosa, entonces”, opinan Moore y Anderson, “4 Macabeos trata de lo que significa ser un “hombre verdadero”” (2010: 179).

El autor de 4 Mac puede probar su tesis de que “la razón piadosa es dueña absoluta de las pasiones” (1.1) recurriendo al “valor varonil” (ἀνδραγαθίας) que los mártires demostraban muriendo “por la virtud” (1.8). El autocontrol (ἐγκράτεια, v.g. 5.34; etc.) de los Nueve cuestiona el control sobre otros que ejercen los de Antíoco como índice supremo de la fortaleza y la virilidad. No obstante, esta gran ironía del texto, el hecho de que el viejo “débil”, la viuda y los siete muchachos humillen al tirano “fuerte” (v.g. 11.24; etc.), acaba reafirmando las mismas conexiones entre la
masculinidad y el dominio, y la femineidad y la subyugación, que eran predominantes en el mundo antiguo, si bien desplace levemente al estereotipo de la masculinidad. Por mucho que el autocontrol haya remplazado al control de otros como el culmen de la masculinidad, los mártires terminan controlando a Antíoco, y “el control de otros es todavía un valor central y celebrado” (Moore y Anderson 2010: 199).

2.4.3. 4 Mac y el análisis feminista: la madre como par de Abraham

Moore y Anderson sostienen que la madre es la figura que más ha sido controlada en 4 Mac, relegada como está al papel de la hija y esposa consciente de sus deberes en su propio discurso en 18.6-19. Sin embargo, desde el principio de su estudio (1991), Darling Young cuestiona tal lectura y cualquier tendencia a la domesticación de la madre en el culto de los mártires que continúa hasta hoy en día, prefiriendo celebrarla como “progenitora del mismo orden que [Abraham]” (1991: 81).

Lo que es importante para Darling Young en su trabajo es tanto recuperar el nombre de la madre como “aquilatar su vida interna y su papel público” (Darling Young 1991: 67-8). Eso lo consigue fundando su interpretación en la descripción honorífica que se otorga a la mujer en 4 Mac 14.20: tenía “el mismo espíritu que Abraham” (τὴν Αβραάμ όμόψυχον). Como el patriarca hizo con respecto a Isaac (4 Mac 13.12; 16.20), la madre santa superó el afecto de los padres por las promesas de Dios, y en lugar de transgredir un precepto, entregó sus hijos a la muerte (16.15-24). Por esta razón es como si ella “estuviera dando a luz a sus hijos para la eternidad” (16.13); a causa del valor que ella demostró, y el ejemplo que les dio, ahora brillan ellos como estrellas en el firmamento (17.2-6; 18.23-24; cf. Gn 15.5-6). Aunque Darling Young haga posiblemente demasiado hincapié sobre este punto manteniendo que “la prominencia de la madre [en 4 Mac] tal vez le induzca al intérprete moderno a especular que la obra se produjo teniendo una audiencia de mujeres en mente” (1991: 81), su estudio, al igual que el de Moore y Anderson, aun así destaca las grandes posibilidades de abrir caminos interpretativos que son inherentes a la lectura postestructuralista de 4 Mac.
2.4.4. 4 Mac y el análisis poscolonial: los mártires como héroes de la no violencia

Un trabajo de deSilva (2007) representa una trayectoria distinta dentro de lo que hemos llamado aquí el enfoque postestructuralista en la interpretación de 4 Mac, mirando el texto a través de la “lente” de la teoría poscolonial en vez de la deconstructiva, la de los estudios de la masculinidad o la feminista. Su estudio, no obstante, no es tan diferente de los de Lieu, Moore y Anderson y Darling Young como puede verse en el modo en el cual aún gira en torno a una dicotomía conceptual en el texto (lo que llamaremos más abajo una “oposición binaria”). En lugar de atender a las oposiciones de judío/griego, u hombre/mujer, deSilva se interesa por la oposición colonizador/colonizado, preguntándose cómo 4 Mac promueve y critica ideas particulares de imperio, subalterno, poder y resistencia (2007: 100-101).

La conclusión de deSilva incluye dos aspectos y corresponde en buena parte a lo que tal vez puedan denominarse las implicaciones políticas del proyecto de nuestro autor de masculinizar a los mártires, representantes de un pueblo esclavizado, y feminizar a sus amos, sobre lo cual Moore y Anderson y Darling Young nos han llamado la atención. Cuanto más se convierten los héroes de la obra en hombres “verdaderos”, llegan a estar situados en el extremo privilegiado del continuo de la identidad sexual antigua, más honor añaden a su forma de vida, y más adscriben la credibilidad y la eficacia a la estrategia de resistencia no violenta propugnada por el autor ante el peligro de la aculturación. Esto es, cada vez más realista y más digna se vuelve su filosofía de 1) la “valoración” vehemente del patrimonio autóctono (v.g. la defensa de la “educación en la ley” frente al modelo del gimnasio, 4 Mac 1.17-18; 4.19-20); 2) la utilización oportuna del “habla desafiante” y la “acción ejemplar” (v.g. el rechazo de Eleazar hasta simular probar el cerdo, 6.15-23); y 3) el mantenimiento de una estrecha solidaridad entre cada una de las personas oprimidas (“todos, animados por un mismo espíritu, dijeron a coro...”, 8.29; etc.; deSilva 2007: 112-25). Es más, la masculinización de los mártires asenta un golpe dirigido al corazón de los feminizados.

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26 Haciéndose eco de la renuncia de los teóricos a la hora de calificar la lectura deconstruktiva de “método”, una “práctica crítica”, un “acto” o una “operación” (para más acerca de la cual, véase la sección [3] más abajo), deSilva hace hincapié en el hecho de que su trabajo, y la interpretación poscolonial en general, es más bien una “hermenéutica”, un “modo de pensar”, una “postura subversiva”, y por último una “lente a través de la cual dar un nuevo enfoque a las Sagradas Escrituras y a la manera en que ellas han sido, y pueden ser, interpretadas y usadas en las situaciones políticas y sociales de la vida real” (2007: 99-100).
y su cultura, en la medida en que se reclama que los judíos son más griegos que los propios griegos. Por el hecho de que demuestran una autodisciplina ejemplar, los mártires prueban que la forma de vida judía es la heredera legítima de lo mejor de la filosofía griega y una forma muy digna de autogobernarse.

2.4.5. Leyendo 4 Mac intertextualmente: adaptando la historia de la sed de David

Según deSilva en otro estudio (2006b), la historia de la sed del rey David en 4 Mac 3.6-18 provee de terreno fértil a otro tipo del análisis postestructuralista, esta vez en términos de intertextualidad. Esto es, a su modo de ver, el estudio del modo en el cual el autor de 4 Mac reescribe libremente una historia que ya se puede encontrar en 2 Sam 23 y 1 Cró 11, además de en Josefo (A.J. 7.12.4), puede ayudar a arrojar luz sobre sus objetivos retóricos particulares en la obra y proporcionar información clave acerca de su entorno social.

Tal y como deSilva (2006b: 38) lo interpreta, en 4 Mac dicho relato sirve de argumento a la tesis del autor de que “la razón puede evitarle a uno ser esclavizado por [el deseo]” (3.2). Esto contrasta abiertamente con el uso de la historia en Josefo y en los libros bíblicos, donde la atención se centra de lleno en alabar a los valientes guardias personales de David (quienes casi no parecen dignos de ninguna mención en la adaptación de 4 Mac, 3.12). Tal como David vence la sensación ardiente de sed ofreciendo a Dios el agua obtenida para él con gran riesgo por parte de los jóvenes soldados, un agua por tanto “equivalente a sangre” (3.15-16), la “mente sensata” formada por la ley puede triunfar sobre todo tipo de “deseo desenfrenado” y sobreponerse a “las agonías corporales por muy fuertes que sean” (3.17-18). De hecho, no hay ningún deseo que “atormente” e “inflame”, “arruine” y “consuma hasta locura” a una persona que la razón no pueda contener (cf. 3.10-11). Para deSilva (2006b: 35), el razonamiento del autor aquí es que hasta el deseo muy irracional de “querer lo que tienen ellos” —como tenía David (“el agua que estaba en poder de los enemigos”, 3.11), y como tenían los judíos de la diáspora codiciosos de las cosas que la cultura griega les podría ofrecer si relajaban sus obligaciones alimenticias, legales y culturales— puede saciarse siguiendo en el camino virtuoso y haciendo caso de la “razón noble” (3.18).
2.5. La forma de 4 Mac y la cuestión de la metodología en su interpretación: observaciones preliminares

¿Hay una manera de interpretar 4 Mac que preste atención a la naturaleza sinecdóquica (sección [2.2] más arriba), polivalente [2.3.1] y catacréstica [2.3.2] del lenguaje de sus écfraseis, pero que no suponga que estas “descripciones vividas” literarias —estas “alegorías” amplias de la vida misma ([2.3])— se fundamente en tales o cuales obras de arte particulares (cf. 4 Mac 17.7)? Ésta es la primera cuestión importante que esta reseña de la literatura —centrada en nuestra idea borrosa, y hipotética por el momento, de 4 Mac como écfras(e)is— ha intentado considerar detenidamente. La constelación de metodologías representada en la idea de un “enfoque postestructuralista” en la interpretación de 4 Mac (sección [2.4]) sugiere unas maneras prometedoras de abordar nuestro texto, pero el análisis de las nociones de sustitución y expiación vicarias desde las perspectivas abiertas por los estudios de la masculinidad, la crítica feminista y la teoría poscolonial suscita ciertos problemas de los cuales nos hace falta ser conscientes. Concretamente, estos problemas tienen que ver con la voz personal en la interpretación textual y con la identidad sexual y sociocultural del intérprete.

¿Sería apropiado para un hombre intentar hacer una exégesis feminista, o para una persona caucásica y de clase media leer un texto desde una perspectiva poscolonial? Esto no significa necesariamente abandonar estas ricas posibilidades interpretativas prematuramente, pero si quisiéramos seguir el buen consejo de Moore para estudiosos (extra)bíblicos, que tenemos que aprender a no apropiarnos de las luchas de otros y hablar directamente por ellos (2010: 22-3), haríamos bien en proceder con cautela.

El proyecto de Lieu de la deconstrucción del “yo” y del “otro”, de lo “judío” y de lo “griego” en 4 Mac —informado por el punto de vista de los estudios de la masculinidad de Moore y Anderson, el feminismo de Darling Young, y las observaciones poscoloniales y intertextuales de deSilva— nos parece la plataforma teórica más robusta desde donde lanzarnos a nuestro proyecto de descubrir el ἀντίψυχος de 4 Mac, dado, particularmente, lo que ya hemos visto de la manera en

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27 En el contexto, específicamente, de una advertencia de los intereses políticos, económicos y socioculturales en juego en el “posmodernismo de resistencia” representado por el “feminismo”, o l’écriture féminine: “... el “poste” del pos[te]modernismo tiene que clavarse bien profundo en el privilegio del hombre blanco occidental...” (2010e: 22-3).
que la obra se “deconstruye” también en sus *écraseis*. No sólo implosionan las “oposiciones binarias” en 4 Mac alrededor de yo/otro y judío/griego a la más mínima aplicación de la presión crítica seria, como Lieu ha descubierto, sino que, y es más, una analógica vuelta al revés llega a suceder con tales dicotomías conceptuales como tiempo/espacio, narrativa/descripción y filosofía/violencia también.

3. Presentación del problema:
4 Mac y el ἀντίψυχος en perspectiva “deconstructiva”

3.1. Introducción

Ya hemos visto en el apartado [1] y en la panorámica de la literatura secundaria [2] cómo 4 Macabeos escapa a cualquier categoría interpretativa fácil con respecto a su situación canónica (canónico/apócrifo), forma (texto/audición/imagen), audiencia (hombres/mujeres), etc. Habiendo llegado, pues, a esta parte introductoria en la que expondremos la metodología que vamos a emplear en esta tesis, parecerá que nuestro texto está a punto de “deshilacharse”, por decirlo así. Éstos y otros “hilos sueltos” en el escrito exigen nuestra atención como “problemas” no resueltos en la interpretación de la obra. Pero antes que “hilos sueltos”, y lo que es más importante, constituyen invitaciones irresistibles a leer. “[N]os hemos preocupado por ofrecer algún atractivo a los que desean leer”, anuncia el autor de 2 Mac (2.25) —un propósito admirable para un escrito con el cual el autor de 4 Mac habría estado totalmente familiarizado, puesto que constituye su fuente principal. Y como Barthes nos recuerda, el placer en leer (*jouissance*) se encuentra donde el tejido textual está “abierto”, en las interrupciones, las rupturas y los espacios en los que el lector está incómodo, y sus suposiciones se ven cuestionadas, y “donde, quizás, algo ocurra poco ortodoxo e imprevisto” (Cuddon y Preston 1998: s.v. *plaisir/jouissance*; Barthes 2007: 11).

La *deconstrucción* es una estrategia interpretativa que se ha comparado a tirar de los hilos sueltos de un texto —un hilo de Ariadna— que intenta escapar del laberinto de Creta de la (mala) interpretación. Como Barthes explica: “En la escritura múltiple, efectivamente, todo está por desenredar, pero nada por descifrar; puede seguirse la

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estructura, se la puede reseguir (como un punto de media que se corre) en todos sus nudos y todos sus niveles... el espacio de la escritura ha de recorrerse, no puede atrevesarse...” (2009: 81). Deshiluchar los cabos sueltos del texto, deslizarlos entre los dedos de uno en uno, siguiéndolos hasta ver adónde nos hacen llegar: he ahí una interpretación del modo deconstructivo de leer. Y un monumento en mitad del paisaje laberíntico de la interpretación alrededor del cual los hilos sueltos del texto amenazan con formar nudos gordianos es el edificio de la “oposición binaria”: yo/otro, judío/griego, tiempo/spacio, narrativa/descripción, filosofía/violencia, etc., tal y como ya hemos notado. Pero antes de poner rumbo hacia esa mansión en el horizonte, no obstante, deberíamos hacerle caso a Barthes y detenernos en 4 Mac un poco más, haciendo, entre tanto, un reconocimiento meticuloso y a fondo de una serie de aspectos —su cualidad de écfrasis, en específico, a la cual hemos aludido tan brevemente más arriba (v.g. la sección [2.2])— que nos capacitará para ver por qué leerlo deconstructivamente nos ayudará entender este texto mejor.

Hemos mencionado anteriormente que 4 Mac comprende un número de rasgos en común con el género antiguo de la écfrasis. A continuación, en esta sección de nuestra Introducción, consideraremos en detalle la opinión de deSilva, uno de los pocos estudiosos que ha tomado en serio este aspecto comúnmente pasado por alto, pero absolutamente fundamental, del texto. Más abajo tomaremos nuestra “nueva” perspectiva sobre la écfrasis desarrollada en la sección [2.2] anteriormente —como algo más que una “digresión” superflua o un “adorno” a la narrativa— y establecerla en el contexto de 4 Mac, prestando atención a la manera en que, ya considerada como un “recuadro descriptivo” _sinecdóquico_ que mira para fuera, esta figura nos obliga a repensar todo lo que es central y periférico, esencial y tangencial en el escrito. La parte final de esta sección luego sugerirá cómo la obra bajo consideración —no sólo como texto sino también como pintura (en palabras) de la “historia” de la “piedad” de los mártires cuyo relato la obra narra (cf. 4 Mac 17.7)— está particularmente bien adaptada, o de hecho _invita de suyo_, a la lectura deconstructiva.

### 3.2. La écfrasis en 4 Mac

A pesar de la discusión suscitada en los comentarios acerca del género de 4 Mac su carácter de écfrasis, o “descripción vivida”, todavía carece de un estudio
pormenorizado. Hadas (1953: 233) refleja la actitud típica de los intérpretes antes este aspecto curioso del texto, relegando su única mención del mismo a una anotación al verso 17.7. Por lo menos deSilva entra en más detalles, como ya hemos insinuado, pero pese a asignar la etiqueta de écfrasis a 4 Mac 6.1-30, 9.10-12.19 y 15.12-22, no se puede decir que su análisis haga justicia a este elemento importante de la obra:

... [E]l autor demuestra su dominio de la técnica retórica de la “descripción vivida” (écfrasis)... no para herir la sensibilidad de la audiencia sino para aumentar su conciencia de la perseverancia de los mártires a través de la descripción vivida y escalofriante de los sufrimientos de éstos. Esto contribuye a la representación del autor del caso extremo que debería facilitar la resistencia y la firmeza en las dificultades más moderadas de la audiencia... (1998: 68, 72 [68])

Las palabras de deSilva pueden ser ciertas, en la medida en que penetran en el texto, pero el problema es que suscitan más preguntas de las que resuelven. Las escenas muy gráficas de la tortura en el escrito, ¿de verdad no hieren “la sensibilidad”? ¿Cómo puede un texto producir un escalofrío en el lector? ¿Por qué debería toda la depravación de detalles sobrecogedores en 4 Mac posibilitar la argumentación a fortiori y animar a la audiencia a imitar, en sus luchas menores, la entereza de los héroes? O, para insistir aún más, como deSilva escribe:

... [E]l autor hace uso de toda su habilidad en el ejercicio de la écfrasis... en 15.12-22, tornando extremadamente vividos los sufrimientos de los siete hermanos y suscitando en la audiencia las mismas sensaciones que cuando fue golpeada la madre con una fuerza tan aplastante. (1998: 72)

¿Pero cómo puede 4 Mac, o cualquier otro texto en realidad, ocasionar una sucesión de golpes al espíritu del lector y todavía incitarle a la admiración y la emulación? DeSilva ha descubierto aquí en el escrito algo de suma importancia, y aún más cuando comenta en otro lugar que 4 Mac es tan profuso en écfrasis “que a los lectores todavía

29 Al efecto de que “[e]l uso de una pintura para expresar una historia moral es conocido en la literatura griega posterior: cf. el comienzo de la Tabula Cebetis [a saber, la Tabula de Cebes] y la Daphnis y Cloe de Longo. Descripciones de obras de arte y sus efectos eran un departamento común de la retórica, llamado écfrasis”.
les pone los pelos de punta leer o escuchar el texto, tal como el autor prevé en 14.9” (2007: 103). Representaciones escabrosas (écfrasesis) de las torturas espeluznantes de los mártires que producen un “estremecimiento” (14.9; 17.7), el tipo de temor sagrado que impele al pueblo a volver a obedecer la ley y que, a su vez, da lugar a que haya paz y armonía para la nación (18.4): ésta es, podríamos decir, la impresión más perdurable de 4 Mac. Pero ¿cómo funcionan exactamente estas écfrasesis? Si se presentan como “descripciones vividas” de las torturas de los mártires de 4 Mac, como 15.12-22, por ejemplo, no ahorra ningún detalle en relatar los sufrimientos espantosos de los hermanos-mártires hasta “la muerte por causa de la piedad” (15.12), ¿significará esto que estas écfrasesis son necesarias para traerles “ante los ojos” de la audiencia los mártires como el sustituto y sacrificio vicario (ἀντίψυχος)? En esta tesis, a medida que intentamos contestar a la primera cuestión, iremos encontrando que nuestra respuesta a la segunda será rotundamente afirmativa: sí se requieren las écfrasesis de 4 Mac para la aparición del ἀντίψυχος, por la lógica de la más “literal” y completa de las écfrasesis en la obra: la de la pintura de la “historia de tu piedad” descrita en 17.7.

3.3. De las écfrasesis en a la écfrasis de 4 Mac: el texto como “pintura” (4 Mac 17.7)

En 17.7 el autor de 4 Mac compara su labor historiográfica con la de un pintor que “pinta del natural” (ζωγράφω) la “historia” de la “piedad” de los mártires30. Van Henten (1997: 76) especula que la expresión está tomada de 2 Mac 2.29; si es así, poner los dos textos uno al lado del otro nos ayudará a entender más claramente cómo leer e interpretar 4 Mac en su carácter de una “pintura en palabras”, o écfrasis:

Pues así como [καθάπερ] al arquitecto de una casa nueva corresponde la preocupación por la estructura entera; y, en cambio, al encargado de la

30 Aunque el posesivo en la frase “… la historia de tu piedad…” (τὴν τῆς εὐσεβείας σου ἱστορίαν) en 17.7 fuera en el singular (σου) —es decir, aunque se refiriera solamente a la madre-mártir— podría decirse del cuadro imaginado que abarca a las desgracias de todos los mártires indiscriminadamente, tal como la mención de la madre “resistiendo” los “más variados tormentos” de su “siete hijos” en 17.7b pone de relieve. No sólo esto, de hecho, sino podríamos también citar en apoyo de la lectura defendida aquí el consejo del siglo IV de Juan Crisóstomo a sí mismo y a sus oyentes que “inscribamos [las] contiendas y combates [de los mártires] en nuestro corazón como si en una lápida se trataran [τοὺς ἁγίους καὶ τὰ παλαιότατα ὠσπέρ ἐπὶ πάνικος τινος τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἐπογράψαντες]”: el paralelo es relevante para nuestros fines aquí en que hace eco precisamente con el ὠσπέρ ἐπὶ πάνικος τινος de 4 Mac 17.7 mientras que, a la vez, abre el temático del arte imaginado a los niños (y a Eleazar), y no solamente la madre (Crisóstomo, Macc. 1, citado en Mayer y Neil 2006: 135-45).
encáustica [ἐγκαίειν] y pinturas [ζωγραφεῖν], el cuidado de lo necesario para la decoración [διακόσμησιν], lo mismo me parece de nosotros: profundizar, revolver las cuestiones y examinar punto por punto corresponde al que compone la historia [τὸ τῆς ἱστορίας ἀρχηγέτη]; pero buscar concisión al exponer [τὸ ἐξεργαστικὸν τῆς πραγματείας] y renunciar a tratar el asunto de forma exhaustiva [τὸ τὴν μετάφρασιν ποιουμένῳ] debe concederse al divulgador [τὸ... σύντομον τῆς λέξεως]. (2 Mac 2.29-31)

Si pudiéramos pintar [ζωγραφῆσαι] la historia de tu piedad como [ὁσπέρ] en un cuadro, ¿no se estremecerían [οὐκ ἄν ἔφριτον] los espectadores al ver a una madre de siete hijos resistiendo, por causa de la piedad, los más variados tormentos hasta la muerte? (4 Mac 17.7)

Ya hemos visto anteriormente que sería muy en conforme con los cánones de la écfrasis antigua considerar sus manifestaciones no sólo como una(s) “descripción[es] viva[s]” sino también como “digresión[es] ornamental[es] que se niega[n] a ser simplemente ornamental[es]” (Heffernan 1993: 5), como “añadidos descriptivos” en el texto principal que miran hacia fuera. Pero aquí, si podemos extrapolar de 2 Mac a 4 Mac, parece que el autor de este último considera su “obra” en su totalidad —“la demostración narrativa” de las “torturas variadas” de los mártires (cf. 4 Mac 3.19)— como un “adorno”, sea a la historia original de Jasón de Cirene (2 Mac 2.23, 30), a la abreviación y “decoración” de esta historia en 2 Mac (2.26, 28, 31), o quizás a ambos de esos textos. Es como si el autor de 4 Mac buscara pintar, decorar y adornar una “casa” —una historia— ya pintada, decorada y adornada por el autor de 2 Mac, su fuente principal; o por otra parte, que tratara de añadir a esa estructura, ya trabajada dos veces, una pintura monumental —o ciclo de pinturas (en palabras) monumentales— de la piedad y resistencia heroica de los mártires (v.g. 4 Mac 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22). Las écfraseis en 4 Mac descubiertas por Hadas y deSilva, por lo tanto, serían episodios individuales en una écfrasis más grande que comprende la obra entera, o por lo menos la parte de dicha obra dedicada a la caída de los héroes a manos de Antíoco (3.19-18.24): los ejemplos más poli-facéticos (πολλαχόθεν) y trascendentes (ἀλλαχόθεν) del “noble valor” (ἀνδραγαθίας) que el autor puede aducir tanto para “mostrar” su tesis (ἐπιδείξα; ἀποδείξαμι) —en todos los sentidos de esa palabra— como para edificar a su audiencia (1.7-8).
Por eso es, en todo caso, que el “límite” en 4 Mac entre “texto” e “imagen”, “obra” (ἔργον) y “ornamento” (πάρεργον) se hace borroso, definitivamente. Los comentarios de Derrida sobre el “ergon” y “párergon” aquí son totalmente oportunas:

Un párergon se ubica contra, al lado y además del ergon, del trabajo hecho, del hecho, de la obra, pero no es ajeno, afecta el interior de la operación y coopera con él desde cierto afuera. Ni simplemente afuera, ni simplemente adentro... El párergon inscribe algo que se agrega, exterior al campo propio... pero cuya exterioridad trascendente... viene a jugar, a lindar con, rozar, frotar, estrecharse contra el límite mismo e intervenir en el adentro... (2001d: 65-6; el subrayado es original)

Pero ¿cómo podemos proceder a interpretar 4 Mac si no estamos seguros de dónde terminan los márgenes de texto y dónde comienza el texto propiamente dicho? La respuesta a esta pregunta, sugerimos aquí en esta tesis, tiene que ver con la introducción en 4 Mac de un elemento “decorativo” —super- o par-erogatorio— que no se le encuentra ni en los tomos “cronológicos” monumentales de Jasón de Cirene ni en el “compendio” poético de esa historia en 2 Mac (2.23-24, 26-31): esto es, con la incorporación en 4 Mac del ἀντίψυχος, el sustituto y sacrificio vicario. Hay algo “más” en 4 Mac como écfrasis —como una “pintura en palabras” horripilante y incómodamente verídica de las torturas incalificables y mortíferas de sus mártires— algo “más” que, más allá de re-presentar la resistencia salvífica de estos héroes, también ocasiona un “estremecimiento” en ellos que oyen de su fortaleza (17.7). Aquel “algo más”, como veremos, es la figura del ἀντίψυχος: una figura cuyo propio nombre, incluso, un cuasi-neologismo enigmático, revela su venida al texto de 4 Mac desde más allá del “campo propio” de la escritura, y de él del lenguaje en sí —su venida “a jugar, a lindar con, rozar, frotar, estrecharse contra el límite mismo e intervenir en el adentro” del texto (Derrida).

3.4. 4 Mac: de la écfrasis a la “deconstrucción”

En la medida en que los límites entre “adentro” y “afuera”, “historia verdadera” y “historia poética”, “obra” y “ornamento”, etc. están borrosos en 4 Mac, este texto se presta a un tipo de lectura en particular: el de la deconstrucción. O, para ser más
precisos, por el hecho de que sea una écfrasis en vez de un “mero” texto, una pintura (en palabras), según el sentido dado en 17.7 a las descripciones anteriores de los “más variados tormentos” de los mártires, 4 Mac le invita al lector que tenga en cuenta la manera peculiar por la cual el significado está (de)construido en este género en particular: por vía de la interrupción de lo que Krieger llama la “estética del signo natural”:

Hablando de la écfrasis... he señalado su origen en el deseo semiótico del signo natural, o lo que es el mismo, el deseo de tener el mundo capturado en la palabra... Es este deseo ingenuo el que nos lleva a preferir la inmediatez de la imagen a la mediación del código en nuestra búsqueda del referente tangible y “real” que haría que el signo fuera transparente. (1992: 7, 11; el subrayado es mío)  

Como ya hemos visto, a primera vista, la écfrasis parece facilitar tal deseo en su cualidad de descripción verosímil. Pero al examinarla minuciosamente, la naturaleza “suplente” de sus “suplementos”, el hecho de que los “añadidos descriptivos” de la écfrasis están profundamente insertos dentro de ella, desbarata tal enfoque. Realmente, 4 Mac funciona como un “adorno” a un “adorno” (2 Mac), como una representación de una representación. Como historia “poética”, es una redacción de la historia “verdadera” que ya ha sido contada en 2 Mac 3-7. Como écfrasis u ornamento, es la pintura (en palabras) de la “historia de tu piedad” mencionada en 4 Mac 17.7. Y como tales, en vez de romper todas las barreras entre el mundo y la palabra, como hemos supuesto anteriormente en comparar la écfrasis a una fotografía, en realidad presenta una multiplicidad de representaciones. En lugar de estar a un paso de la acción, como pretenden la obra de Jasón de Cirene, la de 2 Mac o la gran encáustica, sea mítica o no, 4 Mac está efectivamente a dos pasos —y aunque esto hace que sea más difícil de entender la obra es, en efecto, esta distancia duplicada lo que posibilita el programa de su autor. Distanciarse de la responsabilidad del historiador para “precisar cada suceso” y “examinar punto por punto” (2 Mac 2.28, 30) —esto es, distanciarse de los intereses temporales de los “relatos de la historia” (2 Mac 2.24)— permite al autor de 4 Mac concentrarse en consideraciones espaciales  

que, como ya hemos dicho, *son propias de la pintura*. Pero hay otro elemento más que hay que tener en consideración aquí, como Erickson explica:

... [S]i uno no *pone* esta representación doblemente distante [a saber, la écfrasis] contra el *telón de fondo* de un objeto fijo que hay “allí fuera”, pues, irónicamente, la representación ecfrástica ahora “corresponde” mejor a una realidad que no es representable en su totalidad (o, quizá, no representable de ninguna manera). La imagen ecfrástica es *un signo quasi-natural de un referente irrepresentable* en el sentido en que es un recordatorio de la contingencia y la artificialidad del signo natural. (2010: 150; el subrayado es mío)\textsuperscript{33}

Un “referente irrepresentable”: tal es, como argumentaremos en esta tesis, la realidad de la representación ecfrástica del ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac —del sustituto y sacrificio vicario *como pintado en palabras*. El autor de 4 Mac coge su pincel para “pintar” su historia con palabras (17.7), por extraño que parezca sin una superficie en particular en la cual hacerlo\textsuperscript{34} —el lector toma su posición como “espectador” (cf. 15.20)— y los dos se encuentran en medio de una escena de crueldad atroz. Pero retroceder ante el sufrimiento abismal de los mártires como hace Hadas y deSilva, por ejemplo, equivale a retirarse del texto completamente y negarse a decir nada sobre él. Porque lo abism-al aquí es el signo del *abismo* —del vacío entre el “mundo” y la “palabra”, como lo hemos expresado más arriba, o entre la “obra” y el “ornamento”, “texto” e “imagen”, etc.— que se va ensanchando cada vez más en las écfraseis de 4 Mac y en

\textsuperscript{32} Cf. sección ([2.2]) de esta Introducción más arriba. Para conocer más acerca de esto, véase Louvel 2011: 45-6: “La inserción o inclusión dentro del flujo de la narración de un objeto espacial —un escudo, una urna, una pintura [como en la écfrasis]— espacializa la narrativa, que es un arte temporal, y hace menos clara la distinción marcada que Lessing hizo entre la pintura como un arte espacial y la narrativa como un arte temporal”. En este punto de nuestra Introducción, es más, merece la pena anticiparnos algo para decir que la más importante de estas consideraciones espaciales que el autor de 4 Mac tiene en cuenta en su obra —o por lo menos a nuestro juicio— será la cuestión de la sustitución vicaria: una palabra derivada del latín, *substitutus*, “poner a alguien o algo en lugar de” (DRAE).

\textsuperscript{33} Nótese como Erickson recurre aquí al lenguaje del *lugar* (“pone”) y del “telón de fondo”, etc.

\textsuperscript{34} El hecho de que el verbo “pintar” en 17.7 no tenga objeto directo sigue desconcertando a los intérpretes, habiendo optado la mayor parte de ellos por concluir que el término “pintura” habría eventualmente desaparecido del texto (así, v.g., Anderson 1983: 2.562; Hadas 1953: 232-3). En el texto tal y como él se nos ha conservado, la acción de pintar recae sobre “algo” o “alguien”, y como tal sirve como una imagen llamativa del autor luchando con lo que hemos llamado aquí lo “irrepresentable” de su tema: la sustitución vicaria, el ἀντίψυχος, etc.
el cual está el ἀντίψυχος por encontrarse. La estructura textual de la mise en abyme\textsuperscript{35} que es tan “central” para las preocupaciones interpretativas de la “deconstrucción”\textsuperscript{36} es el reemplazamiento inevitable de la narrativa espacializada —como en un “texto” hecho “pintura” mediante las écfraseis— o, dicho de otra manera, el telón de fondo ineludible de lo irrepresentable en meras palabras (Krieger 1992; Kalas 2007: 47-8).

El ἀντίψυχος se cae, entonces, en el abismo después de que lo hacen los niños circuncisos y sus madres que son en cuanto tales anónimos, desconocidos, ignorados e inánimes (4 Mac 4.25): en resumen, indescriptibles y irrepresentables. Y volviendo a nuestra discusión acerca del ergon/párergon de más arriba: este abismo en 4 Mac en el cual tendremos que buscar los restos, las trazas, del ἀντίψυχος como “ornamento” —como “párergon”— no es otro que el “interior” de la obra que no está “ni simplemente afuera, ni simplemente adentro” (Derrida), ni simplemente “presente” ni simplemente “ausente”: o, en otras palabras, el término indecidible entre los polos opuestos de la “oposición binaria”\textsuperscript{37}.

Acabamos de ver cómo 4 Mac nos invita a seguir los irrepresentables del texto —los niños circuncisos y sus madres, y el ἀντίψυχος— y a adentrarnos con ellos en el abismo entre el mundo y la palabra que abre el texto como écfrasis o pintura en palabras. Y, como ya hemos afirmado y como veremos más detalladamente en la siguiente sección, este abismo es justamente el del término indecidible entre las

\textsuperscript{35} Este término —que literalmente significa “puesto en el abismo”— se usa en la teoría literaria para hacer referencia a un fragmento de un texto que refleja, de algún modo, el contenido del texto más largo del cual forma parte: de ahí que el abismo en el cual las mujeres y sus hijos caen en 4 Mac 4.25 refleje los sufrimientos abism-ales de los nueve mártires principales.

\textsuperscript{36} Kneale (2012: 107) tanto define el recurso de la mise en abyme como sugiere su relevancia en las estrategias “deconstructivas” de la lectura en la siguiente abreviación conveniente: “La expresión mise en abyme... significa la repetición en miniatura de un total dentro de sí mismo... Sea la clave al abismo en un texto una ambigüedad semántica, una etimología de doble cara, o una desviación tropológica... [es] la función del crítico [“deconstructivo”] enfrentarse a este problema, no para intentar resolver o neutralizarlo sino para reconocer el abismo como una característica inherente a un sistema arbitrario y diferencial del lenguaje”.

\textsuperscript{37} Estos dos conceptos —los del “término indecidible” y la “oposición binaria”— requieren una explicación detallada en esta coyuntura, dada la importancia inmensa que acabarán teniendo para nosotros en la argumentación de esta tesis. Más arriba hemos visto algo del modo en que, en el contexto de 4 Mac, no es una tarea sencilla separar a y distinguir entre ideas como “filosofía” y “violencia”, “tiempo” y “espacio”, “narrativa” y “descripción”, “yo” y “otro”, “judío” y “griego”, etc. A todos estos pares de categorías, y a otros parecidos a ellos —que, en teoría, están pensados a ser mutuamente exclusivos, “naturales” e “inevitables” pero de hecho están contaminados entre sí, “arbitrarios” y “artificiales” (Moore 2010a: 91-2 n. 18)— Derrida les da el nombre de las “oposiciones binarias de la metafísica” (1977: 54). Y para nombrar, por otro lado, los términos “entre” tales dicotomías —a fin de analizar fenómenos como la écfrasis, que hemos visto volviendo borroso cualquier límite marcado y definitivo entre la “narrativa” y la “descripción”, por ejemplo— Derrida utiliza el lenguaje de “una nervadura, un pliegue, un ángulo que interrumpan la totalización” en la crítica y la filosofía: el “re-pliegue”, en el texto, “de un indecidible” (1977: 61).
oposiciones binarias que el texto da por sentado —interior/exterior, presente/ausente, etc.— a las cuales la “metodología”, o más bien la “estrategia”, de la deconstrucción nos da acceso.

3.5. Metodología: “deconstrucción” y 4 Mac

Acabamos de decir que, en esta tesis, nos proponemos leer 4 Mac de una manera “deconstructiva”, para así entender mejor cómo funciona, textualmente, como una énfasis —como una serie de énfasis más modestas— o una “pintura en palabras” (17.7): como un “ornamento” decorativo a la “obra” principal de cronología o historia. Expresada sencillamente, nuestra hipótesis en este estudio es que, al acudir a la técnica retórica de la “descripción vivida” en pasajes como 6.1-30, 9.10-12.19, 15.12-22 y 17.7, sobre todo, el autor de 4 Mac se esfuerza en expresar algo inexpresable en palabras solamente —algo “más”, algo indefinible, de cuya naturaleza nada más sabemos al principio excepto que suscita un cierto estremecimiento en el espectador cuando se le trae a la vida “ante los ojos” de uno (οὐκ ἦν ἔφριττον οἱ θεωροῦντες ὁρῶντες: 17.7). La deconstrucción derrideana suministra una (anti)metodología sugestiva mediante la cual poner a prueba nuestra suposición, como veremos, en tanto que, como “práctica” de leer, nos alerta de la necesidad de prestar atención especial al modo en que el proceso de “significación” en el lenguaje depende de un elemento “indecidable”: el “espacio” entre los dos términos de la “oposición binaria” cuya lógica sintáctica —indescriptible por palabras solas— excede su contenido semántico o descriptivo. En esta tesis usaremos, por lo tanto, lo “indecidable” en el texto de 4 Mac para intentar abrir lo indecible —el estremecimiento— en la pintura de 4 Mac 17.7: la traza, o la “traza de la traza”, de la presencia del ἀντίψυχος.

38 Inspirados, como ya hemos advertido (sección [2.5]), por el trabajo de Lieu (2002).
3.5.1. Entre el “pasado” y el “futuro”: el ἀντίψυχος indecible como irrepresentable en el tiempo

Una de las revelaciones más duraderas de la estrategia de la lectura “deconstructiva” como promovida por Derrida es la de la ficción de la presencia del significado en el lenguaje: il n’y a pas de hors-texte, “no hay nada fuera del texto”, como corre su aforismo (in)famoso 40. De entrada, pues, si vamos a interpretar 4 Mac desde una perspectiva “deconstructiva”, parece que nos encontramos frente a un obstáculo insuperable. No sólo ni señalaría la palabra ἀντίψυχος, por ningún sendero directo, a ninguna realidad más “profunda” “detrás” de ese significante, sino también lo mismo resultaría para nosotros en esta tesis fuera lo que fuera la etiqueta que pusíéramos a los conceptos de “sustitución vicaria” y “expiación vicaria”: no habría ninguna manera de hacer aparecer estas ideas, o la “verdad” que significan, como presentes de modo inconfundible en ningún texto, sea éste 4 Mac, el estudio presente, o cualquier otro. Pero ya hemos aludido a una salida de nuestro dilema aquí, de hecho: una manera en la que podríamos salir adelante puede ser la de tirar del hilo suelto de lo temporal en 4 Mac —ya aflojado, como hemos visto, en el género esencialmente espacial de la écrasis 41— y de leer el ἀντίψυχος en la obra no como ir-re-presentable a la conciencia, en primer lugar —como concepto, por ejemplo— sino como irrepresentable en el tiempo. Estos dos modos de la ausencia del significado son de una sola pieza, desde luego —¿pues qué sería la ficción de su presencia en la significación si no la de su presencia en la significación en proximidad?— pero nuestra idea es que el cambio ligero de perspectiva cuadrará mejor con el caso

40 Entre las ilustraciones innumerables de este punto que Derrida facilita en su corpus figura la del fármacon en el Fedro de Platón. Sócrates aquí narra la historia de la presentación de la escritura por Zeuz, su inventor, a Zamus, el rey de Egipto, con la promesa de que “la memoria [μνήμη], así como la instrucción [σοφία], han hallado su remedio [φάρμακον]” (Fedr. 274e; citado en Derrida 2007b: 111, 143). El rey, no obstante, la recibe como “todo lo contrario” (τὸ ὑπαντίον), diciendo que “no es... para la memoria, sino para la rememoración para lo que tú has descubierto un remedio [οὗκους μνήμης ἄλλα ὑπομνήσιος φάρμακον ἡραίος]” (Fedr. 275a; citado en Derrida 2007b: 153). Pero ¿cómo puede ser que “todo lo contrario” del fármacon de Zeuz sea el fármacon de Zamus?, se pregunta Derrida. Y en pocas palabras, la idea a la que Derrida llega es que este significante “significa” o “señala hacia” nada en sí mismo —es decir, le hace presente al lector ningún significado inevitable— independiente del contexto en el cual la palabra se encuentra, y del autor que la habla o escribe. De ahí que el fármacon —una palabra que puede significar “remedio”, “receta”, “veneno”, “droga”, “filtro”, etc., pero cuyo valor preciso, como en el Fedro, nunca es patente en ningún texto (Derrida 2007b: 104-5) — sea un “indecidable” para Derrida: un arquetipo de la manera en que las palabras, o los significantes, significan en su perspectiva “postestructuralismo” (a saber, por relaciones de la différence): tanto diferenciándose de otros significantes, en su contexto, como disfiriendo, para su significado final, a un autor, hablante o “padre” quien ha asumido la responsabilidad por ellas: Derrida 2007b: 113).

41 Véase, por ejemplo, los comentarios de Louvel en la n. 32 más arriba.
particular de 4 Mac. El estremecimiento, por ejemplo, en el cual profundizaremos en esta tesis, es un nombre que Derrida (por vía de Barthes) da a una experiencia que no puede incorporarse a las ideas del “tiempo” que lo figuran como una sucesión de “presente/s” lineales:

Leo al mismo tiempo [en la fotografía]: eso va a ocurrir y eso ha ocurrido ya; observo con horror un futuro anterior donde la muerte es lo que está en juego. Al ofrecer el pasado perfecto de la exposición (aoristo), la fotografía me habla de la muerte en futuro. Lo que me impresiona es el descubrimiento de esta equivalencia. Ante la foto de mi madre cuando era una niña, me digo: va a morir; y tiemblo... por una catástrofe que ya ha tenido lugar. No importa que el sujeto haya muerto ya o no, toda fotografía representa esta catástrofe. (Barthes citado en Derrida 2005b: 82; subrayado original; cf. Barthes 1989: 146-7)

¿Puede el estremecimiento en 4 Mac 17.7, entonces, ser también un signo del “ahora” imposible expuesto por la fotografía —o, en nuestro caso, por la écfrasis como fotografía? Este “ahora” es “imposible” porque siempre señala hacia otro sitio: como dice Barthes, es la “presencia” o el “presente” como la “equivalencia”, o la división sin resto, del “eso va a ocurrir” en/entre el “eso ha ocurrido ya”. “Lo que ha ocurrido sólo una vez”, aquel “referente único e irremplazable”, aquel “referencial irreducible” (Derrida 1999: 85): esto es lo que permanece irrepresentable en un tiempo que, como metonimia, no deja de sustituir, siempre ya, un instante por otro. Y como con el lenguaje, también con el tiempo:

lo inexpresable en el lenguaje que ocasiona el giro

42 O, por otra parte, la conexión, mediante una lógica “deconstructiva”, entre el estremecimiento y lo irrepresentable en el tiempo —una relación que resultará decisiva para nosotros en esta tesis— podría hacerse recurriendo a la lectura de Derrida de Nietzsche, como explica Spivak: “Como Nietzsche sugiere, [la] necesidad de conseguir el poder por medio del definir antropomórfica [o sea, la “voluntad de poder”] obliga a la humanidad a crear una proliferación interminable de interpretaciones cuyo único “origen”, aquel estremecimiento en las cuerdas nerviosas, siendo un signo directo de la nada, llega a ningún significado primario” (1997: xxiii; el subrayado es mío). El “estremecimiento”, en otras palabras, sería un “signo” del origen final y irrepresentable de la cadena de la significación que sustituye “por la revelación de la verdad como una presentación de la cosa en sí misma” (Derrida, citado en Spivak) —pero como “un signo directo de la nada” él no tendría ni contenido lingüístico ni ideacional, propiamente dicho.

43 Hobson (1998: 122-5 [124]) nota también la resonancia entre la lectura de Derrida del tiempo de la fotografía aquí —es decir, como una estructura “que mantiene la referencia por división del referente”— y su lectura “deconstructiva” de textos más ampliamente: “En esta estructura, la repetibilidad de la escritura, la ‘iterabilidad’ de la ‘marca’, se alterna con el efecto de [el “ahora irrepetible en la significación y el tiempo]... [y] hace que surja... lo que está en sí mismo ‘fuera del marco’, ‘desenfocado’... esto es, el efecto viene del trabajo de composición, o de la negociación de una relación con, lo que es otro de forma irredimible, lo que es extra-(fotográfico)” (el subrayado es mío).
en 4 Mac, en primer lugar, de “obra” a “ornamento”, texto a imagen, historia a écfrasis, etc., continuando así con respecto a todas las demás oposiciones binarias en el escrito—a saber, el ἀντίψυχος como párrergon—se revela, de ese modo y a través de la reaparición del estremecimiento, de ser el “ahora”, lo irrepresentable en el tiempo. El ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac como inexpresable en el lenguaje porque irrepresentable en el tiempo: nuestro fin en esta tesis será el de comprobar esta hipótesis contra la lógica de las dicotomías conceptuales en el texto.

Ya hemos dicho que uno de los aspectos más interesantes de 4 Mac es la naturaleza extraña del tiempo de la obra. DeSilva (1998: 21-2), por ejemplo, se detiene en las implicaciones para la mise en scène de la obra del autor continuamente rompiendo la “cuarta pared” del escrito al agarrar a sus lectores en discurso directivo e imperativo —en su exhortación que ahora “prestéis la máxima atención al razonamiento”, por ejemplo (4 Mac 1.1b; cf. 14.11, 13; 16.5; 18.1; etc.), y en sus recursos a “la presente ocasión” (3.19; cf. 1.10), etc. Sean o no estas formas retóricas evidencia que 4 Mac fue pensado como una declamación oral —la pregunta manifiesta de deSilva aquí— sí demuestran la manera en que los planos temporales de los diferentes mundos de los héroes, autor, y oyentes de la obra vienen a converger y cruzarse. “Incluso ahora”, escribe nuestro autor, “nosotros nos estremecemos al escuchar la tribulación de aquellos jóvenes” (14.9): la observación es que este “ahora” de 4 Mac podría también nombrar, con la misma facilidad, cualquiera de las experiencias de vivir, escribir o escuchar la historia o todas éstas conjuntamente.

¿Tiene algo que ver entonces esta entremezclarse de las dimensiones del tiempo de 4 Mac con el ἀντίψυχος: esto es, con el “ornamento” espacial al texto de suma importancia —párrergon por écfrasis— que la “obra” temporal de la narrativa histórica

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Todo esto vendría a decir que aunque lo inexpresable en el lenguaje y el irrepresentable en el tiempo son, como tales, inasibles al final en su totalidad, no están ausentes de la página (o impresión) totalmente, sino que dejan una marca que le permite a uno intuir algo de su “realidad” más amplia.

44 Esto es, ¿quienes exactamente somos los “nosotros” aquí? El “estremecimiento” de la experiencia directa (“ahora”) del sonido de los sufrimientos de los mártires podría ser, posiblemente, el de los mismos mártires (como, por ejemplo, los mártires “que se quedaban atrás” que no estuvieron sacudidos por los llantos de los que fueron “sacados a rastras”, 13.18; cf. 15.21), el del mismo autor (habiéndose enterado de la historia de Jasón de Cirene o de 2 Mac, cf. v.g. 17.14-16), y/o el de los mismos oyentes de 4 Mac (por la apariencia del presente versículo, 14.19). Este “ahora” extraño de 4 Mac —indeterminado, indecidible y, por aquella razón, también irrepresentable— sería análogo, por lo tanto, al “ahora” irrepresentable de la fotografía que, como hemos visto, puede ser o el de su sujeto, el de su ejecutor o el de su espectador (véase Barthes anteriormente).
tiene que acomodar? En primer lugar, consideremos (una traducción literal y, por tanto, basta de) 4 Mac 6.26-30, la primera apariencia del sustituto y sacrificio vicario en nuestro texto:

... Pero [Eleazar], habiendo sido abrasado [κατακεκαυμένος] ya [ἡδὴ] hasta [μέχρι] los huesos y estando a punto de [μέλλων] morir, elevó [Ἀνέτεινα] los ojos a Dios y dijo [ἐπιθεν], “Tú has sabido [οἶσθα], Dios, que ha estado en mi mano salvarme [παρόν μοι σώζεσθαι], aunque muera [ἀποθνῄσκο] en estos tormentos de fuego a causa de la ley... Haz [ποίησον] que mi sangre los purifique y recibe [λαβέ] mi alma como rescate [Ἀντίψυχον] por ellos...” (6.26-27, 29; traducción del autor)

Aquí “habiendo sido”, “ya”, “hasta” (μέχρι)45, “a punto de”, “a mano” (παρόν)46, etc. sirven como tantas circunlocuciones —metonimias o écfraseis— por el “ahora” del ἀντίψυχος que, como como opinamos en nuestra hipótesis de más arriba, es el último lugar irrepresentable. Otra manera de comprender esto sería preguntar cuándo, precisamente, Eleazar, o los otros mártires, realmente se convierten en el ἀντίψυχος, el sustituto y sacrificio victorio: a base de 6.26-30, por lo menos, estaría en algún momento —indecidable, irrepresentable— entre el perfecto “habiendo sido” y el subjuntivo “muera”, entre el presente “estando a punto de” y el orientado-al-futuro “recibe mi alma”. Pero a este “ahora” del ἀντίψυχος nunca se le llama por este nombre en 4 Mac, excepto por écfraseis extrañas como éstas en 6.26-30; esto se debe comparar con la facilidad de nuestro autor en declarar el “ahora” (νῦν) de la demostración exitosa de su tesis después de los informes de Eleazar (6.33) y los hermanos (13.3; cf. 1.12; 3.19), el “ahora” (vōv) de los “sufrimientos más amargos” resistidos por la madre (15.16), y el “ahora” (vōv) de la presencia de los mártires “junto al trono divino” (17.18). Y es que estas écfraseis nada usuales del “ahora” del ἀντίψυχος se repiten en 17.17-22, la segunda y última apariencia de éste en nuestra obra (de nuevo en una traducción literal y poco elegante):

45 Tal como refleja el castellano, además de ser una preposición de lugar —traducido como tal por López Salvá en 4 Mac 6.26— μέχρι también puede ser una preposición de tiempo: “¿cuánto?”, “hasta que”, “hasta el fin de”, etc. Véase LSJ: s.v.
46 La traducción de López Salvá de 4 Mac 6.27a —“... Tú sabes, Dios, que habría podido salvarme...”— mantiene el sentido impersonal de la estructura del πάραμι + dativo en el griego: “depende de mí, está en mi poder hacer”, etc. (LSJ: s.v.). También proporciona justificación adicional para nuestra decisión de traducir ἀποθνῄσκο en 6.27b en el subjuntivo en vez del indicativo.
El mismo tirano y todo el consejo quedaron maravillados [ἐθαύμασαν] de su perseverancia, gracias a la cual se han quedado de pie [παρεστήκασιν] ahora [νῦν] junto al trono divino y viven [βιωθέσιν] la bienaventurada eternidad. Dice Moisés: “Habiendo sido hecho santificados [ἡγιασμένοι], todos [πάντες] los santos [están47] bajo tus manos [ὑπὸ τὰς χεῖρὰς σου]”. Y ellos, que al haber hecho santificados [ἁγιασθέντες] por causa de Dios, han sido honrados [τετίμηνται], no sólo con este honor, sino también con el de lograr que los enemigos no dominaran [μὴ ἐπικρατήσαι] a nuestro pueblo, que el tirano fuera castigado [τιμωρηθήναι] y nuestra patria purificada [καθαρισθῆναι]: habiéndose convertido [γεγονότας], sea cómo fuere [ὅσπερ], en un rescat [ἀντίψυχον] por los pecados de nuestro pueblo. Por la sangre de aquellos justos... la divina providencia salvó [διέσωσεν] al antes malvado [προκακωθέντα] Israel... (17.17-22; traducción del autor)

Aquí en estos versículos la única traza del “ahora” elusivo del ἀντίψυχος —de nuevo, entre el perfecto, el aoristo, etc.— está en el “ahora” de la “bienaventurada eternidad” (τὸν μακάριον βιοθήναι αἰώνα): un estado que veremos en esta tesis es un indecible —y de ahí irrepresentable— debido a la disyunción entre νῦν —propio del tiempo de χρόνος— y αἰών —la “eternidad” que, por definición, no puede admitir ningún “ahora”48. Este tiempo irrepresentable del ἀντίψυχος, pues, se capturaría de modo ambiguo, de modo ecfrástico, en el anuncio de los mártires “habiéndose convertido” en el sustituto vicario en el tiempo totalmente indeterminado del “sea cómo fuere” (ὅσπερ). Y el subjuntivo mixto extraño aquí —subjuntivo del presente de primera o tercera persona singular, subjuntivo del futuro de las mismas personas— podría mantenerse, de hecho, en el griego si leyéramos el sentido temporal de ὡς- (con el intensificador -περ): algo del estilo de “hasta que” por “como si fueron...”, “sirvieron de...”...[Τ]περ ἀντίψυχον γεγονότας, “habiéndose convertido... en un ἀντίψυχος, hasta que...” —¿hasta qué? “Hasta que” el “ahora” pase: el ἄν ("¿cuándo?", “¿qué?”), y el τι (“¿quién?”; “¿cuál?”; “cualquier/a”), del ἀντίψυχος.

47 En esta cita exacta de Dt 33.3 (LXX: Anderson 1983: 2.563 n. d), el verbo “estar” —o en el tiempo presente o de cualquier otro modo— está ausente en el griego.
48 Véase el Capítulo 3 de esta tesis más abajo sobre las nociones del Aion, Chronos y Kairos en 4 Mac.
3.5.2. El “ahora” irrepresentable en la pintura de la “historia de tu piedad”:

escribir, pintar y re/inscribir el ἀντίψυχος

Lógicamente, por lo tanto, si no cronológicamente, “antes de” ser irrepresentable —o quizás por esta razón— el ἀντίψυχος es una pregunta, una duda: ¿vida de quién —qué vida— cuándo —por quién? ¿De qué manera, entonces, imagina el autor de 4 Mac plantear esta pregunta —esta duda— en la ficción de la naturaleza muerta de 17.7-10? ¿Nos puede dar algunas pistas su pintura (en palabras), su écfrasis, del ἀντίψυχος, cuestión irrepresentable del “ahora”, acerca de cómo escribir esta persona o hacerla presente —tarea que podríamos haber considerado imposible, después de Derrida? Aunque nuestro escriba revela muy poco de su pensamiento sobre estos asuntos en los versículos que acabamos de mencionar, sí tenemos, en sus palabras, más que suficiente como para intentar a responder a nuestras preguntas:


“Aquí [ἐνταῦθα] yacen [ἐγκεκρήτωται] un anciano sacerdote, una mujer cargada de años y siete jóvenes...” (4 Mac 17.7-9; traducción del autor)

49 Esta expresión —ausente en el griego, si bien inferido por Townshend (1913: 2.683) a base de ἐπί, en su sentido de “en el estilo de”, y siguiéndole a él también López Sálval— Anderson (1983: 2.562 n. b) la considera “algo forzada”, especialmente a la luz del hecho de que “[e]l griego no tiene ninguna palabra por “cuadro”, sino lee literalmente “como en alguien” o “como en algo (tuyo)”. A lo largo de esta tesis pensamos mucho con esta ausencia aparente de una superficie para la pintura del ἀντίψυχος, y concluiremos, para anticiparnos algo, que esto lo tiene todo que ver con la naturaleza irrepresentable del sustituto y sacrificio vicario.

50 Ausente en el griego, que tiene ποικίλας βασιλίους con ningún indicio concreto respecto a quién(es) exactamente sufrieron/eron estos “más variados tormentos”.

51 De nuevo, ausente en el griego pero añadido aquí a base de la presencia de λεγόμενα: es decir, que tiene que haber palabras a las cuales referiría este “decir” o “contar”.

52 Prefiriendo la lectura alternativa facilitada en la NRSV (en inglés) porque comprende mejor el sentido del τοῖς ἀπὸ.
La clave de esta perícope en su conjunto, sostenemos aquí, es que la pintura (en palabras) del ἀντίψυχος —pintura del ahora irrepresentable— está destinada a ocasionar un estremecimiento (φρίκη) —un estremecimiento de incertidumbre (ἀντίψυχος)— en los que la ven (οἱ θεωροῦντες). No sólo nos proporcionaría este estremecimiento una manera convincente de leer ἡξίων, “posible”, al principio de la frase inicial —“si nos fuera posible” en el sentido de que si nuestro tema fuera representable53 — sino que también ese sentido de “posibilidad”, o representabilidad, nos daría un eco imprevisto entre ἡξίων en el v. 7 y ἡξίου en el v. 8: puesto que (καὶ γάρ) no es posible (ἡξίων) pintar (ζωγραφέω) el ἀντίψυχος, declaramos que sea una especie de puente conceptual —un axioma (ἄξιον)54— inscribirlo (ἀναγράφω) en cambio. Pero por qué razón debería de ser más de fiar ἀναγράφω que ζωγραφέω, o bien, que γράφω? O expresado de otro modo: ¿por qué abriría este inscribir la posibilidad —por fin— de poder representar el ἀντίψυχος irrepresentable cuando la pintura y la escritura no han podido hacerlo? El secreto, sugerimos aquí, se encuentra en el aspecto de la crónica al ἀναγράφο55: o, de ser más precisos, en su manera de

53 Seguimos en esto la interpretación de Anderson (1983: 2.562 n. b), quien, haciendo un comentario sobre la traducción de 17.7a en Townshend 1913: 2.683, escribe: “La traducción de Townshend [“Y si nos fuera licito pintar...”]... implica que lo que está en juego aquí es la interpretación de nuestro autor del segundo mandamiento como prohibiendo todas las formas de arte pictórico. Por otro lado, no obstante, tenemos que tomar en cuenta no sólo el hecho de que el helenismo hacía mucho con el arte pictórico y la analogía, y que 4 Mac está impregnado con influencias helenísticas, sino también que la pintura religiosa en la sinagoga en Dura Europus cerca de Antioquia... muy probablemente indiquen que la representación pictórica entre los judíos fuera posible incluso en una etapa considerablemente más temprana [es decir, antes del siglo III EC]. De ahí que nuestra traducción del v. 7 [“Si nos fuera posible pintar...] supone nada más que nuestro autor considera que la escena de los martirios en su conjunto es t... implica que lo que está en juego aquí es la inter... 54 Boisecq (1916: s.v.) proporcional la siguiente etimología de ἀξίος: pone de manifiesto la inadecuación de traducirlo en 17.8 sólo como “convendría” (López Salvá), “conveniente”, “apropiado” (Anderson 1983: 2.562), “oportuno”, etc. sin ningún comentario más: “litt. qui entraîne par son poids, qui est de poids”, d’où ‘qui vaut’; qui mérite, digne de; qui en vaut la peine’; ἀξίος ‘évaluer, apprécier; juger digne; juger convenable; prétendre’. Cf. άγατο ‘entraîner par son poids, peser, évaluer, estimer, apprécier’, lat. agina ‘châsses d’une balance’ exagium ‘pesage’ exāmen ‘languette d’une balance’...”; “[A]xios”, por lo tanto, “representa agitos, ‘lo que tira o arrastra con su peso, que se lleva su propio peso’” (Patridge 2002: s.v.), y el ἀντίψυχος, sostenemos aquí, se convierte en un axios o un axioma —esto es, “lo que se lleva su propio peso” como un concepto, en la escritura y el argumento escrito de 4 Mac— por vía de una técnica no de escribir (γράφω) o de pintar (ζωγραφέω) sino de anagraphe (ἀναγράφω) en cambio. Más abajo sugeriremos cómo exactamente viene esto a suceder.

55 Una acepción común de la palabra ἀναγραφή, tal como en, por ejemplo, la crónica de Hipias de Eldio de los vencedores olímpicos (su Ολυμπιονικόν ἀναγραφή; Christesen 2005). Pero, como señala Voegelin, muy a menudo ἀναγραφή importa más que una simple “lista”, como en el caso de la “novela” o “utopía” que es la Ἱερά ἀναγραφή de Evémero: “[Es] muy probable que la frase sacra historia haya penetrado en el vocabulario occidental del uso egipcio [de la frase hiera anagraphe], meditada por la Hiera Anagraphe de Evémero y la traducción latina de ésta...” (2002: 131-5 [134-5]).
repasar, de nuevo (ἀνα-), “lo que sucede” —su modo de escribir (γράφω) el evento dos veces, o de escribir en paralelo⁵⁶.

En 17.9 el autor de 4 Mac, por primera vez en su texto, es capaz de señalar el “aquí” de sus mártires como ἀντίψυχος, el “aquí” del “ahora” anunciado por el escalofrío del terror y deleite simultáneos: “Aquí [ἐνταῦθα] yacen...”. Esto hace, como ya hemos sugerido, por medio de una práctica de escritura que llama anagráfía (ἀναγράψαι, 17.8). Por un lado, entonces, el “aquí” de 4 Mac 17.9 se refiere al lugar del entierro (real o imaginado) del “anciano sacerdote”, la “mujer cargada de años” y los “siete jóvenes”: un significado posible de ἀναγράφω es “grabar y mostrar públicamente”, “instalar un pilar que tiene una inscripción”, etc. (LSJ: s.v.). “Ellos vengaron a nuestro pueblo con la mirada puesta en Dios y resistiendo las torturas hasta la muerte” (17.10), otra acepción posible: “reducir a una fórmula o prescripción” (cf. Hipócrates, Decent. 9). Pero ἀναγράφω tiene por lo menos un sentido más que desestabilizaría la idea de que las palabras de 4 Mac 17.8-10 sólo funcionaran como una inscripción en un sepulcro:

“... Porque yo [Apolonio] imagino que vosotros [egipcios] podríais haber construido templos para ellos [los dioses]... sin haber introducido ninguna imagen [de ellos; ἀγάλμα δὲ μὴ ἐσφέρειν], dejando que los que frecuentaban los templos [imaginaran⁵⁷] las imágenes de los dioses; ya que la mente [ἡ γνώμη] puede, más o menos, dibujar [ἀναγράφει] a los dioses y figurarlos [ἀνατυποῦται] mejor [κρεῖττον] que ningún artista [δημιουργίας]; pero vosotros habéis privado a los dioses el privilegio de la belleza [τὸν καλὸν] tanto del ojo exterior [ὁρᾶσθαι] como de la intuición interior [ὑπονοοῦσθαι]...” (Filóstrato, Vit. Apoll. 6.19; traducción del autor del griego original en Conybeare 1912: 2.80)

En el preludio a este pasaje en particular el filósofo Apolonio de Tiana ha estado criticando la costumbre “egipcia” —respaldada por su interlocutor Tespesio— de representar los dioses como animales “mudos” y “inútiles”, y defendiendo, en cambio, la práctica “griega” “muy honorable” y “muy piadosa” de representarlos de

⁵⁶ Como veremos en más detalle en la sección [3.5.3] a continuación.
⁵⁷ Ausente en el griego pero necesario —discutiblemente— para que tenga sentido en castellano.
modo antropomórfico. “[E]l sabio explica que la apuesta... es cuestión de principios:... como seres de un plano ontológico más bajo que el humano, los animales son, fundamentalmente, poco adecuados como para servir como modelos para la representación divina” (Kindt 2012: 172). 

No tener ninguna imagen de los dioses sería mejor que tener sólo formas divinas zoomórficas, arguye Apolonio, puesto que:

... la [i]imaginación [φαντασία]... [es], con mucho, una artista más sabia y más sutil [σοφότερα... δημιουργός] que la imitación [μιμήσεως], puesto que la imitación sólo puede crear lo que ha visto [ὁ εἶδος], mientras que la imaginación puede crear también [δὲ καὶ] lo que no ha visto [ὅ μὴ εἶδον]; la imitación concibe su ideal [ὑποθῆσεται] con referencia [πρὸς τὴν ἀναφοράν] a la realidad [τοῦ ὄντος], y se muestra, a menudo, desconcertada [ἐκκρούει] por terror [ἐκκληλήξεις], mientras que la imaginación nunca lo está, sino que marcha [χωρεῖ] inquebrantable [ἀνέκπληκτος] y por sí misma hacia la meta que ella misma se ha trazado [ὑπέθετο]... (Vit. Apoll. 6.19; traducción del autor del griego original en Conybeare 1912: 2.78)

La anagrafía, por lo tanto, en este “otro” sentido que Filóstrato ve a Apolonio usándola58, sería una técnica (junto con su concepto hermano, la anatipografía: ἀνατυπόω) para representar lo “augusto” (σεμνόν) y lo “imponente” (ἐμφοβον) hacia los cuales tanto el zoomorfismo como el antromorfismo —en palabras o en imágenes— sólo señalan o dan en perder totalmente. Y al objeto de avanzar un paso más: la “anagrafía” de 4 Mac 17.8-10 serviría, según nuestra lectura, no sólo como un epitafio en un sepulcro sino también como una imagen imaginaria —o mejor quizás, una imagen fantasmática— de una “realidad” arrolladora y misteriosa que, de la misma manera que esta misma “realidad”, tanto “se ve” como (δὲ καὶ) “no se ve”, tanto “aquí” como no “aquí” (ὁπο-θήσεται, from ὑπο-τίθημι). Aquella “realidad” sería nada más que el mismo ἀντίψυχος: pero mientras que la mimesis de la pintura de 4 Mac 17.7 habrá sido atacada (ἐκκρούει) por el “terror” (ἐκκληλήξεις) —el terror del estremecimiento que, como hemos visto, anuncia el “ahora” y “aquí” irrepresentables del sustituto y sacrificio vicario sin ser coextensivo con el uno o el otro— la

58 Cf. Vit. Apoll. 7.14, donde Apolonio dice que “la conciencia [ξύνεσιν]... trajo ante Orestes y representó en su imaginación [ἀνέγραφεν] las formas [τὰ... εἴδη] de las Euménides, cuando se había vuelto enojado con cólera contra su madre...” (traducción del autor del griego original en Conybeare 1912: 2.188).
imaginación, mediante la anagrafía, “marcha inquebrantable” (χωρεῖ... ἀνέκπληκτος) directamente a (πρός) esta proposición imposible (ὑπ-ἔθετο). En el frío perfil de las letras grabadas en la estela de 17.9-10, el autor de 4 Mac “d/escribiría” el ἀντίψυχος como una figura geométrica (cf. v.g. Platón, Men. 83b) —a diferencia de una estrictamente “literaria” y métrica— y le dejaría al lector, u oyente, que lo imaginara y llenara los vacíos, en la misma manera en que Aristóteles —habiendo esbozado el contorno (περιγεγράφθω) del Bien— estuvo contento de dejárselo a otro “llenarlo después” (ὑστερον ἀναγράψαι; Eth. nic. 1098a17) 59.

3.5.3. De la “anagrafía” a la “anagrammaticalidad”

Una inscripción o un recurso impresionista a la imaginación parecen oportunos, pero aún nos hace falta una manera de hacer un uso concreto de la “anagrafía” —esta técnica nebulosa de invocación sugestiva— en el contexto muy particular y muy riguroso de esta tesis. De esta idea, de esta palabra —anagrafía— es sólo un pequeño paso léxico a “anagrammaticalidad”, otra idea que Derrida usa en su lectura deconstructiva”. En base esta palabra denota, en realidad, un caso especial de la indecidibilidad de todo lenguaje que notamos más anteriormente 60 —el modo en que la palabra fármacon en el Fedro, por ejemplo, contiene ecos de otras palabras (v.g. pharmakeus, “hechicero”; pharmakos, “chivo expiatorio”) que, en sus resonancias, se inmiscuyen en los senderos de la significación y la interpretación (Johnson 2004: xxvi) 61 —pero para Wills (2005: 39) la idea de la “anagrammaticalidad” tiene un cierto corte ético del cual carece el juego libre aparentemente anárquico de la “indecidibilidad”:

El tránsito por la aporía de lo... indecidible está... marcado por la sorpresa de una especie de anagrama conceptual, invirtiendo los términos (pero de tal manera que los desplaza para siempre) de lo que puede parecer una insistencia lógica. No es ninguna sorpresa, por tanto, encontrar una experiencia del abismo... 60

59 Estas dos acepciones de ἀναγράφω —a saber, “describir líneas y figuras matemáticamente” y “llenar contornos”— se han tomado de LSJ: s.v.
60 Véase la n. 40 más arriba.
61 El lector notará, entonces, que para Derrida el trabajo del anagrama va más allá de lo que su definición en un diccionario parecerá admitir: esto es, es más que una nueva palabra formada por una transposición simple y literal de las letras de otra.
ético en la obra de Derrida que corre en paralelo con —a la vez que lo reescribe— su análisis del abismo párergonal en la estética de Kant.

Pero, ¿cómo exactamente conduce a “una experiencia del abismo ético” esta inversión de los términos de la “insistencia lógica” que hace que éstos sean irreconocibles? Si re-sitúo y re-contextualizo, dice Wills, los polos de la oposición binaria, digamos, tal como puedo re-ordenar las letras de una palabra para formar un anagrama, no hay manera en que pueda saber por adelantado la forma que esta dicotomía, o esta palabra, tomará cuando haya terminado. La revelación imprevista de la paronomasia o juego de palabras, pues, se aproximaria a una exposición a, o de, el Otro inexpresable e irrepresentable en el texto —y “[e]s sólo al mantener la alteridad absoluta en juego que... se pueden desarrollar relaciones sobre la base de las formas del respeto humano mutuo”, en vez de sobre las de lealtades homicidas del Yo (Wills 2005: 36-40 [37, 39]). Pasar re-vista a las oposiciones binarias en 4 Mac, luego, re-situarlas por medio de la lógica deconstructiva y “anagramática” —siguiendo así el autor de la obra quien re-divisa y re-funde su texto (y pintura) por anagrafía en 17.7-1062— y re-labrarlas por sus implicaciones éticas: así será la tarea que nos espera en cada capítulo de esta tesis mientras vamos tratando de traernos el ἀντίψυχος al blanco de la mirada. O, para expresar nuestro objetivo en términos de la cita de Blanchot que hemos tomado para tanto el título como el epígrafe de este estudio: nuestro trabajo será el de contraescribir por “anagramaticalidad”, en un contralenguaje nunca inscrito pero siempre prescrito, la (contra)visión de lo ético en 4 Mac representada por la contravida, el ἀντίψυχος —buscando siempre entender las muertes trágicas y horribles de los nueve mártires de la obra en toda su incalificable, aplastante “pesadez desastrosa”.

4. La ocasión, el objetivo y el contenido de la tesis

4.1. La ocasión y el objetivo

La búsqueda del ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac, de la cual esta tesis se ocupará, consistirá, pues, en la búsqueda de las diferencias, de las oposiciones binarias —o, más

62 Esto es, llevándole al lector/espectador de la obra de un “ver” casual (ὀρῶντες, 17.7), a un “mirar” más involucrado y intencionado (θε-ὀρῶντες, 17.7) y finalmente a una in-spección imaginativa, iconográfica, “estere-óptica” y anagráfica (ἀφ-ὀρῶντες, 17.10).
específicamente, de los términos olvidados, desaprovechados y *indecidibles* de estas últimas—mediante las cuales el autor y lector de la obra, deliberadamente o no, tratan de concebir el concepto que él vehicula. Sin embargo, antes de avanzar en esta sección y exponer los hitos mediante los cuales marcaremos nuestro recorrido, necesitamos anticipar algunas palabras sobre la ocasión específica que ha dado origen a nuestro trabajo.

En nuestra sección metodológica más arriba mencionamos que, en primer lugar, los hilos sueltos de sentido en 4 Mac que se enredan alrededor de las oposiciones binarias del texto—de ese modo llamándonos la atención—son invitaciones irresistibles a *leer*. Es vital enfatizar esto, y asegurarnos que nos preparemos a disfrutar de ellas como lectores ante todo, en vez de acometerlas como problemas interpretativos por resolver. No obstante, en segundo lugar, es importante reconocer que hasta una lectura superficial de 4 Mac suscita ciertas cuestiones con las cuales el lector tiene que trabar en una lucha difícil y prolongada. En realidad, un desafío de este tipo nos lleva al grano de este estudio: ¿Cómo puede una minoría (Eleazar, los hermanos, su madre) sustituir a la mayoría (Israel) en 4 Mac (de donde la noción de sustitución vicaria), y asumir un castigo de Dios que no es personal sino colectivo (expiación vicaria)? Tales ideas nos parecen completamente foráneas, situados como estamos más acá de la Ilustración, así que tenemos que estar en guardia para no rechazar ninguna interpretación por el simple hecho de que ella pueda comprometer nuestras preconcepciones habituales.

Haciendo un comentario sobre la cuarta Canción del Siervo en Isaías 53—un texto que no carece de conexión con 4 Mac—Hofius refleja bien el miedo del Otro que excluye el mismo proyecto que proponemos desarrollar aquí:

La exégesis que se preocupa por la veracidad de los textos hace frente aquí al problema de si la sustitución existencial descrita en la Canción puede

63 Croy (1998: 105-6) resume bien el paralelo más importante entre 4 Mac e Is 53 que tenemos que tener en cuenta en esta tesis: en ambos texto, sostiene, “la noción del sufrimiento vicario está relacionada con el sufrimiento punitivo en el sentido en que se supone el pecado, pero la primera diverge con el entendimiento punitivo tradicional en que la víctima y el pecador no son la misma persona” (106). Por esta razón Croy concluye que “[una] subcategoría significante de lo punitivo” en el judaísmo del segundo templo—“o quizás un tipo [de sufrimiento] en sí mismo”—“era [el] sufrimiento expiatorio representado en Isaías 53 y 4 Macabeos” (ibid.: 216).
considerarse como posible de alguna manera. ¿Es imaginable que una persona sufra sustitucionariamente [sic] el castigo que otros merecen en justicia? ¿Son la culpabilidad y el castigo transferibles de una persona a otra?... En el campo legal la culpabilidad personal no lo es; el castigo que una persona ha de cumplir no puede, bajo ningún concepto, asumirse sustitucionariamente [sic], ni puede ser expiada su culpa por otra persona. Sin embargo las consideraciones bíblicas y teológicas también plantean la cuestión... (2004: 168; el subrayado es original)

Aunque Hofius formula aquí una serie de cuestiones que parecen, a primera vista, coincidir con aquellas de las que nos ocuparemos, lo hace de un modo escasamente útil. Pues sucumbir, de entrada, a los criterios de lo “cierto”, lo “posible”, lo “concebible”, lo “legal”, las consideraciones “bíblicas y teológicas”, etc. es obliterar ab initio lo diferente, el Otro del que el sentido depende, según hemos visto ya. El hecho de que Hofius (2004: 168 n. 27) recurra en la misma página a Kant sirve para poner de manifiesto la naturaleza en el fondo interesada de sus argumentos. Como Janowski demuestra, Kant elabora la cuestión de la sustitución, en un ensayo fundamental para buena parte del pensamiento alemán moderno y contemporáneo, “La religión dentro de los límites de la mera razón”, “desde una perspectiva muy particular acerca de la humanidad, a saber, desde el axioma de la no representabilidad del sujeto”64. Resumiendo, la crítica que está por hacer aquí es que Hofius traiciona su texto al reivindicar una aplicabilidad universal para lo que responde, en realidad, a una interpretación muy limitada del mismo —constreñido como el estudioso está por una ortodoxia política y jurisprudencial muy moderna que no cuadra con los tiempos, lugares y contenidos de los textos que estudia.

A diferencia de Hofius, aunque sea injusto señalarle en particular, ya que el tipo de pensamiento que él ejemplifica es recurrente en la reflexión exegética y teológica sobre la idea de la sustitución, a lo largo de nuestra investigación intentaremos poner

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en evidencia los peligros de optar por atar(nos) a los hilos sueltos de 4 Mac de una única manera. Nuestro interés no se centra sólo en la clase de cuestiones que Hofius plantea, sino, justamente, en lo que quizá deba conceptuarse como lo incierto, lo imposible, lo ilegal en relación con el ἄντιψυχος. Esto no significa que podamos ir más allá de nuestro tiempo, entorno y suposiciones, ni que pretendamos superar a Hofius y a otros pensadores afines a él. Simplemente queremos decir que, al abordar un escrito no canónico como 4 Mac desde una perspectiva crítico-literaria en lugar de teológica debemos liberarnos de todo nuestro bagaje ideológico y explorar algunas de las consecuencias más inquietantes del proceso de construcción de sentido en el texto.

4.2. El contenido

En esta tesis, entonces, iremos en búsqueda del ἄντιψυχος de 4 Mac (6.27-29; 17.19-22), la figura excepcional en cuya persona se encuentra la totalidad de la teología de la sustitución y expiación vicarias de su autor. Este reconocimiento ya ha sido conceptualizado como una búsqueda para aquella figura en tanto que destaca frente al telón de fondo de 4 Mac como píntura: una imagen cuyo juego de claros y oscuros —texto y margen, lo “adentro” y lo “afuera”, obra y ornamento, crónica exhaustiva e historia popular, etc.— esconde una multitud de otras oposiciones binarias que, al leerse “deconstructivamente”, revelarán en negativo la silueta del ἄντιψυχος. Por lo tanto, cada uno de los capítulos del presente trabajo tomará como su punto de partida la identificación de una oposición binaria en el texto, los polos de las cuales luego se “invertirán” y se “desplazarán” según la estrategia de la lectura deconstructiva65. Por último, en un intento de hacernos un panorama más amplio de las implicaciones de la recuperación del Otro excluido, recurriremos, capítulo por capítulo, a algunos tratamientos de oposiciones parecidas en la literatura, la filosofía, la historia, la teología, y sobre todo, la ética. Estas lecturas sugerirán maneras nuevas e intrigantes a

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65 En un texto sugestivo que reúne las facetas de la lectura “deconstructiva” —“indecidibilidad” o el “término indecidible”, la “oposición binaria”, etc.— que sólo hemos tenido la oportunidad, llegado este punto de esta Introducción, de discutir un tanto oblicuamente, Derrida resume la “doble ciencia” de su deconstrucción en los siguientes términos: “...[P]or una parte, atravesar una fase de inversión... Deconstruir la oposición significa, en un momento dado, invertir la jerarquía [...] Dicho esto —y por otra parte— permanecer en esta fase todavía es operar sobre el terreno y en el interior de un sistema deconstruidos. También es necesario... marcar... la emergencia irruptiva [o “desplazamiento”] de un nuevo “conceitoso”, concepto de lo que no se deja ya, no se ha dejado nunca, comprender en el régimen anterior... [éstos conceptos] los he llamado indecidibles... que ya no se pueden incluir en la oposición (binaria) filosófica pero que, no obstante, ocupan la oposición filosófica, resistiéndola y desorganizándola, sin constituir nunca un tercer término...” (1977: 54-6; el subrayado es original).
partir de las cuales entender el ἀντίψυχος y las nociones de sustitución vicaria y de expiación vicaria en 4 Mac.

4.2.1. Capítulo 1: Entre lo “judío” y lo “griego”: lo “egipcio”

Aunque está claro que 4 Mac contiene elementos tanto “judíos” como “griegos” —como serían, por ejemplo, el modo en que está dirigido a los “israelitas” (18.1; cf. 9.6, 18; etc.) y su enfoque en el cultivo de las virtudes (1.2-4, 18; 5.23-24; 15.10; etc.) respectivamente— es mucho menos obvia la mejor manera de combinar estos elementos en una síntesis verosímil y convincente históricamente. ¿Debería el estudioso considerar el texto como más “judío” que “griego”, más “griego” que “judío”, o como “judío” y “griego” en la misma medida? ¿Qué significarán, incluso, estas etiquetas y síntesis, tanto en el contexto original de la obra y en el nuestro como intérpretes hoy en día?

En este capítulo intentaremos dar la vuelta por este punto muerto imposible —“imposible” porque la forma esencialmente “griega” de la exégesis académica extingue de entrada cualquier traza de lo “judío”— al tratar de pensar 4 Mac como un texto “egipcio”. En la misma línea que Derrida, quien trata de pensar “Egipto” como anterior, lógicamente, a tanto lo “judío” como lo “griego” (v.g. id. 2005a; 2007b; Bennington 1994), leeremos el ἀντίψυχος como un jeroglífico: como el “pajaro de cenizas” que aparece en Hesiquio (una de las muy pocos atestiguaciones de ἀντίψυχος más allá de 4 Mac), y el “pajaro de arena” (ḥol) del folclore judío que, en vez de sintetizar la vida de la muerte como el fénix, da lugar a un nuevo principio mucho más inestable (v.g. 4 Mac 18.4-5).

4.2.2. 2: Entre economía y sacrificio: el “don imposible”

Cada una de las traducciones comunes de la palabra ἀντίψυχος en Biblias, léxicos y obras semejantes parecen depender todas de metáforas económicas: “[una] vida por [una] vida”, “[una] vida en intercambio por [una] vida”, “[una] vida como un rescate por [una] vida”, etc. ¿Cuál, entonces, es la naturaleza de esta economía que persigue al ἀντίψυχος —no sólo en aparatos críticos, de hecho, sino también en los otros pocos usos de la palabra en la literatura contemporánea con 4 Mac: en el Lexifanes de.
Luciano, por ejemplo? ¿Debería considerarse el ἀντίψυχος como una mercancía, de acuerdo con la financiación de Seleuco de los servicios del templo (4 Mac 3.20-21) o el sistema de ganancias y pérdidas del tesoro del santo lugar (4.1-14), como un sacrificio, según el lenguaje cultual con el que se asocia estrechamente en 4 Mac (17.21-22) —o será su economía, más bien, de un orden totalmente distinto?

En este capítulo consideraremos estas tres opciones acerca de la economía del ἀντίψυχος, leyéndolas a la luz de los escritos de Derrida sobre el “don imposible” (v.g. id. 1995a; 2006). Veremos que el autor de 4 Mac, insatisfecho como está con las economías tanto del tesoro como de los sacrificios, sin contar con la del patrocinio foráneo del templo en sí, usa la idea del ἀντίψυχος como una especie de moneda “contra-hecha” por la cual una pieza, o un sacrificio, se convierte en varios (si ningún plural por ἀντίψυχος no aparezca nunca en su texto) y el per-don, el dar de sí (-donare) completamente (per-), viene a rebasar cualquier mera reciprocidad.

4.2.3. 3: Entre Aion y Chronos: el Kairos

Los exegetas de la obra no han llegado aún a dar una respuesta consensuada a la cuestión de si el autor de 4 Mac cree en la inmortalidad del alma o en la resurrección del cuerpo. Algunos se apoyan más en versículos como el 18.23, por ejemplo, en el cual el autor afirma que los mártires “han recibido de Dios almas puras e inmortales”, mientras que otros enfatizan el hecho de que el autor apela a la “duda de Ezequiel” en 18.17: “¿Vivirán estos huesos secos?” (cf. Ez 37.2-3). Pero, ¿sería posible que nuestro autor crea en ambas de estas proposiciones: es decir, que cree que los mártires viven simultáneamente una “incorruptribilidad” espiritual “en una vida perdurable” (17.12) y una “eternidad” corpórea “bienaventurada” (17.18)?

En este capítulo demosotaremos la verdad de esta hipótesis al analizar el tiempo en que el autor de 4 Mac cree que la vida antes y la vida después de la muerte tienen lugar: es decir, la manera en que nuestro autor organiza las dimensiones de αἰών, χρόνος and καιρός, además de sus conceptos cómplices, en su texto. Tomando ejemplo de la lectura de Deleuze del tiempo de los estoicos (id. 2005) —influencias filosóficas claves en autor de 4 Mac— veremos cómo los mártires de la obra juegan el
papel del ἀντίψυχος en la vida tanto antes como después de la muerte al convertirse en un καιρός, un “momento favorable”, para Israel (v.g. 4 Mac 1.10; 3.19).

4.2.4. 4: Entre masculino y femenino: lo andrógino

Desnudados, azotados, descuartizados, golpeados, quemados, mutilados, desollados, despellejados y dislocados en el ecúleo: los mártires de 4 Mac aguantan a casi toda tortura imaginable resistiendo a sus verdugos griegos y haciendo llamamientos a sus hermanos israelitas a que vuelvan al cumplimiento de la ley ancestral. Pero a pesar de que Antioco y sus tropas pretenden, con estos abusos crueles, humillar y emascula a los mártires, y mostrar al mundo que estos judíos, como todos los judíos, son un grupo de mujeres flojas, patéticas y vencidas, inferiores por mucho a los griegos en poder y honor, los tormentos de los mártires llegan a ser en realidad una oportunidad para ellos de constatar su “coraje masculino” (ανδρεία, v.g. 4 Mac 1.11).

¿Son los mártires como ἀντίψυχος, entonces, las “mujeres” lamentables totalmente derrotadas por los seléucidas o los “hombres” valientes elogiados por el autor judío de 4 Mac? En este capítulo argüiremos que son ambos, y que esta “androginía” es una clave para entender su implicación en las sustitución y expiación vicarias en el texto. Percibiremos, con la ayuda de Bataille (v.g. id. 1972), cómo las heridas de los mártires, como genitales, les exponen a la posibilidad de intercambio o “trato” interpersonal: a lo que Bataille llama “comunicación” intersubjetiva.

4.2.5. 5: Entre sujeto y objeto: lo abyecto

“Nuestra filosofía...”, dice Eleazar, “... nos inculca la templanza... nos ejercita en la fortaleza... nos educa en la justicia... [y] nos instruye en la piedad” (4 Mac 5.22-24). La ley en 4 Mac, en realidad, le enseña al judío sujeto a ella en mayor medida. Como la obra explica en detalle, para responder a la ley un hombre con su razón (1.15-17) —y cierto es que el judío en 4 Mac, aún si es una mujer biológica, siempre tiene que comportarse como un hombre virtuoso (como es el caso de la madre-mártir del texto, 15.30)— él ha de aprender cómo separarse de todo lo que es “natural”: de “los dones de la naturaleza” como la carne del cerdo, por ejemplo (5.8-9). Pero, ¿qué significaría, una vez que esto se acepte, que los mártires de 4 Mac —responsables de haber reestablecido
la “observancia de la ley” (18.4)—aún se representaran viviendo esclavados a su naturaleza humana: estando motivados, en el caso de los hermanos, por ejemplo, por el amor fraternal que se alimentaba en el pecho de su madre (13.19-27)?

En este capítulo veremos cómo el autor de 4 Mac coloca a los mártires en la frontera entre la “ley” y la “naturaleza”—descrita tan bien por Kristeva (v.g. id. 2004)—para así reinscribir la primera desde dentro de la última: o sea, para incluir dentro de la ley la posibilidad de una nueva figura, el ἀντίψυχος fundada no en la lógica del único Dios sino en la de la naturaleza polifacética, difusa e infinitamente sustituible (cf. 4 Mac 1.28-30).

4.2.6. 6: Entre alteridad e identidad: la psique

En el meollo de su intento de pensar en contra de la mayor parte de la tradición occidental y situar a la ética, en vez de la ontología, como la “primera filosofía”, Levinas desarrolla toda una terminología de “sustitución” para dar nombre a la manera en que el Yo depende de, y está siempre endeudado a, el Otro por su venida al ser (v.g. id. 2011). Antes de estar yo “en casa” en mi mismo, según este filósofo, estoy exiliado con el otro, obligado a responder por— a proveer por— su escasez, sus necesidades y sus deseos sin tener nada yo que me corresponda a mí. Y siempre obsesionado con y reclamado en esta demanda de este otro por “mí” —esta puesta de sí mismo dentro de mí— sólo podré responder—siempre demasiado poco, demasiado tarde— poniéndome dentro de él: sustituyéndome por él, asumiendo responsabilidad por él, expiando por la carencia en él que no he podido nunca llenar.

¿Cómo, entonces, se relacionarían entre sí esta explicación levinasiana de la “sustitución” y la sustitución vicaria efectuada por los mártires de 4 Mac? En este capítulo intentaremos responder a esta pregunta al comparar la psique levinasiana, el principio animador y relacional entre el Otro y el Yo, con el ἀντίψυχος de 4 Mac. Entrevéremos que, para ambos autores que se estudiarán en esta sección de la tesis, la reclamación ética de la “sustitución” está garantizada por una filosofía particular que está asegurada en sí misma por la justicia (v.g. 4 Mac 5.22-24).
4.2.7. Entre democracia y tiranía: lo antipolítico

“Gracias a [los mártires], la nación recobró la paz”, dice el autor de 4 Mac en 18.4: “restablecieron la observancia de la ley en nuestra patria y obligaron a los enemigos a capitular”. ¿A qué se parecen como conceptos *políticos*, entonces, esta “paz” y “observancia de la ley” que los mártires traen? Por lo que nos dice nuestro autor, claramente no equivalen a la “tiranía” de Antíoco (1.11; 11.24; 17.2, 9, 14, 21; etc.), pero tampoco son del mismo orden que la “constitución ancestral” (*πάτριος πολιτεία*) —sea mejor descrita ésta como “teocrático” o “democrático”— que anteriormente se mantenía en vigor en Jerusalén, antes de la barbarie de Antíoco, bajo el sumo sacerdote Onías y el rey Seléuco (v.g. 3.20).

En este capítulo nos concentraremos en cuatro elementos “trágicos” de 4 Mac —“trágicos” puesto que están tomados del teatro griego antiguo— que sugieren que los mártires de la obra fundan una *antipolítica* que abre la polis y sus ciudadanos (varones) a lo *foráneo* (la *mujer*). Con la ayuda de esta herramienta interpretativa tomada de Loraux (véase id. 2002b; 2008), y al analizar cómo los mártires de 4 Mac insisten en el luto, la venganza, la memoria y lo extraño, entreveremos la manera en que representan a la ciudad, como *ἂντιψυχος*, la violencia originaria y excluyente sobre la cual la ciudad necesariamente ha de establecerse.

4.2.8. Conclusión: lo sublime

¿Será el *ἂντιψυχος* en 4 Mac, así pues, algún tipo de *suma* de los conceptos indecidibles en el texto que trataremos, en esta tesis, hacer que emergan a la superficie, algún total de los términos “medios” de las oposiciones binarias en la obra que intentaremos estudiar? ¿Queda escondida, de algún modo, la explicación que aquí buscamos de los mecanismos de la sustitución y expiación vicarias en el texto en la *acumulación* de las teorías y modelos que examinaremos? El principal problema al suponer tal conclusión en esta tesis se halla en su ignorancia del hecho de que los indecidibles de 4 Mac que forman la base de cada uno de nuestros capítulos aquí son en sí mismos *irrepresentables* de manera inherente, incluso, y especialmente, para el mismo autor de la obra.
En la Conclusión a esta tesis, por lo tanto, cambiaremos de registro y analizaremos el ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac desde una perspectiva estética en vez de literaria: el arte, en lugar de la literatura, capaz de expresar mejor lo inexpresable mediante las sensibilidades y el deseo, según Lyotard (v.g. id. 2012). Volveremos a la imagen que nos dio el impulso inicial de emprender la aventura de dejar a 4 Mac que se descontruyera —la del cuadro hipotético de la “historia de tu piedad” en 4 Mac 17.7— para imaginar cómo el ἀντίψυχος, además de sus mecanismos de sustitución y expiación vicarias, podrían representarse en imágenes, y en sentimientos, en vez de en palabras solamente. Cada uno de los indecidibles, o “anagramas”, que habremos descubierto en cada uno de nuestros capítulos se transpondrán por última vez para así re-enfatizar o poner de relieve su cualidad esencialmente textual: esto es, para afirmar de nuevo su conexión ana-lógica a la ana-grafía por medio de la cual el autor de 4 Mac, en 17.8-10, puede por fin escribir el “aquí” y el “ahora” del ἀντίψυχος.
INTRODUCTION:
4 Maccabees as EKPHRASIS IN “DECONSTRUCTIVE” LOGIC

Introduction

Like much of contemporary Continental philosophy, the Jewish apocryphal text known as 4 Maccabees (hereafter 4 Macc) witnesses to the failure of language to speak an ethical word in the face of unspeakable horror. In the case of Continental philosophy, the traumatic break-up of language and ethics comes with the Shoah; in the case of 4 Macc, it is a holocaust as well—the death of innocent Jewish women and children for the sake of the Law (e.g. 4 Macc 1.8-11)—that catalyses a moral crisis of meaning-making in discourse. But “God hears also those who are mute [σιωπόντων],” according to the author of 4 Macc (10.18)—hears those who have fallen silent (ἀπο-σιωπάω) when words have had their say—and reason (λογισμός) persists after speech has been cut off (γλωττοτομήσεις, 10.19). What substitutes for language in this work, and atones for its shortcomings, is an antilanguage (ἀντιλέγον ἐν, 8.2), an antirhetoric (ἀντιρητορεύσαντα, 6.1), an antiphilosophy (ἀντιφιλοσοφήσαν, 8.15), an antipolitics (ἀντιπολιτεύμενος, 4.1): an antithesis (ἀντιθείς) of “reason” to “desire” in the midst of which arises an idea of an “offering to God” (3.16).

After language—after rhetoric, philosophy, politics, economy, sexuality and all other attempts to give an account of the Other—the figure who arrives on the scene in 4 Macc is the ἀντίψυχος (6.29; 17.21), the antilife or counterlife: “a ransom for the sin of the nation” through which “divine Providence preserved Israel that previously had been mistreated” (17.21-22). But what is the counterword, the re-joinder, the re-taliation that this vicarious substitute and sacrifice seeks that leaves the author of 4 Macc breathless—speechless—and gesturing, with a shudder, towards the painting he would have made of her instead—should it have been “possible” (17.7)? Between reason and desire in 4 Macc—between “justice,” “courage,” “self-control,” “rational judgment,” and all their divergent “emotions,” in the strange hinterland where argument collapses and words fail (“But this argument is entirely ridiculous”—2.24-3.1 [3.1]; cf. 1.5-6; 6.34-35)—there is to be found the counter-vision of the ethical with which this thesis will concern itself: the “counter-living” of the counterlife, the ἀντίψυχος, which makes “responsibility” felt—finally—in all its “disastrous heaviness.”
1. 4 Maccabees: a general introduction to the work

1.1. A brief overview of the content of the work

The apocryphal text known as 4 Maccabees (4 Macc) tells the story of the martyrdoms of the sage Eleazar, a mother and her seven sons, ostensibly during a period of Jewish persecution at the hands of the Seleucids under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.E.). It is a retelling of events narrated in the canonical 2 Maccabees (2 Macc 3-7), albeit couched in the form of a philosophical argument that attempts to prove that the Jewish faith is a surer guide to virtue than any Greek way of life. Likely written sometime around 90 C.E. by a devout Jew of the Diaspora thoroughly conversant with Greco-Roman thought, it is noteworthy for being the earliest self-contained Jewish reflection on the religious and political implications of martyrdom (van Henten and Avemarie 2002: 47). Although, as we have said, 4 Macc is based on a story originally told in 2 Macc, and perhaps also on a lost history by Jason of Cyrene (2 Macc 2.23), it is only in 4 Macc that the seed of the idea—planted in the earlier works—that the suffering and deaths of a righteous few have vicarious, redemptive efficacy for the many comes to bloom for the first time.

1.2. The textual tradition

The text of 4 Macc survives in several different manuscripts in several different languages: Syriac, Latin, Old Slavonic, Coptic and Greek. As Anderson (1983: 2.532-3) for example has pointed out, however, the author’s free borrowing and adaptation of a variety of features from Greek philosophy and rhetoric, combined with the absence of semitisms throughout the work, the reliance on quotations from the Septuagint and the author’s confidence in using rare Greek words or even coining new ones (e.g. 4 Macc 1.29; 4.19; 9.19; 11.4; 13.19, 27; 14.16; 15.13; 16.24; 18.5; etc.) all suggest that the work was originally written in Greek.

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1 Of this author we know nothing more, unfortunately, than what Schwartz (2008: 175), for example, can supply reading between the lines: ““Jason” is a common name, among Jews and non-Jews alike; we may assume that this one was a Jew. It may be that the words “of Cyrene” indicate that he had left that place of origin [either the city or the region: i.e., Cyrenaica]; but…it need not indicate anything more than that the person mentioning him...was from a different place. And even that is not necessary...”
1.2.1. *The Syriac*

Bensly and Barnes’s work (1895) assembles the Syriac textual evidence for our text. This witness is admittedly quite late—the most primitive codex that forms the basis of the translation dates from the ninth or tenth century—but Barnes judges it to be “faithful,” and therefore “of some value for the textual criticism of the book” (Bensly and Barnes 1895: xiv). In general the text agrees with Codex Sinaiticus, rather than with Alexandrinus. Swete (1899: 3.900-902) and Hiebert (2005: 193-216) both present a list of some of the more interesting variants on the basis of the Syriac that, even when not taken explicitly into account in the present thesis, will at least inform certain of the contentious readings that we will take up in due course.

1.2.2. *The Latin*

The first paraphrase of 4 Macc into Latin, the *Passio Sanctorum Machabaeorum*, is first attested textually in manuscripts dating from the fourth century (Hiebert 2005: 196, 211-16 [196]; id. 2012: 131). In contrast to the Syriac version, however, which is largely faithful to the Greek original and “which may be the only text-critically significant translation of [4 Macc] that has survived in its entirety” (Hiebert 2005: 193), the *Passio* departs from its Greek source so often and to such an extent that thematic correspondences between the two are frequently difficult even to sight. Moreover, the thoroughly Christian character of the exposition—*sed christiano explicabitur sensu* (“explained in a Christian sense”), according to *Passio* 1.1—while interesting on any number of levels cannot be said to be useful for establishing the text.

1.2.3. *The Old Slavonic and the Coptic*

The earliest translation of 4 Macc into Slavonic, attempted by Maximus Triboles (“Maximus the Greek”; ca. 1470-1555), still awaits proper scholarly attention,

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2 For example, though it is to anticipate ourselves somewhat: in the conceit of the painting of the “history of your religion” in 4 Macc 17.7—of which we will make much in this thesis, as the place where the ethics of language has failed, irremediably, and painting has since taken over—the Syriac lacks the ὥσπερ present in A and S and also, with the latter, reads ὅροντες as following ἥθεωροντες (Bensly and Barnes 1895: xx; Swete 1899: 3.902). The significance for our purposes is that the painting is, in the Syriac, not at all metaphorical (ὅσπερ)—and that the translator here, on the contrary, is actually playing up the visual as well as readerly aspect (ὅροντες).
although Thomson has ventured a few preliminary comments. The most noteworthy characteristic of this version, it seems, is the licence its author has taken in abridging it. As Thomson writes, “by abridging the text Maximus has altered the very nature of the book, which is no longer a philosophical treatise…but has become an account of the Maccabees’ sufferings” (1998: 868-9 [869]). In terms of setting the text, however, until such time as it is properly edited Maximus’ rendering unfortunately cannot be used. The same is true of the fragments discovered by Lucchesi in the early 1980s of an early (Sahidic) Coptic translation of our work (1981; 1983), though Miroshnikov (2014) has certainly made a very good start in terms of making fitting use of these particular leaves.

1.2.4. The Greek

The Greek textual witness, which is the earliest and therefore principal object of study in the present work, may be thought of as being divided into three branches: that of certain manuscripts of the Septuagint, that of certain manuscripts of the writings of Josephus (see below for the argument for Josephan authorship), and that of certain menologia, Eastern analogues to the Western martyrologies, containing prayers and saints’ lives arranged according to the observances of the liturgical calendar (van Henten 1997: 58-9).

The standard Greek text for the study of the work, however, is Rahlfs’s Septuaginta (2006), which lists variants to the text of 4 Macc in the most important manuscripts in which it is found, among them Sinaiticus (4th c.), Alexandrinus (5th c.) and Venetus (8th or 9th c.). Although not present in the Vulgate, and hence missing from both the Catholic and Protestant apocrypha, 4 Macc nonetheless appears as an appendix to the

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3 Due to the unsatisfactory nature of the photographs before him Miroshnikov (2014: 73 n. 20) reports that he has been unable to take stock of three fragments of 4 Macc—corresponding to 4 Macc 1.1-6—which are currently deposited in the National Library of Paris (1316 f. 114, 1323 f. 171 and 1323 f. 214). Nonetheless, his presentation and translation of the remainder of this extant Coptic version of 4 Macc (which otherwise encompasses 4 Macc 1.7-16; 15.16-21; 16.14-23; 17.7-12 and 18.6-15) is well done and merits some attention on our part. In particular we note here his observation that although the Coptic represents an abridgment of the Greek of our text—a fact that goes some way at least toward explaining the gaps in these fragments as compared to the critical version set by Rahlfs (2006)—the Coptic is “distinguishing[d]…from the abridgments available in other languages [i.e., Latin and Old Slavonic]” in that the introductory philosophical orientation to 4 Macc therein is not that which is abbreviated (Miroshnikov 2014: 72). But still, and for our purposes here: it is our judgment that this Coptic text—which likely dates, after all, from the “first half of the tenth century” (Miroshnikov 2014: 71)—is not of much use to us in terms of setting our text.
Greek Orthodox Bible and is often included in other scholarly bibles and collections of apocryphal literature.

1.3. The authorship of the work

As already mentioned, the placement of 4 Macc within some manuscripts of the works of Josephus has led modern commentators to attribute it to the hand of the Jewish historian. DeSilva (1998: 12, 14) points to Eusebius in the third century (Hist. eccl. 3.10.16) as the originator of this fallacy, which was followed by Jerome (Vir. ill. 13; Pelag. 2.6) and later medieval compilers of Josephus’s work. Close analysis of the text tells against such an assertion, however. Townshend (1913: 2.653-85), for example, notes that the author of 4 Macc writes in a florid manner totally distinct from anything else in the Josephan corpus, that he uses indeclinable Greek transliterations of Hebrew names in contrast to Josephus’s predilection for their declinable Greek forms, that he makes factual mistakes unthinkable to Josephus (such as in 4 Macc 4.15, where he calls Antiochus Epiphanes the son of Seleucus IV, rather than his brother; cf. Josephus, A.J. 12.4), and so on. Siding with those modern scholars, then, who eschew the argument for Josephan authorship, and in the absence of any concrete data in the text itself, we must be content to leave the question of authorship open in the present work, apart from venturing to say that the author was clearly a devout Jew nonetheless comfortable with expressing himself in the literary and philosophical style of the wider Greco-Roman world.

1.4. The date of the writing of the work

The question of dating 4 Macc is another enigma that has proved difficult to solve with any certainty. There are no specific indications in the work itself, and as such scholars have had to fall back on more general observations based on the vocabulary employed in the text and the historical and religious realities reflected therein.

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4 Worth mentioning here too is the fact that both Eusebius and Jerome know the work by a different title—Περὶ ἀυτοκράτορος λόγιον, “On the Supremacy of Reason”—which could be considered to be more in accord with its content (cf. 4 Macc 1.7, 13, 30, etc.).
We mentioned above that it is highly likely that the author of 4 Macc has used 2 Macc as a source. This would seem to put the *terminus post quem* at around 100-90 B.C.E., the time at which the latter was likely written. Anderson, however, has observed that the mention of Onias having held the high priesthood “for life” in 4 Macc 4.1 presupposes a date after 63 B.C.E., when the life tenure lapsed after the fall of the Hasmoneans (1983: 2.533). Bickerman narrows the window even further by noting that terms such as θρησκεία, “religion” (4 Macc 5.7, 13; etc.) and νομικός, “skilled in the law” (5.4; cf. γραμματέως, 2 Macc 6.18) came to be used only during the reign of Augustus (27 B.C.E.-14 C.E.; 1976: 1.275-81). The other part of Bickerman’s argument is altogether less certain: namely, that the author of 4 Macc, like Josephus, has incorporated the political arrangements of his own day into his source material. According to Bickerman, the union between Syria, Phoenicia and Cilicia mentioned in 4 Macc 4.2 (cf. 2 Macc 3.5) obtained only between 18 and 54 C.E., and therefore 4 Macc should be dated to this window. But in fact, not only does literary and epigraphical evidence suggest that the linking of Syria, Phoenicia and Cilicia actually persisted until at least 86 C.E. (Klauck 1989: 668), but also, as van Henten says, it does not follow that any particular historical situation alluded to in the text must necessarily be the one in which the text was written (1997: 94).

What other evidence may be adduced then to move beyond the very general observation that 4 Macc was more than likely written after the turn of the era? Here we are on highly speculative ground, but a brief examination of the text’s relationship both to the Temple in Jerusalem and to early Christian literature can prove enlightening.

Van Henten (1997: 77) and others have suggested that the lack of concrete references in 4 Macc to the Temple and other political institutions in Jerusalem must almost of necessity indicate a date post-70 C.E., but this argument is not a particularly strong one. DeSilva (1998: 15) and Huizenga (2009: 115-6), for example, have both pointed out that flourishing Judaisms capable of spiritualising the Temple and the “homeland”—as does the author of 4 Macc—existed well before 70. Bremmer (2008: 211) is more incisive in his observation that the only really telling parallels between 4 Macc and early Christian literature—which last would be a useful yardstick for establishing a date for the work—are to be found 1), around the very rare word
.AdapterViewος, the “life given for life,” a word that appears in the contemporary literature only in 4 Macc and in the Epistles of Ignatius (4 Macc 6.29; 17.21; cf. Ignatius, Eph. 21.1; Smyrn. 10.2; Pol. 2.3; 6.1); and 2), around the sense in which Eleazar in 4 Macc, as slain martyr, is both priest and victim (4 Macc 5.4; 7.6, 12; 17.9; cf. the portrayal of Jesus in the Letter to the Hebrews; see also Butterweck 1995: 24). Taken together, these echoes suggest a date for the writing of 4 Macc at around about the last decade of the first century, since both the letters of Ignatius and the Letter to the Hebrews—which writings appear to be at least familiar with our text—are now usually dated to around this period. But we cannot be sure by any means, of course, and for that reason the window just indicated of about 90-100 C.E. for the writing of 4 Macc will, in the present work, be taken as nothing more than a guide.

1.5. The place of the writing of the work

Alexandria in Egypt, a bustling Greek metropolis that was home to a great many Jews, was, at least for a previous generation of scholars, the most likely place of composition of 4 Macc. For exegetes such as Townshend (1913: 2.657), the high degree of Jewish hellenisation reflected in the book, above all in the author’s accommodating attitude to the Greek games, art, tragedy and philosophy, fits in well with the city that was home to Philo and other open-minded Jewish intellectuals. But despite the fact that Hadas (1953: 117-8) has made a convincing list of the ways in which Philo and the author of 4 Macc stand together against certain of the pagan philosophers on the one hand and Palestinian Judaism on the other, something which could be perhaps the most compelling evidence for their close proximity, factors such as the lack in 4 Macc of the allegorising tendency characteristic of the Jewish/Christian Alexandrian “school,” and the absence of references to 4 Macc in the writings of the Alexandrian Church Fathers such as Clement and Origen, would seem to tell against attributing our work to the renowned Egyptian city (Anderson 1983: 2.534-5; deSilva 1998: 18). The fact is that, even if the fame for it and the vast majority of textual evidence witnessing to it derives from Alexandria, the kind of

5 For further connections between 4 Macc and Hebrews, see deSilva 1998: 146-8.
6 For Hadas, the parallels between Philo and the author of 4 Macc are three specifically: 1), a wariness of certain Stoic beliefs, such as the origin of wisdom, the place of the passions and the nature of sin; 2), a belief in individual Providence; and 3), a belief in the immortality of the soul as opposed to the resurrection of the body.
hellenising Judaism represented by 4 Macc was widespread throughout the Diaspora. As Freudenthal (1869: 112-3) notes, authors such as Jason of Cyrene, Paul of Cilicia and Josephus all attest to this fact.

Current scholarly consensus has begun to favour van Henten’s hypothesis (1994: 44-69) that 4 Macc originated somewhere in Asia Minor, perhaps Cilicia (cf. 4 Macc 4.2), though the traditional ascription of the work to Antioch, where a Christian cult of the martyrs flourished from an early date, can by no means be discounted (Rouwhorst 2005: 81-96). Van Henten’s argument is attractive in the parallels it draws between the fictitious epitaph in 4 Macc 17.9-10 and funerary inscriptions much more widely attested in Asia than in any other region. These parallels notwithstanding, the source materials linking the relics of the saints to Antioch—including testimony of a synagogue, and later Christian basilica, erected in the vicinity of their graves, possibly in the southern quarter of the city—remain difficult to dismiss. In this thesis, therefore, we prefer to leave the question of the provenance of 4 Macc open, as we did with those of its authorship and date: it will be enough for us, given that this study will be one based entirely on literary considerations, rather than historical ones, that we recognise simply that our work was written by a hellenised Jew in one of the major intellectual centres of the Mediterranean.

1.6. Historical context and immediate occasion for the writing of the work

As we have already seen, the bulk of 4 Macc consists of a retelling, by a well-hellenised Diaspora Jew of the first century C.E., of events that supposedly took place during a period of persecution suffered by Jews in Jerusalem under Antiochus IV Epiphanes (175-164 B.C.E.). Two historical realities therefore underlie the text—on the one hand, the situation in Jerusalem under King Seleucus and his immediate successor, Antiochus, and on the other, the situation of the Jewish people in the Diaspora at the time the work was written—and both of these must be taken into account right from the outset of the thesis.

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7 These primary sources, which are admittedly quite late, are helpfully collected in Cummins 2001: 83-6.
When we begin to probe 4 Macc for insights into the history of the Maccabean period and its background one considerable problem immediately presents itself: our author is not at all interested in writing “history.” In fact, Anderson (1983: 2.537) goes so far as to suggest that the work, “as a source book of information on the external history of the writer’s own time and place or of the early years of the Maccabean wars,” is of “little value.” Not only of little value however, we could add, but also thoroughly unreliable. As we have already ventured, since the author’s project in 4 Macc is entirely apologetic and philosophical, and not at all historical and informative, it is more than likely he had need of only one source (2 Macc), and it is this disinterest in historical detail that leads him to make rather prominent errors of fact. One misstep we have already seen is that of him calling Antiochus IV Epiphanes the son of Seleucus IV, rather than his brother. Other apparent mistakes of his include his giving King Seleucus the epithet “Nicanor” (4 Macc 3.20), instead of Philopator; his situating the gymnasium built by Jason “on” the citadel of Jerusalem (4.20), where 2 Macc 4.12 correctly reports that it was placed “under” this fort; his confusion between Apollonius and Heliodorus in the story of the raid on the temple treasury (4.1-14; cf. 2 Macc 3); etc. (Hadas 1953: 94-5, 110). All of these errors should not lead us to distrust and dismiss the author of 4 Macc outright. Rather, they lead us simply to acknowledge that he has a purpose that enables him to overlook historical precision in favour of giving the general sense of a scene that will fit his broader deliberative purposes.

Despite our author’s latitude in dealing with his sources, however, some correspondences with known historical events can be gleaned by a careful reading of his work. The martyrdoms recounted in the text are set against the backdrop of what scholars call the Palestinian “hellenisation crisis” of 175-164 B.C.E., the highly volatile situation in which tensions among the Jewish community in Jerusalem reached fever pitch as the pressure of adapting to the surrounding Greek culture, or of rejecting it outright, began to take its toll (deSilva 1998: 37-43). By the time of the death of Seleucus IV Philopator in 175 B.C.E. at the hands of his minister, Heliodorus (Appian, Syr. 45)—the same Heliodorus who had been in charge of the robbery of the
Menelaus and his brother Lysimachus, however, proved to be more of a threat to the faithful Jews of the city than Jason. Not even of the Zadokite high priestly lineage, but members of the priestly clan of Bilgah (2 Macc 3.4; 4.23, 29), they further diminished the prestige of the high priesthood and alienated the general population by stealing from the temple to service their debt to Antiochus (2 Macc 4.30-34, 39). When the high priest and his deputy then moved forcefully to quell the rising tide of hostility to their rule, the situation in Jerusalem drew close to an all-out war (2 Macc 4.40-50). On hearing of a rumour of the death of Antiochus (2 Macc 5.5; 4 Macc 4.22), and thinking he could seize again the high priesthood, Jason returned to Jerusalem from exile, but the subsequent infighting among the Jews was interpreted by Antiochus as a revolt and he and his army returned swiftly from their campaign in Egypt and stormed Jerusalem. Men, women and children were mercilessly slaughtered, the temple was pillaged and profaned with foreign cults, Greek and

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8 According to Bartlett (1973: 241), Heliodorus’ answer to Seleucus in 2 Macc 3.38—that he would only send an “enemy or plotter” back to Jerusalem, “for you will get him back thoroughly flogged, if he survives at all”—“may be intended as ironic, for it was Heliodorus who conspired against Seleucus and brought about his death.”

9 The significance of Menelaus’ ancestry—which is more likely to have been of the priestly family of Bilgah (Neh 12.5, 18; 1 Chr 24.14) than of the tribe of Benjamin, since his brother Simon occupied the priestly position of captain of the temple (and in fact, the Old Latin and Armenian versions of 2 Macc 3.4 testify to this, as against the witness of the Greek version)—is that, as a non-Zadokite, he was the first “complete “outsider” to be appointed High Priest” (Schäfer 2003: 37-8 [38]; cf. Grabbe 2002: 14-15). His appointment reflects a further capitulation to the tidal wave of Hellenism since, as an Oniad, even Jason was still a Zadokite.
Syrian\textsuperscript{10}, and a harsh suppression of the observance of Jewish law was enforced (2 Macc 5.1-6.11; 4 Macc 4.23-26). It is precisely against this background of savage Jewish persecution that we find the martyrs of 2 and 4 Macc go to their deaths as well.

Moving on now to the world of the author, rather than with that assumed by the text: might there be a specific historical context that would fit our hypotheses, gleaned from text-critical enquiries, that 4 Macc was written at around about 90-100 C.E., perhaps at Antioch or one of the major intellectual centres of Asia Minor? Understanding the book to be about the heroic response of the martyrs in the face of religious persecution, the majority of scholars have sought to place its writing in a time and locale in which where the freedom of the Jewish cult was under attack. But observing the general lack of threat and urgency in the book such as there in 2 or 3 Macc, for example, as well as the telling lack of references to the situation of the audience vis-à-vis religious hostility, Anderson (1983: 2.533-4) suggests that it is not necessary to fit the writing of 4 Macc into a known period of persecution, such as that under Hadrian (117-138 C.E.).

Far more fruitful as a starting-point for our inquiries, in fact, is Klauck’s assertion (1989: 664) that 4 Macc is an attempt to deal with the “everyday situation” of Diaspora Jews struggling to ascertain whether or not, and to what extent, they should assimilate into Greco-Roman society. But acculturation and hellenisation are not the only threats to Judaism that our text envisions, at least according to Bremmer (2008: 212-3). For the question is: if the book was meant to strengthen resistance against the encroaching tide of relativism and unthinking assimilation, how can we explain the themes of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement that are so palpable therein (above all, as we shall see throughout this thesis, in the figure of the ἀντίψυχος [4 Macc 6.29; 17.21])?

\textsuperscript{10} In 2 Macc 6.1-6 we read that as part of the suppression of Judaism the temple was profaned with debauchery and prostitution, unclean sacrifices and, on top of the altars, “abominable offerings that were forbidden by the laws” (vv. 4-5). Bickerman (1979: 69-71, 75) and Goldstein (1976: 143-52) suggest that these “abominable offerings” consisted of stones, perhaps meteorites (cf. Dan 8.10-12), that represented various gods of both Greek and oriental traditions.
Is it possible that the author of 4 Macc was, in his work, aiming not only at convincing and strengthening his fellow Jews but also in sympathising with the nascent Christian movement? Or, as Bremmer puts it: “Is it…really impossible to imagine that in the transitional period around AD 100 a Jew tried to convince his fellow Jews, who felt attracted to Christ, of the existence of a comparable figure(s) in their own tradition?” (2008: 212-3). We have already noted that the work must have been very quickly taken up by Ignatius and the author of Hebrews, at least, if not also by the other communities responsible for the other Pastoral Epistles\textsuperscript{11}. One other clue that 4 Macc could very well have been written in a situation with a high level of Jewish-Christian interaction is the presence in the work of the story of the Akedah or binding of Isaac (7.14, 19; 13.12; 14.20; 15.28; 16.20; 17.6; 18.11; cf. Gen 22.1-19), a well-attested locus of Jewish-Christian controversy in late antiquity\textsuperscript{12}. Such a picture of continued mutual influence between Jews and Christians well into the second century C.E. fits in well with what we know about the situation in Antioch at this time (Zetterholm 2003; Cummins 2001).

It is important to note, therefore, that the Jewish author of 4 Macc likely felt that his immediate surroundings presented something of a double threat: that of the attractiveness to Jews of Greek ways and customs, on the one hand, and of the interest to them of emergent Christianity, on the other. The question of the extent to which and the ways in which Jews should involve themselves in the surrounding Greek culture—which had been fought out in Jerusalem, in a way, in the time of Antiochus and the historical Maccabees—was still very much alive in the Diaspora. To take the case of Antioch, for example, which as we have already seen is the most likely place of the composition of 4 Macc, even if this hypothesis has not been proved definitively by any means: Zetterholm, working with the Syrian city in mind, suggests that the work could have been a production of the group of Jewish “religious traditionalists” and Torah apologists known from the primary sources to have been active there. These were Jews who, in their own day, preferred to die before sacrificing to the Greek gods (Josephus, \textit{B.J.} 7.50-51), much like the martyrs of 4 Macc itself. They were also sufficiently informed, however, about Hellenistic society (Zetterholm

\textsuperscript{11} For a brief overview of the influence of 4 Macc on the New Testament, which includes but also goes beyond Hebrews, see deSilva 1998: 143-9.

\textsuperscript{12} See, for example, the references in Bremmer 2008: 212-3 n. 205 and Huizenga 2009: 117-22.
suggests they were “acculturated” but not “assimilated”) and about Jesus-worship (having been likely exposed to Jewish and Gentile Christians in the synagogues of the city) to be able to defend their position and interests and avoid becoming completely subsumed (Zetterholm 2003: esp. 80-82, 86, 99, etc.).

With respect to the more immediate situation that likely gave birth to 4 Macc, some scholars have suggested that the work, owing to its eulogistic and encomiastic tone, was composed as an address marking the anniversary of the martyrs’ deaths, or else in celebration of some important Jewish festival, such as Hanukkah. Above we alluded to those primary materials that witness to the presence of a synagogue in Antioch that at one point either housed the relics of the martyrs, or else was built on or near their resting place. If true, these traditions could supply a plausible rhetorical setting for the work, but the lack of any real parallel to such an annual observance in Jewish tradition would seem to militate against such a reconstruction. The observance of Hanukkah remains the much more likely possibility, even despite the complete lack of references to the military heroes of the uprising: a fact that, deSilva suggests (1998: 24), can be explained by a theological preference for martyrs rather than warriors as the agents of reconciliation with God. On the other hand, it should not even be taken for granted that the work was only ever intended to be delivered orally; aside from van Henten’s observation that the funerary oration (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος) was often a pretext for more widely applicable “political” propaganda, “praising the whole people through the commemoration of the fallen” (1997: 64-5), account must be taken of Deissman’s suggestion that 4 Macc was always intended to have a wide audience and so may have come to be disseminated as a “book in the form of a speech.” A modern (early twentieth-century) analogy to the form of 4 Macc, Deissman writes (1900: 2.151), might be the religious pamphlet, to which the name of “tractate” has been

13 Hadas suggests a commemoration on the pattern of the annual fast in honour of Gedaliah, the governor of the Jewish remnant in Judah after the exile who was assassinated by an anti-Babylonian zealot (2 Kgs 25.22-26; Jer 40.7-41.18; b. Ned. 12a), or else after that of the ten sages martyred in the Bar-Kochba revolt (Midr. Eleh Ezkerah), honoured in the contemporary musaf recital on Yom Kippur (1953: 107-8). While the later parallel is potentially fruitful, given its connections with Jewish atonement thinking, it is not directly relevant to this discussion on the specific occasion that gave rise to 4 Macc, and hence will be cast aside for the moment. Similarly interesting, though ultimately tangential to the present interest, is Darling Young’s allusion (1991: 81) to the cult of Abraham’s tomb at Hebron, which Josephus says was the object of a popular cult (B.J. 4.530-32, 554).
given: these are also, quite often enough, in the form of a speech or sermon, and are intended for the widest possible distribution\textsuperscript{14}.

1.7. The audience of the work

The intellectual sophistication of the work also may suggest an Antiochene, or at least cosmopolitan, provenance. As we have already suggested, the author takes it upon himself to prove the superiority of the Jewish way of life as a life-long aid to virtue and nobility, and he argues his case in a way that suggests both a resolute grounding in Judaism and a high degree of familiarity with the categories of Greek philosophy and literary forms on the part of his audience, such as could be gained by exposure to the sophists and philosophers in the public places of any major urban centre. A point that will have particular relevance for us in this study is the fact that while Stowers (1994: 60) and Moore and Anderson (2010: 197-8) suggest that the audience of 4 Macc, like its author, formed part of the male ruling elite of their ethnic subculture, Darling Young (1991: 67-81 [81]) speculates that possibly, given the heroic portrayal of the figure of the mother within, “the work was produced with an audience of women in mind.”

“In [the] audience,” Darling Young (1991: 68) speculates with regard to 4 Macc, “there were quite likely women for whom the mother, in her virtuous conduct and sacrifice, was meant to be a model to emulate.” But for all the praise of the woman in the book, as “mother of the nation, vindicator of the law and champion of religion” (4 Macc 15.29), and so on, there remains the troubling fact that her fate, in the end, is suicide (17.1). Is this the ideal to which women in the audience were meant to aspire? Darling Young (1991: 79) and others suggest that such was the price the woman had to pay for wanting to preserve her chastity (cf. 18.7-9), a prospect that would hardly have seemed more inspirational in its own day than it does in ours: better dead than violated, in other words. Ilan (1999: 77-8) glosses the mother’s self-destruction by asserting that “[t]he mother in 4 Maccabees probably served as a legitimate role-model for the novel form of martyrdom practiced in the war of 66-73 CE—suicide in

\textsuperscript{14} So Deissman here: “Sie ist vielmehr von vornherein mit der Absicht der Publikation ausgearbeitet... Eine moderne Analogie sind etwa die religiösen Flugschriften, für die sich der technische Ausdruck „Traktat“ eingebürgert hat; sie sind recht häufig ebenfalls in die Form einer Rede oder einer Predigt gekleidet...”.
the face of defeat,” but this seems too far to go to prove that the highest forms of sacrifice for the Jewish people did not depend on sex, education or any other form of social advantage.

Far more likely, in fact, is Stowers’ suggestion that the language of desire and self-mastery in 4 Macc indicates that it was written by an elite male Jew for an audience of his peers. Hence the tacked-on appearance of the mother’s final speech in 4 Macc 18.6-19, for example, which for Moore and Anderson (2010: 195-8) has all the character of the afterthought, an attempt by the author to prevent the image of feminine self-sufficiency from taking too deep a root among his audience (see the sudden introduction of her husband in 18.9, for example). The point is that, in the final analysis, 4 Macc—at least in its present form—displays none of the “subversion of deference and hierarchy” that Perkins (1995: 123) has identified in the later early Christian martyr acts that would be perhaps the most satisfying way of shoring up Darling Young’s suggestion that it was intended for an audience of women. Such is the conclusion of D’Angelo (2003: 157), for example, who points to the emphasis in 4 Macc on familial duty, preservation from adultery and submission to one’s husband as further evidence for the conventional, androcentric gender politics espoused by the work.

1.8. The structure of the work

There is broad agreement among scholars that 4 Macc is composed of two main parts—1.1-3.18 and 3.19-18.24—though not all agree on their relation to each other. Those who argue for the close interdependence of the two sections have the upper hand, in contrast to those who advocate a rather looser relationship or even multiple authorship. According to the rhetorical conventions of the ancient diatribe, the first part of the work serves as the unfolding of the thesis of which to be treated—in this case, “that devout reason is sovereign over the emotions” (1.1)—and the second part its demonstration or proof by way of the pious and discerning conduct of the martyrs.

15 Dupont-Sommer (1939), Lebram (1974), Breitenstein (1978) and are among the defenders of this latter position. See the refutation of their arguments by deSilva 1998: 25-6 and van Henten 1997: 67-70.
According to deSilva (1998: 25-6), who gives voice to the broad census among scholars as to the structure of 4 Macc, the work can be more fully broken down in the following way:

a) Thesis: “that devout reason is sovereign over the emotions” (1.1)

– Introduction to the work (1.1-12)
According to Quintillian, the aim of the introduction or exordium is to gain the good will and attention of the audience and to pique their interest (Inst. 4.1.5; quoted in Klauck 1989: 686). Here our author does this not least of all by specifying his topic (1.1) and describing his procedure (1.7-12).

– Definition of key terms (1.13-30a)
As the author himself explains this section, “We shall define [διακρίνοµεν] just what reason is and what emotion is, how many kinds of emotions there are, and whether reason rules over all these” (1.14).

– Examples from the law and sacred history supporting the truth of the proposition (1.30b-3.18)
Dietary (1.33-34), sexual (2.5-6) and economic (2.8-9, 14) regulations, as well as stories of such illustrious figures as Joseph (2.2-3), Moses (2.17), Jacob (2.19) and David (3.6-18), are all pressed into the service of the author’s argument that “rational judgment is sovereign over the emotions” (1.30b).

b) “Narrative demonstration” (3.19) of the thesis “from the noble bravery of those who died for the sake of virtue” (1.8)

– The historical setting of the martyrdoms (3.19-4.26)
Here the author condenses, in arresting fashion and in the space of just two short chapters, the history told in far greater detail in his source (2 Macc 2.32-6.11; see below for some implications of this abridgement). The story of Simon’s treachery is set out (4 Macc 4.1-14), which sets in motion the change in government and a change in the high priesthood (4.15-20) which leads to the
occupation of Jerusalem (4.21-26) and puts an end to the situation of “profound peace” previously enjoyed in the homeland (3.20-21).

– *In praise of Eleazar (5.1-7.23), the seven brothers (8.1-14.10), and their mother (14.11-17.6)*

In this the central part of the work, deSilva (1998: 25) observes a repeated threefold movement that consists of the interweaving of 1), the “vivid description” (*ekphrasis*, Greek ἔκφρασις) of the martyrs’ tortures (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22); 2), the relevance of their sufferings with regard to the philosophical thesis the author seeks to prove (6.31-35; 7.16-23; 13.1-5; 14.11-12; 16.1-2; etc.) and 3), elements of encomia in praise of each of the heroes (7.1-15; 13.6-7; 13.19-14.10; 17.2-6; etc.).

– *Peroration to the whole (17.7-18.24)*

A summary of the achievements of the martyrs (17.7-22; 18.3-5, 20-24) and an exhortation to follow in their footsteps (18.1-2) conclude the work, both of which are characteristic of the *enumeratio* form proper to the ancient funeral oration (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος; van Henten 1997: 64-5).

**1.9. The form, rhetorical style and historical content of the work**

The three principal oratorical forms present in 4 Macc—philosophical diatribe, commemorative speech or eulogy (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος) and encomium—can be grouped together under the umbrella of the “protreptic” discourse, a particular kind of oration “that mingles philosophical argumentation and vivid examples of the philosophy at work…all for the purpose of making that philosophy more credible” (cf. 4 Macc 7.9; deSilva 1998: 28 and passim). One further literary feature of the work that should be mentioned at this point, if left to be taken up again further on, is its distinct quality of ekphrasis (ἐκφρασίς) or hyper-real description, as in, for example, the striking renditions of the martyrs’ tortures (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22). This is a facet to the work that has been curiously overlooked by scholars but which we propose to make an important part of the present study.
At the outset of our investigation into 4 Macc some observations must be made on the kind of history it offers the reader. In the brief overview of 4 Macc above we noted that it presents as an expanded version of events related in 2 Macc 3-7, though it varies from this latter account in several key details (in its conflation, for example, of three characters in 2 Macc 3-4 into one character in 4 Macc 4). Whether or not these deviations can be explained by suggesting that the authors of 2 Macc and 4 Macc used a common source—perhaps the lost history of Jason of Cyrene mentioned in 2 Macc 2.23—is a point of relatively minor detail. What is of more account for our purposes is deSilva’s observation that, in the terms of ancient literary conventions, 4 Macc is not the “true history” (ἀληθὴς ἱστορία) that 2 Macc might claim to be. Rather, it is a “narrative that preserves some basic history while departing from exact history in order to present some trans-historical truth”: in other words, an example of “poetical history,” otherwise known as ὡς ἀληθὴς ἱστορία or πλάσμα (deSilva 1998: 29-30).

An important corollary of this is that whether or not 4 Macc was originally conceived as a speech or tractate it has come down to us today as something of a novel, in the sense that it privileges “poetical” truth above “historical” truth. The hope in the present study, therefore, is to recognise 4 Macc for what it is and to subject it to a particular kind of literary criticism—“deconstruction,” specifically (for more on this, see section [3] below on the methodology to be employed)—rather than to study it according to the canons of historical criticism: a move that, it could be said, would be something of a category error.

1.10. The philosophical content of the work

Above we asserted that the defence of the Jewish way of life in 4 Macc is informed throughout by concepts and vocabulary borrowed from Greek philosophy. What precisely is the nature of these influences, and can they be attributed to a particular

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16 Viz., in 2 Macc 3.5, 7 Apollonius son of Tharseas is said to be governor of Coelesyria and Phoenicia, while in 4 Macc 4.4, 21 it is Apollonius son of Menestheus who has this charge. Moreover, in 2 Macc 3 a certain Heliodorus, said to be in charge of the governor’s affairs, is given the task of appropriating the funds in the treasury in Jerusalem for the use of King Seleucus. In 4 Macc 4, however, it is Apollonius, now governor of Syria, Phoenicia and Cilicia (4.2), who comes to seize the temple money (4.6; van Henten 1997: 72-3).

17 See the discussion on the ancient novel and the classification of narratives according to their degree of historical truth in Holzberg 1996: 15.
school? Scholars historically have been divided on these questions, with many placing undue emphasis on certain parts of the text, at the expense of others, to try and fit the data neatly into one or other philosophical tradition. Stoic, Peripatetic and Platonist thought have all, at one time or another, been proposed as the fount from which our author draws his inspiration, but the most attractive proposal of late in this respect has been deSilva’s suggestion that 4 Macc represents a kind of blend of some of the more popular ideas that swirled around the marketplaces of the Mediterranean in the Greco-Roman world (1998: 51-2).

DeSilva calls the material drawn upon by our author the “philosophical koine” of the ancient world, borrowing this term from Chadwick who used it to refer to the mixture of Stoic ethics, Platonic metaphysics and Aristotelian logic that formed the basis of the education of the literate classes in antiquity (Chadwick 1984: 6). As suggested, deSilva’s proposal has the attractiveness of accounting for the rather eclectic philosophical tastes of the author of 4 Macc, who has few qualms about picking and choosing what he considers to be the most promising doctrines of the various philosophical schools and combining them in his own particular way. So it is, for just one example, that he can pick up the Stoic idea of the freedom of the wise person (4 Macc 2.21-23; 5.38; etc.) while rejecting the focus of that school on the extirpation of the passions, preferring instead the Platonic and Peripatetic idea that the emotions are to be strictly controlled (1.28-30; 3.1-5; etc.).

1.11. *The theological content of the work*

Many commentators have been struck by the ideas of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement to be found in 4 Macc—which, we have already hinted, will be the subject of this thesis—but these are by no means the only theological opinions the author advocates within. Manifest throughout the work, for example, is a concern to present the Jewish religion in the terms of the Greek philosophical koine mentioned above in order to demonstrate the superiority of the Torah as a guide to virtue and the good life. At one important point, at least, this engagement with pagan thought leads our author to surprising new theological insight: instead of the doctrine of the resurrection of the body put on the lips of brothers in 2 Macc (7.9, 11, 14, 22-23), the author of 4 Macc prefers the Platonic notion of the immortality of the soul (9.22;
and of a corresponding reward or punishment after death (e.g. 9.8-9; Anderson 1983: 2.539).

Although the notion that the righteous few could somehow represent the many before God (“vicarious substitution”) and could somehow make up for their sins by suffering and dying (“vicarious atonement”) has roots deep in the Old Testament (e.g. Isa 53), it is the fact that it finds such pithy expression in 4 Macc that is of particular interest to us in this study (e.g. 4 Macc 6.27-29; 17.19-22). In particular, we will be occupied by the character of the ἀντίψυχος, the “ransom” or “life in exchange”—literally, the “life given for life”—a role our author understands has been fulfilled by the martyrs. These two themes of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement in 4 Macc have been at the heart of numerous recent investigations into the origins of New Testament soteriological thought.

2. Interpretations of 4 Macc and the “poststructuralist turn”

2.1. Introduction

This section of our Introduction will aim at two ends primarily: 1), to situate 4 Macc within a particular genre of ancient writing in general and of Jewish-Christian writing in particular, that of the ἐκφρασις (ekphrasis; plural: ekphraseis); and 2), to situate this particular study of 4 Macc within a particular current of the work’s interpretation, that of a recent “poststructuralist” turn. We will see, first of all, how certain passages of our text, at least (e.g. 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22; etc.)—if not the work in its entirety—fit the broad definition of “vivid description” that invites their classification as ekphraseis. Next we will see how some biblical scholars have dealt (or not) with the unruly qualities of this particular genre in like texts, which include the polyvalent nature of its imagery and symbolism, its typically catachrestic language, and the relationship of the literary product with its pictorial “model.” Lastly, before offering some preliminary conclusions that will form the basis of the next section on the question of methodology we will use in this thesis, we will survey here some studies

18 See, for example, Williams 1975, who argues for 4 Macc as the predominant influence on early Christian reflection on the saving power of Jesus’ death, and Finlan 2004: esp. 207-10, which rebuts Williams’s position and quite rightly adjudges 4 Macc to be one factor among many, albeit an important one, in shaping this theology.
of 4 Macc that have attempted to breath new life into this forgotten and overlooked
text, above all by interpreting it from perspectives other than the usual historical-
critical ones: i.e., from “poststructuralist” perspectives.

2.2. 4 Macc as ekphrasis: the form and comparable Greek and Roman texts

For the purposes of this review of the most pertinent literature on 4 Macc, the interest
taken in this thesis in its notions of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement—in
other words, in the mysterious person of the ἀντίψυχος—can be reduced to a
convenient shorthand: an interest in its quality of ekphrasis. As will be demonstrated,
not only does this rhetorical label suitably encompass our concerns—for even on a
first reading of 4 Macc, for example, it is clear that the form dominates the central
part of the work in praise of Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother (5.1-17.6;
deSilva 1998: 25)—but it also has the advantage of suggesting a common point of
reference by which to compare 4 Macc with ancient Greek, Roman, Jewish and
Christian writings.

The literary figure of ekphrasis has been defined, in a recent commentary on the New
Testament letter of Jude, as a “‘before-the-eyes’ portrayal in which things and
narratives of events are described” (Webb 2008: 118). As Nicolaus of Myra puts it in
his fifth century C.E. Progymnasmata, a handbook of preliminary exercises for
students of rhetoric: “Ekphrasis is descriptive speech, bringing what is described
clearly (or “vividly,” εναργώς) before the eyes” (Prog. 11; quoted in Webb 2008:
119). The relevance of this device for our purposes can be more clearly seen in an
explanatory note Nicolaus adds a couple of lines later, where he observes that
“‘clearly’ is added because in this way it most differs from narration; the latter gives a
plain exposition of actions, the former tries to make the hearers into spectators”
(Prog. 11; quoted in Webb 2008: 119). In other words, it is clear from the outset that
there is a dimension of vicariousness inherent in the form of ekphrasis: by employing
it, ancient authors aimed to turn auditors into observers, to involve them more directly
in their argument, and to bring the drama more fully “to life,” as it were. In the Latin
manuals too, the term is variously transliterated, translated as or likened to the
techniques of evidentia, illustratio, or demonstratio; this last the author of the
Rhetorica ad Herennium (early first century B.C.E.) describes as “ocular
demonstration”, or “when an event is so described in words that the business seems to
be enacted and the subject to pass vividly before our eyes” (Rhet. Her. 4.55.68; trans.

Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis) has identified three overlapping stages in the development
of ekphrasis that can help us appreciate precisely how this strategy of the “vivid
description” was deployed in the ancient world. At first, he argues, it was used as a
“digression” in which to describe beautiful works of art and handicrafts, landscapes,
palaces, paintings, and so on. Such is the case with the famous description of the
shield of Achilles in the Iliad, for example (Il. 18.478-608). Later, at around the turn
of the first century, probably, the “before the eyes” portrayal of paintings in particular
had evolved from a mere “digression” into an independent literary form. Perhaps the
most well-known example of the stand-alone ekphrasis is the Tabula of Cebes from
the first century C.E. (Parsons 1904), a writing in which an old man undertakes to
explain the meaning of a painting—the scenes of which are realistically evoked in the
text—which was located in a temple of Cronus. Finally, at about the rise of the second
century renewal movement in the art of the rhetoric known as the Second Sophistic,
the ekphrasis had come to be appreciated as a tool by means of which to argue and
persuade. In addition to the Progymnasmata of Nicolaus, discussed briefly above, the
technique of the “vivid description” of persons, places, times, and events also figures
in other major rhetorical handbooks from antiquity—those of Hermogenes,
Aphthonius, and Theon, for example (Becker 1995: 24).

Do the fully life-like vignettes or ekphraseis in 4 Macc (e.g. 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19;
15.12-22; etc.) amount, then, to so many explicit “digressions” in the text, are they
self-sufficient literary centrepieces or are they deliberate manoeuvres in the author’s
rhetorical strategy? While helpful on an introductory level, Aune’s schema of the
three ages of ekphrasis has the potential to lead us to a false trilemma. Must the
ekphraseis in 4 Macc, in fact, be fitted into just one of these three categories:
digression, centrepiece or rhetorical strategy? Now that we have briefly oriented
ourselves to the nature of the ekphrasis in general—i.e., have seen that, whatever its
literary or rhetorical purpose, it is always marked by the characteristics of “vivid
description” and “ocular demonstration”—it will help us to immerse ourselves in the
particular, rather more specialised debates on how exactly it comes to function.
Should instances of ekphraseis, in ancient (and modern) literature in general and in 4 Macc in particular, really be regarded as so many explicit “digressions” from the text, side-lines as it were, mere ad-orn(a)ments? With regard to 4 Macc an instinctive answer might be in the affirmative: the torture sequences in the work (6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22; etc.) do seem like mere digressions, in the sense in which, at least for our modern sensibilities, they detract from the author’s cultivated argument for the nobility of the “divine philosophy” of the martyrs (7.9) and its practicality in the day-to-day struggles of his audience. But then again: why do we as readers prefer or prioritise the cultivated and the philosophical to the barbarous and “senseless” violence? For to assume at the outset that the link between philosophy and violence in the work is “distressing” and, therefore, “tenuous in the extreme,” as does Rajak (2001b: 111-13, 120), for example—i.e., that the addition of the torture vignettes adds nothing to the reasoning within but, on the contrary, makes it “artificial,” “not very profound” and “crude and eclectic”—is to miss the way the violence of 4 Macc is actually “interspersed” with the philosophy, and in such a way that the one cannot be separated from the other (Streete 2009: 27).

Such a re-orientation to the de facto overlap in 4 Macc between what has habitually been understood as its illuminated centre—its reasoned exposition of “philosophy,” or “narrative demonstration of temperate reason” (3.19)—and its benighted detours—its technicolor scenes of violence—fits well with the insights gleaned from what might be called the “new” appreciation in contemporary literary criticism for the far-reaching effects of ancient ekphraseis. We mean, by such a “new” appreciation, to signal those scholars who have sought to recover the ekphrasis from Lessing’s effective dismissal of it, in the eighteenth century, as blurring the boundaries—undesirably, problematically—between poetry, as diachronic art, and painting, as synchronic (Krieger 1990: 200). Lessing believed that while the archetype of the “ocular demonstration” that we cited above—Homer’s description of the shield of Achilles in the Iliad—provides “the only correct way of integrating descriptions into narrative” because it puts the former at the service of the latter (de Jong 2012: 10), Virgil’s rendering of the shield of Aeneas in the Aeneid supplies an object lesson in how not to write ekphraseis: the poetic experience here, in Lessing’s opinion, has become a “cold and tedious,” second-hand simulation of the visual one (quoted in Marshall 1997: 4.696). Whereas Homer depicts Hephaestus in the process of making
Achilles’ shield—thus keeping the time of his story going even in the midst of the ekphrastic “digression”—Virgil pauses his tale to describe Aeneas’ shield and thus only succeeds, for Lessing, in getting waylaid by the diversion. But are Hephaestus’ “decorations” really only for the sake of Homer’s story, as Lessing thought? Mitchell (1995: 176-81 [180]) points out that, in actual fact, Achilles’ shield “represents much more of Homer’s world than the Iliad does”—a detail that, once recognised, would see “[t]he relation of epic to ekphrasis…turned inside out” and the Homeric plot “become[] a fragment in the totalizing vision provided by [the] shield.” Something other than a strict “digression” or a rigorous set piece actually takes place in the ekphrasis, then: “[t]his is a utopian site that is both a space within the narrative, and an ornamented frame around it, a threshold across which the reader may enter and withdraw from the text at will” (Mitchell 1995: 178).

What lessons, at this stage, can we then apply from the shield of Achilles to the ekphraseis in 4 Macc? If the former is, for Mitchell, “an imagetext that displays rather than concealing [sic] its own suturing of space and time, description and narration, materiality and illusionistic representation,” could the same not also be said of a passage like 4 Macc 15.12-22, for example? This pericope is marked by the same sort of “here is…” and “there is…,” “close by stands…” and “not far off we see…” that Lessing so detested in Virgil (Marshall 1997: 4.696): but, more to the point, its ekphrasis comes so far after the fact—after the torture of the mother-martyr’s sons as narrated in the text—that it could hardly be said to add anything to the “narrative demonstration of temperate reason” (4 Macc 3.19) with which the work is (ostensibly) preoccupied. And yet, as we have already seen Streete (2009: 27) opine, “torture [in 4 Macc] is paradoxically the occasion for speaking against the dominant regime”: the violence of the work is, in other words, the sine qua non of its “philosophy.” The ekphraseis in the writing at hand, then, reflect in miniature the tension in the text between reason and violence, narrative and description, time and space: as “vivid description” each functions, in Scott’s concise formulation, as a synecdochic “descriptive inset [that] aspires to stand for, sometimes even stand in for, the larger world of which it is a part” (1994: 2; emphasis original). Like the epitaph in 4 Macc

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19 “The entire universe is depicted on the shield: nature and man; earth, sky, and ocean; cities at peace and at war; plowing, harvest, and vintage; herding and hunting; marriage, death, and even a scene of litigation…the whole world that is “other” to the epic action of the Iliad…” (Mitchell 1995: 180).
17.8-10—which sums up the essence of 4 Macc as “funeral oration” (ἐπιτάφιος λόγος; van Henten 1997: 65), almost like an epigraph—the ekphraseis of 4 Macc encapsulate the central themes of the work as “imagetext” or photo-graph. “Death for religion’s sake” (15.12; cf. 17.7): these words that open the third sequence of ekphraseis in 4 Macc serve not as an escape to yet another diversion in the text but, rather, as a pithy summary of the writing as a whole.

2.3. Jewish and Christian examples of ekphrasis

Despite the fact that the ekphrasis does not seem to have been taken up with much enthusiasm by the early Jews and Christians—for extant examples of the genre from these communities are rather few and far between—Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis) mentions three in particular that are of interest: Rev 17.1-6; Apoc. Ab. 21.7-29.21; and Herm. Vis. 3-4 and Sim. 6, 9. In this subsection, then, our aim will be to determine whether or not the scenes of vivid description in these three contemporary writings are of a type, or not, with those in 4 Macc. Here we will also begin to venture, where convenient, some preliminary comments on the utility or otherwise of the particular methodologies that scholars have used to interpret these Jewish and Christian ekphraseis—all with an eye to adopting or adapting these methods, or dismissing them outright, in the present investigation.

2.3.1. The polyvalent nature of ekphrastic imagery: Rev 17.1-6

In Rev 17.1-6 the seer meets with a vision of the “Whore of Babylon,” a sight that is unique in the Apocalypse for being entirely static: that is, without any kind of movement described. Aune (1998: 919ff.) notes the woman’s characterisation as a “prostitute” and her seated pose “by many waters” (17.1), on a beast with “seven heads” (17.3), and suggests the scene is an ekphrasis modelled on the “Dea Roma” sestertius minted under Vespasian in 71 C.E., which could have been itself modelled

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20 In the context of his search for the “photo-text”—the words for which a given image cries out, or the image for which a given text cries out—Stafford considers the value of the ekphrasis as a way to avoid the pitfalls of either text or image as simple, mechanical description of the other: “The Greek prefix ‘ek’ means ‘detachable’, so ekphrasis is a discourse that is ‘périégétique’, ‘qui “conduit autour”’, but which is also a kind of ‘hypotyposis’” (citing Bernard Gibert; Stafford 2010: 52). In other words, the ekphrasis “has important analogies with photography” in that it provides a faithful record of the moment (as “hypotyposis”) but without turning it into a nature morte (Stafford 2010: 204 n. 96).
on another sculpture or bas-relief. On this coin the goddess is depicted sitting on the seven hills of Rome alongside representations of the river God Tiber and of Romulus and Remus suckling the she-wolf (*lupa* also carrying the connotation of “prostitute”). According to Aune and Streett, the ekphrasis in Rev 17.1-6 would then function as a biting parody that turns a piece of Roman propaganda totally against itself (Aune 2006: 140; Streett 2009: 303).

But the correlation that Aune has stumbled upon between Rev 17.1-6 and the Dea Roma coin—an exceptional find, to be sure, given the obvious difficulty of linking one particular literary ekphrasis with one particular pictorial model—should not preclude other readings of the literary imagery within, as Knight observes. The polyvalent nature of the symbolism in ekphrasis—its ability to affect the reader “with a synergy of historical, literary, mythical, and archetypal allusions”—makes it difficult “to establish a one-to-one correspondence between an image in the text and an element from the historical context” (Knight 2005: 105-6). The same, we will argue in this thesis, is the case in 4 Macc. But this is not necessarily to argue that the imagery in ekphrasis can be somehow unanchored from its specific historical context in a kind of “anything goes” hermeneutic. As we will see, it is rather to assert that “objective” historical evidence cannot be regarded as the sole arbiter of a text’s meaning, especially where that meaning is produced on a variety of levels, as in 4 Macc: as history, literature, philosophical diatribe, etc.

2.3.2. *Ekphrasis as an attempt to “name the unnameable”: Apoc. Ab. 21.7-29.21*

In the first or second century C.E. *Apocalypse of Abraham*, the patriarch, having ascended into heaven (15.4-5), is invited to “[l]ook now beneath your feet at the firmament [Slavonic *prostirte*, lit. “a spreading out broadly”] and understand the creation that was depicted of old [stênevamju, lit. “formerly shadowed”] on this expanse [protjaženie, lit. “a pulling out tightly”]” (*Apoc. Ab. 21.1*)\(^{21}\). In 21.7 we then

\(^{21}\) Using the edition of Rubinkiewicz 1983: 1.689-705. For the vocabulary in this text of “heaven,” “firmament,” “expanse,” etc., see especially Lunt’s note 19a in Rubinkiewicz 1983: 698. Although it would be tempting to read the Slavonic words *prostirte* and *protjaženie*—“a spreading out broadly” and “a pulling out tightly” respectively—as related to some kind of preparation of a *surface* upon which to paint, Lunt observes that these words “doubtless reflect forms based on Gk. *ten*” and thus the image does not seem to be able to be sustained. Collins (2000: 35-6) offers another brief discussion of these terms.
read, “And I saw there [in the firmament] a great crowd of men and women and children, half of them on the right side of the portrayal [obrazistvo], and half of them on the left side of the portrayal.” Through the next nine or so chapters, God invites Abraham to “Look at the picture!” (26.7; cf. 23.1; 24.3; 29.4) and understand the explanation offered of the future of both his stock and of the world at large.

An important observation recently made by Schäfer about the character of the Apocalypse of Abraham draws attention to a facet of the text whose importance in orienting us in the present study cannot be overstated:

The entire narrative in the Apocalypse of Abraham is a graphic dramatization of the enigmatic phrase that opens Gen. 15: “the word of the Lord came to Abram in a vision [ba-mahazeh],” with its apparent tension between the spoken word and the seen vision, in other words, between an audition and a vision. (2011: 87; emphasis original)

The question for us, in other words, is to what extent and in what detail the same kind of “enigma” or “tension between the spoken word and the seen vision” exists in the ekphraseis in 4 Macc. We have already noted above (section [2.2]), in the course of establishing a “new” perspective on 4 Macc in which its “vivid descriptions” would be brought from the periphery to the centre of the text, that there is, in fact, a certain antagonism in the work between time and space, narrative and description, philosophy and violence, etc., and therefore between text and image as well. Moreover, if the “catachrestic” quality of much of the ekphrasis in the Apocalypse of Abraham suggests that its author stretches here to describe something that is at heart indescribable—i.e., the vision of God that is only hinted at in Genesis—could the same not be said of 4 Macc as well? In resorting to the spoken, written and painted word, instead of just one of these, and by mixing metaphors and imagery drawn from the realms of lection, audition and vision, we will suggest in this thesis that our author, too, is stretching to somehow express the inexpressible.

Miller defines the catachresis as “an example of the forced or abusive transfer of terms from an alien realm to name something that has no proper name in itself since it is not an object which can be directly confronted by the senses”—hence, what I am calling here an effort to “describe the indescribable” (Miller quoted in Eaglestone 1997: 68). For one example in the Apocalypse of Abraham, see 8.1, where the act of hearing takes on a curiously visual quality: “the voice of the Mighty One came down from the heavens in a stream of fire...” (my emphasis).
2.3.3. Ekphrasis and the “allegorical” mode of its interpretation:

Herm. Vis. 3-4 and Sim. 6, 9

The static and didactic nature of the vision reports in the Shepherd of Hermas—especially Herm. Vis. 3-4 and Sim. 6, 9—has led a number of scholars to speculate that the work was written under the direct influence of the ekphraseis in the Tabula of Cebes (see [2.2] above; cf. Taylor 1901; id. 1903). Aune tries to move beyond the question of immediate influence, however, and suggests that the “real issue…is whether Hermas”—like John in Rev 17—“adapted the ekphrasis genre by basing literary vision reports on allegorical interpretations of pictures” (1998: 924; my emphasis). But since we must remain sceptical, at least, that the question of the “original” pictorial model for Hermas can ever be definitively solved, does this mean we have arrived at an impasse in the interpretation of the work from the point of view of its ekphraseis?

It is here that the question of how the ekphraseis were originally intended to be understood comes into its own, an issue at which we have only hinted up until now by suggesting that with the Second Sophistic the vivid description came to be used as a chiefly rhetorical device. According to Aune (2003: s.v. ekphrasis), the interpretation of the ekphrasis could have been either literal—i.e., according to the “face value” of the work of art itself—or allegorical, in which particular features of the artwork invited new moral (Tabula of Cebes) or religious (Lucian’s Heracles) insight. The relationship between the physical painting and the literary ekphrasis was sometimes, then, a rather opportunistic one: the conceit of the artwork, or static “tableau,” being treated as nothing more than a convenient yet especially convincing way to get one’s “deeper” point across. It is for this reason that the absence today of a particular physical work of art—either with relation to Hermas or to 4 Macc itself (but see the imagined painting in 4 Macc 17.7)—should not stop the interpreter from reading a

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23 See, for example, the explanation of the action of the Tabula of Cebes provided by Elsner (2007: 185-6): “In the Tabula of Cebes, a philosophic allegory of a picture drawing on eclectic sources and purporting to offer salvation both to the viewers of the image and to the readers of the text, the viewers’ initial aporia before the subject matter of a picture is presented as a reflection of their aporia before the problem of life itself (from which a correct understanding of the image is going to save them)” (emphasis mine). In very broad terms, then, I see the author and readers of 4 Macc wrestling, in the ekphraseis in the text, with much the same kind of aporia: could it be life itself that is the indescribable subject matter for which the push and pull of time and space, narrative and description, word and image is the only possible approximation (cf. [2.3.2] above)?
particular text as ekphrasis. Exactly how such a reading may proceed, taking into account the ancient allegorical mode of interpretation of ekphraseis in which detailed knowledge of the surface of a certain painting was not the principal objective, but the more fundamental truths “within,” will be suggested further on in this Introduction (see section [3] below).

2.4. A “poststructuralist turn” in the interpretation of 4 Macc

Commentaries on 4 Macc are, on the whole, limited to introductions and annotations in scholarly Bibles and editions of the Pseudepigrapha, though there are of course exceptions. Rare has been the exegete sufficiently unencumbered to address himself to “a text that has always remained outside the church’s canon, yet still lurks about the fringes of certain Septuagint codices like an uninvited guest at a wedding reception,” to borrow deSilva’s memorable characterisation of the text (see the Preface to id. 1998). Rarer still has been the exegete prepared to tackle 4 Macc from outside the strictures of traditional historical-critical categories: to go beyond such details as its date, context, structure, form, and so on.

The essays that form the heart of this literature review on 4 Macc are to be welcomed as innovative contributions toward the understanding of this important but oft-forgotten text, above all in their methodological presuppositions. All of them, as the title of this section suggests, could be classified as interpretations of our text in poststructuralist perspective, a broad rubric that encompasses such reading practices as “deconstruction, New Historicism, postcolonial theory, queer theory, and major academic variants of “third-wave” feminism”24. Just what this means in practice will hopefully become clear as we review each paper in brief and then draw some preliminary conclusions further below. For the moment though, it is enough to borrow a figure from Moore and describe these papers as essays that have attempted to “burst out” of the “enclosure” of institutional biblical criticism (2010d: 2): to unleash the text, as it were, and its full range of meaning from the strictures and neuroses of overly-formalist and positivist exegetes. Hence the important prefix “post-” in our description of their work: at the very least, each of the following scholars hints at the

24 For a helpful definition (of sorts) of “poststructuralism,” see Moore 2010d: 1-2 n. 1.
potential of a fresh appreciation of a dusty, forgotten book all too often left on the biblical scholar’s shelf.

2.4.1. The deconstruction of “self” and “other,” “Jew” and “Greek” in 4 Macc

The work of Lieu (2002) supplies us with an introduction of sorts to what we are calling here a poststructuralist turn in the interpretation of 4 Macc, a label meant, as we have said, as a kind of shorthand for a reading practice, applied to our text, that systematically challenges any uniformity of ideology, with respect to group identity, gender, politics, or the like, that author or reader seek to impose. For our purposes in this thesis, Lieu's most important contribution in this paper rests in her analysis of the way in which the classical locus of the self/other dichotomy in antiquity, Greek/barbarian, is redefined in 4 Macc—however precariously—25—as a distinction between Jew/Greek.

But even to say that a clear-cut boundary between “Jew” and “Greek” is erected in our text is putting the matter too simply, for Lieu (2002: 302) rightly observes that “boundaries” in the ancient world are sites of fluidity, “negotiation and “interchange”: zones of mutual influence. So it is, for example, that the author of 4 Macc, a Jew, has no qualms about writing in the Greek language and in a quintessentially “Greek” literary style, something which the author of the Letter of Aristeas, in another time and place, would have found “contrary to nature” (Let. Aris. 44). The point is that the constant redrawing of boundaries in the varied texts of the Second Temple period, according to different times and places and the shifting nuances of cultural interaction, “often makes it very difficult to discern clearly ‘the other’ who is excluded” (Lieu 2002: 310). Not only the “other” though, but also to discern the “self”: that is, the identity of the group whose communal experiences gave birth to the text. And although Lieu’s major concern in her paper is to call for a rereading of the “separation of the ways” between ancient “Judaism” and “Christianity” in general, her advice to pay close attention to the boundaries of the text as a way of understanding

25 That Lieu’s project here could be broadly described as a deconstructive one is evident throughout, even if she gently chides those scholars who she says “[have] become fixated by de/constructing the permeable boundaries of ‘Judaism and Hellenism’.” “So formulated,” she counters, “this is not even a ‘subsidiary crater’ in the texts’ own constructions” (2002: 305).
evolving rhetorical strategies in ancient “Judaism” and “Christianity” amounts to a
call for a re-reading of the “map” of interpretation of 4 Macc in particular.

2.4.2. 4 Macc and masculinity studies: 
the stand-off between Antiochus and the martyrs as contest of “true manliness”

Moore and Anderson begin their paper (2010) with a panorama of the four cardinal 
virtues of the ancient world—prudence (φρόνησις, 4 Macc 1.2), temperance 
(σωφροσύνη, 1.3), justice (δικαιοσύνη, 1.4) and courage (ανδρεία, 1.4) and then 
situate them in the context of 4 Macc, specifically as manifestations of what the 
author calls “devout reason” (ὁ εὐσεβὴς λογισμός, 1.1). In a deft exegetical move, 
though, they proceed to redefine ἀνδρεία as “manliness”—from ἀνήρ, “man”—thus 
throwing new light on the text that challenges conventional historical-
critical interpretations. “As much as anything else, then,” Moore and Anderson announce, “4 
Maccabees is about what it means to be a “true man”” (2010: 179).

The author of 4 Macc is able to demonstrate his thesis that “devout reason is 
sovereign over the emotions” (1.1) by way of recourse to the “manly courage” 
(ἀνδραγαθίας) displayed by the martyrs as they died “for the sake of virtue” (1.8). 
The self-control (ἐγκράτεια, see e.g. 5.34; etc.) of the Nine challenges the control over 
others that Antiochus enjoys as the supreme index of masculinity and strength. This 
great irony of the text, though—that the “weak” old priest, the widow and the seven 
young boys humiliate the “strong” tyrant (see e.g. 11.24; etc.)—ends upon reinforcing 
the predominant connections between masculinity and domination and femininity and 
subjugation in the ancient world, even as it shifts the mark of masculinity just a bit. 
Self-mastery might have replaced mastery of others as the ultimate masculine trait, 
but since the martyrs end up mastering Antiochus, the “mastery of others is still a 
central value and still celebrated” (Moore and Anderson 2010: 199).

2.4.3. 4 Macc and feminist analysis: the mother as Abraham’s peer

Moore and Anderson argue that the mother is the one figure who has been mastered 
most of all by the end of 4 Macc, relegated to the role of dutiful daughter and 
housewife in her own speech of 18.6-19. From the very beginning of her chapter
(1991), however, Darling Young sets out to disrupt such a reading and to challenge any tendency towards the domestication of the mother in the cult of the martyrs that continues to this day: to celebrate her, rather, as “progenetrix of the same order as [Abraham]” (1991: 81).

What is important for the scholar in her paper is both to recover the name of the mother and to “assess her inner life and her public role” (Darling Young 1991: 67-8). This she achieves by founding her reading on the honorific bestowed upon the mother at 4 Macc 14.20: “she was of the same mind as Abraham” (τὴν Ἀβρααμ ὀμώψυχον). Like the patriarch with Isaac (4 Macc 13.12; 16.20), the saintly mother overcame parental affection for the sake of God’s promises, and rather than break a commandment, she effectively delivered them up to death (16.15-24). For this reason it is as if the mother has given “rebirth for immortality to the whole number of her sons” (16.13): because she showed forth the courage of her faith and set a good example for her children, they now shine forever as stars in the firmament (17.2-6; 18.23-24; cf. Gen 15.5-6). Even if Darling Young overreaches here in holding that “the prominence of the mother [in 4 Macc] might prompt a modern interpreter to speculate that the work was produced with an audience of women in mind” (1991: 81), her study still highlights the great potential for breaking new interpretive ground that inheres in the “poststructuralist” reading of 4 Macc.

2.4.4. 4 Macc and postcolonial analysis: the martyrs as non-violent heroes

DeSilva’s paper (2007) represents a distinct trajectory in what we have here called the poststructuralist turn in the interpretation of 4 Macc, looking at the text as it does through the “lens” of postcolonial rather than deconstruction, masculinity studies or deconstructive criticism. That his study is not altogether different, however, from those of Lieu, Moore and Anderson, and Darling Young can be seen in the way it still revolves around a particular conceptual dichotomy in the text (what we will call further on in this Introduction a “binary opposition”). Instead of in our author’s

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26 Echoing the general reluctance of theorists to label “deconstructive” reading a “method,” a “critical practice,” an “act,” or an “operation” (for more on which reading, see section [3] below), deSilva is careful to stress that his work, and postcolonial interpretation in general, is more of a “hermeneutic,” a “mindset,” a “subversive stance,” and finally “a lens through which to take a new look at Scripture and the way it has been, and can be, interpreted and used in real-life political and social situations” (2007: 99-100).
construction of Jew/Greek or male/female, deSilva is interested in his understanding of coloniser/colonised, asking how 4 Macc promotes and critiques particular ideas of empire, the subaltern, power and resistance (2007: 100-101).

DeSilva’s conclusion is twofold, and corresponds largely to what might be called the political implications of our author’s project of masculinising the martyrs, representatives of an enslaved people, and feminising their masters, to which Moore and Anderson and Darling Young have already drawn our attention. The more the heroes of the work become “true men”—i.e., come to be situated at the privileged end of the continuum of ancient gender identity—the more honour accumulates to their way of life and the more credibility and effectiveness attaches to the strategy of non-violent resistance advocated by the author in the face of the danger of acculturation. That is, all the more realistic and dignified becomes his philosophy of 1), the spirited “valuing” of the indigenous heritage (e.g. the defence of “education in the law” against the model of the gymnasium, 4 Macc 1.17-18; 4.19-20); 2), the well-timed deployment of “defiant speech” and “exemplary action” (e.g. Eleazar’s refusal even to pretend to eat pork, 6.15-23); and 3), the maintenance of close solidarity among every one of the downtrodden people (“all with one voice together, as from one mind,” 8.29; etc.; deSilva 2007: 112-25). Moreover, the masculinisation of the martyrs strikes a blow at the very heart of the feminised and their culture, insofar as the claim is made that the Jews are more Greek than the Greeks. By the fact of the martyrs demonstrating exemplary self-discipline they prove the Jewish way of life to be the legitimate heir of the best of Greek philosophy and a more than worthy constitution by which to be self-governing.

2.4.5. Reading 4 Macc intertextually: retelling the story of David’s thirst

According to deSilva in another study of his (2006b), the story of David’s thirst in 4 Macc 3.6-18 provides fertile ground for yet another kind of poststructuralist analysis, this time in terms of intertextuality. That is, it is his contention that the study of the way in which the author of 4 Macc has freely rewritten a story found in 2 Sam 23 and 1 Chr 11, as well as in Josephus (A.J. 7.12.4), can help shed light on his particular rhetorical goals in the work and provide certain clues as to his social location.
As deSilva (2006b: 38) interprets it, in 4 Macc the tale has come to serve as an argument from example that advances the author’s thesis that “reason can provide a way for us not to be enslaved by desire” (3.2). This is in marked contrast to the deployment of the story in Josephus and the biblical books, where the focus is squarely on lauding the bravery of David’s men (who rate hardly a mention in the retelling in 4 Macc, 3.12). Just as David conquers the burning sensation of thirst by offering to God the water obtained for him at great danger to the young soldiers and hence “equivalent to blood” (3.15-16), so the “temperate mind” formed by the Law can conquer and quench all manner of “frenzied desires” and “bodily agonies” (3.17-18). In fact, there is no desire that so “torments” and “inflames,” “undoes” and “consumes” a person that reason cannot keep in check (cf. 3.10-11). For deSilva (2006b: 35), the author’s argument here is that even the desire, such as David’s, of “wanting what they have” (“the water in the enemy’s territory,” 3.11)—as would have been the experience of Diaspora Jews covetous of those things the Greek culture would offer them if only they would relax their dietary, cultic and other legal obligations—can be sated by continuing on the virtuous course and paying heed to noble reason (3.18).

2.5. The form of 4 Macc and the question of methodology in its interpretation:
some preliminary observations

Might there be a way in which to interpret 4 Macc that is attentive to the synecdochic (section [2.2] above), polyvalent [2.3.1] and catachrestic [2.3.2] nature of the language of its ekphraseis, but yet does not assume that these literary “vivid descriptions”—these broader “allegories” of life [2.3]—are based on particular, concrete works of art? This is the first important question that this literature review—centred on our rough idea, hypothetical at this stage, of 4 Macc as ekphrasis(e)is—has attempted to think through. The constellation of methodologies represented by the idea of a “poststructuralist turn” in the interpretation of 4 Macc (section [2.4]) has suggested some intriguing ways to proceed, but the prospect of analysing the notions of vicarious substitution and atonement in the work from a masculinity studies, feminist or postcolonial perspective raises certain problems of which we need to be aware. Specifically, these issues have to do with the personal voice in textual interpretation, and with the genderedness and social location of the interpreter.
Is it right for a man to attempt to do feminist exegesis, or for a middle-class Caucasian person to read a text in postcolonial perspective? This is not necessarily to abandon these rich interpretative possibilities prematurely, but if we wish to follow Moore’s good advice for (extra)biblical scholars—that we must learn not to appropriate the struggle of others and to speak directly for them—we would do well to proceed with some caution. Lieu’s project of the deconstruction of “self” and “other,” “Jew” and “Greek” in 4 Macc—as informed by Moore and Anderson’s masculinity studies angle, Darling Young’s feminism, and deSilva’s postcolonial and intertextual insights—seems to us to be the sturdiest theoretical springboard from which to leap into our project of uncovering the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc, particularly given what we have already seen of the way in which the work “deconstructs” itself in its ekphraseis as well. Not only do the “binary oppositions” in 4 Macc around self/other and Jew/Greek implode at the slightest application of serious critical pressure, as Lieu has discovered, but an analogous turning inside out also comes to pass with such conceptual dichotomies as time/space, narrative/description and philosophy/violence as well.

3. Presentation of the problem:
4 Macc and the ἀντίψυχος in “deconstructive” perspective

3.1. Introduction

In our general introduction and literary review sections we have seen how 4 Macc eludes easy interpretative categories with respect to its canonical status (canonical/pseudepigraphal), form (text/audition/image), audience (men/women), etc. Having arrived at our section on methodology, then, we notice the garment that is our text already “bursting its seams,” as it were. These and other “loose threads” in the writing demand our attention as unresolved “problems” in the interpretation of the work, but before that, and more importantly, they are in the first place simply irresistible invitations to read. “[W]e have aimed to please those who wish to read,” announces the author of 2 Macc (2.25)—an admirable aim for a writing project with

27 In the context, specifically, of an advertisement of the political, economic and socio-cultural stakes involved in the “postmodernism of resistance” represented by “feminism”, or l’écriture féminine: “…the “post” of postmodernism must be driven deep into the privilege of the white, Western male…” (2010e: 22-3).
which the author of 4 Macc would have been thoroughly familiar, given it comes from his principal source. And as Barthes reminds us, pleasure in reading (*jouissance*) is to be found where the (textual) garment “gapes,” in the interruptions, breakdowns and gaps in which the reader is discomforted, his assumptions challenged and “where, perhaps, something unorthodox or unexpected occurs” (Cuddon and Preston 1998: s.v. *plaisir/jouissance*; Barthes 1975: 13-4).

*Deconstruction* is an interpretive strategy that has been likened to pulling at the loose threads of a text—an Ariadne’s thread—attempting to escape from a Cretan labyrinth of (mis)interpretation. As Barthes puts it: “In the multiplicity of writing, everything is to be *disentangled*, nothing *deciphered*; the structure can be followed, ‘run’ (like the thread of a stocking) at every point and at every level…the space of writing is to be ranged over, not pierced…” (1977: 147; emphasis original). Unravelling the loose ends of the text, running them through one’s fingers, following them to see where they lead: such is one interpretation of the deconstructive mode of reading. And one monument of the labyrinthine landscape of interpretation around which the loose threads of the text threaten to form Gordian knots is the edifice of the “binary opposition”: self/other, Jew/Greek, time/space, narrative/description, philosophy/violence, etc., just as we have already seen. But before we tackle in detail that particular feature on the horizon, however, we must follow Barthes’ advice and traverse the terrain of 4 Macc a little more, making a careful, more in-depth survey all the while of a number of things—not least of all its quality of *ekphrasis*, all too briefly alluded to above (e.g. section [2.2])—that will enable us to see why reading deconstructively will help us better understand this text.

We have mentioned above that 4 Macc has a number of features in common with the ancient genre of the *ekphrasis*. Here in this section of our Introduction we will look in some detail at the opinion of deSilva, one of the only commentators who has taken seriously this commonly overlooked but absolutely vital aspect of the text. Further below we will take our “new” perspective on the ekphrasis gained in section [2.2] above—as something *more* than a superfluous “digression” or “ornament” to narrative—and set it within the context of 4 Macc, taking notice of the way that, now

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28 The metaphor is a favourite of Miller, for example: see Miller 1992. For helpful explications of the idea, see Abrams 2005: 206-9; Eckstein 1990: 33-4; Harwood 1995: 166.
considered as an outward-looking or *synecdochic* “descriptive inset,” this figure forces us to rethink what is central and peripheral, essential and tangential in the writing. The final part of this section will then suggest how the work under consideration—not just as text but as a (word-)*painting* of the “history” of the “religion” of the martyrs whose story it relates (cf. 4 Macc 17.7)—is particularly well-suited to, and indeed *invites*, a “deconstructive” reading.

### 3.2. *Ekphrasis in 4 Macc*

Despite all the discussion in the commentaries on the genre of 4 Macc its character of *ekphrasis*, or “vivid description,” still wants for comprehensive scholarly consideration. Hadas (1953: 233) reflects what is perhaps the typical attitude of scholars before this curious aspect of the text, relegating as he does his only mention of the ekphraseis in 4 Macc to a footnote on 17.7. At least deSilva goes a bit further, as we have hinted—but although he applies the label to 4 Macc 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; and 15.12-22 his analysis can hardly be said to do justice to this important element of the work:

…the author displays his mastery of the rhetorical technique of “vivid description” (*ekphrasis*)…not to offend the sensibilities of the audience but to heighten their appreciation of the martyrs’ endurance through the vivid, chilling depiction of their sufferings. This contributes to the author’s portrayal of the extreme case that ought to facilitate resistance and steadfastness in the audience’s more moderate difficulties…. (1998: 68, 72 [68])

This is certainly true enough, insofar as it goes, but it also tends to raise more questions than it answers. Do the highly graphic scenes of torture in the work really not “offend…sensibilities”? How can a text send a “chill[]” down a reader’s spine? Why exactly should the overwhelming depravity of detail in 4 Macc enable the argument a fortiori and encourage the audience to imitate the endurance of the heroes in their lesser struggle? Or, to push even further, as deSilva writes:

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29 To the effect that “[t]he use of a painting to convey a moral story is familiar in later Greek literature; *cf.* the opening of *Tabula Cebetis* [i.e., the *Tabula of Cebe*] and of Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe*. Descriptions of works of art and their effects were a regular department of rhetoric, called *ekphrasis*.”
...[T]he author exercises all his skill in *ekphrasis*...in 15.12-22, making the sufferings of the seven children as vivid as possible, implanting on the audience the sense-impressions that struck the mother with overwhelming force. (1998: 72)

How can 4 Macc, or any other text for that matter, inflict a series of fateful body blows to the reader and still incite admiration and emulation? DeSilva has his finger on the pulse of the text here—that is, he has uncovered something of tremendous import—and even more so when he remarks elsewhere that 4 Macc is so rich in ekphrasis “that audiences still squirm when reading or hearing the text, even as the author anticipates in 14.9” (2007: 103). Lurid depictions (ekphraseis) of the shocking tortures of the Maccabean martyrs produce a “shudder” (14.9; 17.7), the kind of holy fear that impels the people to take up again the observance of the law and which in turn leads to peace and harmony in the land (18.4): such could be one possible *résumée* of the action of 4 Macc, or at least its most enduring impression. But how exactly do these ekphraseis work? If they appear as “vivid descriptions” of the tortures of the *martyrs* of 4 Macc—15.12-22, for example, spares no detail in relating the dreadful sufferings of the brother-martyrs unto “death for religion’s sake” (15.12)—does that mean that these ekphraseis are *necessary* so as to bring “before the eyes” of the audience the martyrs as *vicarious substitute and sacrifice* (*ἀντίψυχος*)? In this thesis, as we attempt to answer the first question, we will find our answer to the second to be an emphatic *yes*—the ekphraseis of 4 Macc *are* required for the appearance of the *ἀντίψυχος*, by the logic of the most “literal” and *complete* of the ekphraseis in the work: that of the painting of the “history of your religion” described in 17.7.

3.3. *From ekphraseis in to the ekphrasis of 4 Macc: the text as “painting” (4 Macc 17.7)*

In 17.7 the author of 4 Macc likens his work in writing his story to the task of a painter “painting from life” (*ζωγράφω*) the “history” of the martyrs’ “religion”\(^{30}\). Van

\(^{30}\) Even though the possessive in the phrase “…the history of your religion…” (τὴν τῆς ἑσπερίας σου ἱστορίαν) in 17.7 is in the singular (σου)—i.e., referring to the *mother-martyr* only—the imagined painting may be said to encompass the trials of *all* of the martyrs indiscriminately, as the mention of the mother “enduring” the “varied tortures” of her “seven children” in 17.7b makes clear. Not only that, in fact, but as further support of the reading defended here we might also cite John Chrysostom’s
Henten (1997: 76) speculates that the turn of phrase is taken from 2 Macc 2.29; if that is the case, putting these two texts side-by-side will help us understand more clearly how to read and understand 4 Macc in its character of a “word-painting,” or ekphrasis:

For as [καθόπερ] the master builder of a new house must be concerned with the whole construction, while the one who undertakes its painting [ζωγραφεῖν] and decoration [ἐγκαίειν] has to consider only what is suitable for its adornment [διακόσμησιν], such in my judgment is the case with us. It is the duty of the original historian [τῷ τῆς ἱστορίας ἁρμηγέτῃ] to occupy the ground, to discuss matters from every side, and to take trouble with details, but the one who recasts the narrative [τὸ... σύντομον τῆς λέξεως] should be allowed to strive for brevity of expression [τὸ ἐξεργαστικὸν τῆς πραγματείας] and to forego exhaustive treatment [τῷ τήν μετάφρασιν ποιουμένῳ]. (2 Macc 2.29-31)

If it were possible for us to paint [ζωγραφήσαι] the history of your religion as [ὦςπερ] an artist might, would not those who first beheld it have shuddered [οὐκ ἄν ἔφριτον] as they saw the mother of the seven children enduring their varied tortures to death for the sake of religion? (4 Macc 17.7)

We have already seen above that it would be very much in keeping with the ancient canons of the ekphrasis to regard its manifestations not only as “vivid description[s]” but also as “ornamental digression[s] that refuse[] to be merely ornamental” (Heffernan 1993: 5), as outward-looking “descriptive insets” in the principal text. But here, if we can extrapolate from 2 Macc to 4 Macc, it seems as though the author of this last regards the entirety of his “work”—the “narrative demonstration” of the “varied tortures” of the martyrs (cf. 4 Macc 3.19)—as an “adornment,” whether to the “original histor[y]” of Jason of Cyrene (2 Macc 2.23, 30), to the “abbreviation” and “adornment” of this history in 2 Macc (2.26, 28, 31), or perhaps to both of these texts. It is as if the author of 4 Macc seeks to paint, decorate and adorn a “house”—a fourth century advice to himself and his listeners that they “inscribe [the] contests and wrestling matches [of the martyrs] on our heart as if on a tablet [τοὺς ἀγώνας καὶ τὰ παλαιόματα ὀσπέρ ἐπὶ πίνακος τινος τῆς καρδίας ὑμῶν ἀπογράφαντες]”: the parallel is relevant for our purposes in that it echoes precisely the ὀσπέρ ἐπὶ πίνακος τινος of 4 Macc 17.7 while opening up the subject matter of the envisioned artwork to the children (and Eleazar), and not just the mother (Chrysostom, Macc. 1, quoted in Mayer and Neil 2006: 135-45).
history—already painted, decorated and adorned by the author of 2 Macc, his principal source: or instead, that he seeks to add to this structure, already twice worked-over, a monumental “painting”—or cycle of monumental (word)“paintings”—of the martyrs’ religion and heroic endurance (e.g. 4 Macc 6.1-30; 9.10-12.19; 15.12-22). The ekphraseis in 4 Macc uncovered by Hadas and deSilva, then, would be individual episodes in a larger ekphrasis that encompasses the whole work, or at least the part devoted therein to the demise of the Jewish heroes under Antiochus (3.19-18.24): the most poly-faceted (πολλαχόθεν) and trans-cendent (ἀλλαχόθεν) examples of “noble bravery” (ἀνδραγαθίας) that the author can adduce both to “show” his thesis (ἐπιδείξας; ἀποδείξαμι)—in all the senses of that word—and to edify his audience (1.7-8).

So it is, at any rate, that the “line” in 4 Macc between “text” and “image,” “work” (ἔργον) and “adornment” (πάρεργον) comes to be blurred, definitively. Derrida’s remarks on “ergon” and “parergon” are entirely to the point here:

A parergon comes against, beside, and in addition to the ergon, the work done, the fact, the work, but it does not fall to one side, it touches and cooperates within the operation, from a certain outside. Neither simply outside nor simply inside…. The parergon inscribes something which comes as an extra, exterior to the proper field…but whose transcendent exteriority comes to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against the limit itself and intervene in the inside...

(Derrida 1987: 53, 56; emphasis original)

How we can proceed, though, to interpret 4 Macc if we are not sure where the margin ends, as it were, and the text begins? The answer to this question, we here suggest in this thesis, has to do with the introduction into 4 Macc of a “decorative” element—super- or par-erogatory—found neither in the weighty “chronological” tomes of Jason of Cyrene nor in the poetic “abridgement” of this history in 2 Macc (2.23-24, 26-31): that is, with the introduction into 4 Macc of the ἄντίψυχος, the vicarious substitute and sacrifice. There is something “more” to 4 Macc as ekphrasis—as lurid word-painting, uncomfortably true-to-life, of the unspeakable, death-dealing tortures of its martyrs—something “more” that, above and beyond re-presenting the salvific endurance of these heroes, also brings about a “shudder” in those who hear of their
fortitude (17.7). That something “more”, as we shall see, is the figure of the ἄντίψυχος: a figure whose very name, even—an enigmatic near-neologism—reveals its coming to the text of 4 Macc from beyond the “proper field” of writing, even of language itself—it is coming “to play, abut onto, brush against, rub, press against…and intervene in the inside” of the text (Derrida).

3.4. 4 Macc: from ekphrasis to “deconstruction”

Inasmuch as the lines between “inside” and “outside,” “true history” and “poetical history,” “work” and “adornment,” etc. are blurred in 4 Macc, the text invites a particular kind of reading: that of deconstruction. Or, more precisely, for the fact of its being an ekphrasis rather than a “mere” text—a (word-)painting, according to the sense given in 17.7 to the foregoing descriptions of the “varied tortures” of the martyrs—4 Macc invites the reader to take account of the peculiar way by which meaning is (de)constructed in this particular genre: that is, via the disruption of what Krieger calls the “aesthetic of the natural sign”:

In speaking of ekphrasis…I have pointed to its source in the semiotic desire for the natural sign, the desire, that is, to have the world captured in the word…. It is this naïve desire that leads us to prefer the immediacy of the picture to the mediation of the code in our search for a tangible, “real” referent that would render the sign transparent. (1992: 7, 11; my emphasis)

As we have already seen, the ekphrasis, at first glance, seems to furnish just such a desire “to have the world captured in the word” in its quality of life-like description. On closer inspection, however, the supplanting nature of its “supplements”—the fact that its “descriptive insets” or “digressions” or “ornaments” in fact open outwards onto the world as ekphraseis—throws off our focus. In effect, 4 Macc functions as an “adornment” to an “adornment” (2 Macc), as a representation of a representation. As “poetical” history, it is a rewriting of an already rewritten “true” history found in 2 Macc 3-7; as “adornment,” it is the (word-)painting of the “history of your religion” mentioned in 4 Macc 17.7. And as such, rather than removing barriers between the

31 For a helpful discussion on this excerpt of Krieger’s see Bolter 1996: 264.
“world” and the “word,” as we assumed in likening the ekphrasis to the photo-graph, our text actually throws them up. Rather than being located at first remove from the action, like the work of Jason of Cyrene, of 2 Macc, or of the great mural, mythical or not, 4 Macc is actually at second remove, and it is this doubling in distance that enables the program of its author, even as it makes it more difficult to interpret. Stepping back from the compiler’s responsibility for “exact details” (2 Macc 2.28, 30)—in other words, from the temporal concerns of the “narratives of history” (2 Macc 2.24)—frees our author to concentrate on the spatial considerations that, we have already said, are proper to a painting. But there is yet another element to be taken into account here, as Erickson points out:

...[I]f one does not place this doubly distant representation [i.e., the ekphrasis] against the backdrop of a fixed object “out there” then ironically enough, the ekphrastic representation “corresponds” more closely to a reality which is not representable in its totality (or perhaps at all). The ekphrastic image is a natural-like sign of an unrepresentable referent in that it is a reminder of the contingency and artificiality of the natural-sign. (2010: 150; my emphasis)

A “natural-like sign of unrepresentable referent”: such is, we will argue in this thesis, the reality of the ekphrastic depiction of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc—of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice as painted in words. The author of 4 Macc picks up his paintbrush to “paint” his story “as an artist might” (17.7), oddly enough without a particular surface upon which to do so—the reader takes up her position as onlooker (cf. 15.20)—and both find themselves in the midst of a scene of unspeakable cruelty.

But to pull back from the ekphraseis of the abysmal suffering of the martyrs as do...

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32 Cf. section [2.2] of this Introduction above. For more on this, see Louvel 2011: 45-6: “The insertion or inclusion within the flux of the narration of a spatial object—shield, urn, painting [as in ekphrasis]—spatializes narrative, which is a temporal art, and blurs the sharp distinctions made by Lessing between painting as a spatial art and narrative as a temporal art.” At this point in our Introduction, too, it is worth anticipating ourselves somewhat so as to say that the most important of these spatial considerations which the author of 4 Macc takes into account in his work—or at least in our judgment—will be the matter of vicarious substitution: a word derived from the Latin substitutus, “to put in place of” (OED).

33 Notice how Erickson has recourse here to the language of “place” and “backdrop,” etc.

34 The fact that the verb “paint” in 4 Macc 17.7 has no direct object continues to puzzle commentators, with most opting to conclude that a word such as “picture” has dropped out of the text (Anderson 1983: 2.562; Hadas 1953: 232-3). As it stands, it reads “to paint as on someone” or “as on something,” and as such serves as a suggestive image of the author battling with what we have here termed the “unrepresentable.”
Hadas and deSilva, for example, is ultimately to pull back from the text itself and to refuse to say anything about it. For the abysmal here is the sign of the abyss—the gap between “world” and “word,” as we have put it above, or between “work” and “adornment,” “text” and “image,” and so on—which pulls further and further apart in the ekphrasis in 4 Macc and in which the ἀντίψυχος is to be found. The textual structure of the mise en abyme35 so “central” to the interpretive concerns of “deconstruction”36 is the unavoidable re-siting of the spatialised narrative—as in a “text” made “painting” by means of ekphraseis—or, put another way, the inescapable backdrop of the “unrepresentable” by words alone (Krieger 1992; Kalas 2007: 47-8).

The ἀντίψυχος tumbles, then, into the void after the nameless, faceless, lifeless, bodiless circumcised children and their mothers (4 Macc 4.25). And to return to our discussion of the ergon/parergon from above: this abyss in 4 Macc into which we must peer for the remains of the ἀντίψυχος as “adornment”—as “parergon”—will be that “within” the work which is “neither simply outside nor simply inside” (Derrida), neither simply “present” nor simply “absent”: or, in other words, the undecidable term between the twin poles of the “binary opposition”37.

We have just seen how 4 Macc invites us to follow after the unrepresentable circumcised boys and their mothers, after the unrepresentable ἀντίψυχος, into the abyss between word and word that the text—as ekphrasis or word-painting—opens

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35 This term—which literally means “thrust into the abyss”—is used in literary theory to refer to a portion of text that somehow reflects the concerns of the larger text of which it forms a part—hence the abyss into which the women and boys fall in 4 Macc 4.25 mirrors the abysmal suffering of the nine principal martyrs of the work.
36 Kneale (2012: 107) both defines the device of the mise en abyme and suggests its relevance in “deconstructive” strategies of reading in the following convenient shorthand: “The expression mise en abyme…denotes the repetition in miniature of a whole within itself…Whether the key to the abyss in a text is a semantic ambiguity, a double-faced etymology, or a tropological deviance…[it is] [t]he [“deconstructive”] critic’s function…to face that problem, not to attempt to solve or to neutralize it but to recognize the abyss as an inherent feature of an arbitrary and differential system of language.”
37 These two concepts—the “undecidable term” and the “binary opposition”—require an explanation at this point, given the immense importance they will come to assume for us in the argumentation of this thesis. Above we have seen something of the way in which, in the context of 4 Macc, it is not at all a straightforward task to separate out and tell the difference between ideas such as “philosophy” and “violence,” “time” and “space,” “narrative” and “description,” “self” and “other,” “Jew” and “Greek,” and so on. To each of these pairs of categories, and to others like them—which, in theory, are meant to be mutually exclusive, “natural,” and “inevitable” but are in fact cross-contaminated, “arbitrary,” and “artificial” (Moore 2010a: 91-2 n. 18)—Derrida gives the name of the “binary oppositions of metaphysics” (1981: 41). To take full account of the terms “between” such dichotomies, on the other hand—of phenomena such as the ekphrasis, which we have seen to blur any clean dividing line between “narrative” and “description,” for example—Derrida presses into service the language of “a nerve, a fold, an angle that interrupts totalization” in criticism and philosophy: the “doubled fold,” in the text, “of an undecidable” (1981: 46).
up. As we have already asserted, and as we will see in more detail in the following section, this is the abyss of the undecidable term between the binary oppositions which the text takes for granted—inside/outside, present/absent, and so on—to which the “methodology,” or better the “strategy,” of deconstruction gives us access.

3.5. Methodology: “deconstruction” and 4 Macc

We have said that, in this thesis, we propose to read 4 Macc “deconstructively”38, so as to better understand how it works, textually, as an ekphrasis—as a series of smaller ekphraseis—or a word-“painting” (17.7): as a decorative “adornment” to the main “work” of chronology or history. Simply put, our hypothesis in this study is that, in turning to the rhetorical technique of the “vivid description” in passages such as 6.1-30, 9.10-12.19, 15.12-22, and 17.7, above all, the author of 4 Macc tries to express something inexpressible in words alone—something “more,” something ineffable, of whose nature we know only, at the outset, that it excites a certain shudder in the viewer when brought to life “before the eyes” (οὐκ ἐν ἐφηρττόν οἱ θεωροῦντες ὁρῶντες: 17.7). Derridean deconstruction provides a suggestive (anti)methodology by which to test our supposition, as we shall see, insofar as, as reading “practice,” it alerts us to the need to pay special attention to the way in which “meaning” in language depends on an “undecidable” element: the “spacing” between the two terms of the “binary opposition” whose syntactic logic—indescribable in words themselves—exceeds its semantic or descriptive content39. We will in this thesis, in other words, use the “undecidable” in the text of 4 Macc to try and open up the unspeakable—the shudder—in the painting of 17.7: the trace, or “trace of the trace,” of the presence of the ἀντίφησις.

38 Inspired above all, as we have said (section [2.5]), by the work of Lieu (2002).
39 As Derrida (2004a: 296 n. 36) explains the logic of the “between” that will be so important for us in this study: “…[T]he syncategorem “between” [i.e., the “undecidable” acting or considered “with” (syn) the “categories” of the binary opposition] contains as its meaning a semantic quasi-emptiness; it signifies the spacing relation, the articulation, the interval, etc.” Although, as he goes on to say, this “between” “can be nominalized, turn into a quasi-categorem, receive a definite article…”—i.e., can be assimilated to the one or the other of the terms of the conceptual dichotomy—in itself it functions as an “incomplete signification” whose abandonment to and filling-up by either term reveals the direction of the “violent hierarchy” of meaning in a text (2004a: 230).
3.5.1. Between “past” and “future”:
the undecidable ἀντίψυχος as unrepresentable in time

One of the most enduring insights of the strategy of “deconstructive” reading as pioneered by Derrida is that of the fiction of the presence of the signified in language: il n’y a pas de hors-texte, “there is nothing outside of the text”, as his (in)famous aphorism runs. Right away then, if we are to interpret 4 Macc in “deconstructive” perspective, we seem to be faced with an insurmountable obstacle. Not only would the word ἀντίψυχος not point, by any direct path, to any “deeper” reality of a signified “behind” this signifier, but the same would hold true for us in this thesis whichever label we could think to attach to the concepts of “vicarious substitution” and “vicarious atonement”: there would be no way to conjure these ideas, or the “truth” they signify, as unmistakeably present in a text, whether 4 Macc, the present study or any other. But we have already hinted at a way out of our dilemma here, in fact: one way forward for us could be to pull on the wayward thread of the temporal in 4 Macc—come loose, as we have seen, in the essentially spatial genre of the ekphrasis—and read the ἀντίψυχος in the work not as un-present-able to consciousness, in the first place—as concept, for example—but as unrepresentable in time. These two modes of the absence of the signified are of a piece, of course—for what is the fiction of its presence in meaning if not that of its presence in meaning in immediacy?—but our idea is that the slight change in perspective will actually better fit the particular case of 4 Macc. The shudder, for example, of which we will make so much in this thesis, is a name that Derrida (via Barthes) gives to an experience that

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40 Among the countless illustrations of this point that Derrida supplies in his corpus is that of the pharmakon in Plato’s Phaedrus. Here Socrates tells the story of the presentation of writing by Theuth, its inventor, to Thamus, king of Egypt, with the promise that “my invention is a pharmakon for both memory and wisdom” (Phaedr. 274e; quoted in Derrida 2004c: 81). The king, however, receives it as its “very opposite” (τοῦναντίον), saying, “it’s not a pharmakon for memory, but for reminding, that you have discovered (οὔκουν μνήμης ἀλλὰ ὑπομνήσιος φάρμακον ἡγεῖτο)” (Phaedr. 275a; quoted in Derrida 2004c: 104-5). But how can the “very opposite” of Theuth’s pharmakon be Thamus’ pharmakon?, asks Derrida. And in short, the idea at which Derrida arrives is that this signifier “means” or “points to” nothing in itself—i.e., makes present to the reader no inevitable signified—independent of the context in which the word is placed, and of the speaker or author who placed it there. Pharmakon—a word that can mean “remedy,” “recipe,” “poison,” “drug,” “philtrum,” and so on, but whose precise value, as in the Phaedrus, is never self-evident in any text (Derrida 2004c: 77)—thus comes to be an undecidable for Derrida: the epitome of the way words, or signifiers, make meaning in his “poststructuralist” perspective (i.e., by relationships of difference: by differentiating themselves from other signifiers, in context, and by deferring for ultimate meaning to an author, speaker or “father” figure who has assumed responsibility for them: Derrida 2004c: 82).

41 See, for example, the remarks of Louvel at n. 32 above.
cannot be incorporated into ideas of “time” figured as a succession of linear “present/s”\(^{42}\).

I read at the same time [in the photograph]: this will be and this has been; I observe with horror an anterior future of which death is the stake. By giving me to the absolute past of the pose (aorist), the photograph tells me death in the future. What points me, pricks me, is the discovery of this equivalence. In front of the photograph of my mother as a child, I tell myself: she is going to die: I shudder…over a catastrophe that has already occurred. Whether or not the subject is already dead, every photograph is this catastrophe. (Barthes quoted in Derrida 2001a: 60-61; emphasis original; cf. Barthes 1981: 96)

Could the shudder in 4 Macc 17.7, therefore, not also be a sign of the impossible “now” exposed by the photograph—or, in our case, by the ekphrasis as photo-graph? This “now” is “impossible” because it is always pointing elsewhere: as Barthes says, it is “presence” or the “present” as the “equivalence,” or the division without remainder, of the “this will be” with/in the “this has been.” The “what took place only once,” that “unique and irreplaceable referent”, that “irreducible referential” (Derrida 2001a: 61)—this is what remains unrepresentable in a time which, as metonymy, does not fail, always and already, to substitute one instant for another. And as with language, so with time\(^{43}\): the inexpressible in language that occasions the turn in 4 Macc, in the first place, from “work” to “adornment,” text to image, history to

\(^{42}\) Or, alternatively, the connection, by a “deconstructive” logic, between the shudder and the unrepresentable in time—a link which will prove crucial for us in this thesis—could be made via an appeal to Derrida’s reading of Nietzsche, as Spivak explains: “As Nietzsche suggests, [the] need for power through anthropomorphic defining [i.e., the “will to power”] compels humanity to create an unending proliferation of interpretations whose only “origin,” that shudder in the nerve strings, being a direct sign of nothing, leads to no primary signified” (1997: xxiii; my emphasis). The “shudder,” in other words, would be a “sign” of the ultimate, unrepresentable “origin” of the chain of signification which substitutes “for the disclosure of truth as a presentation of the thing itself” (Derrida, quoted in Spivak)—but as “direct sign of nothing” it would have neither linguistic nor ideational content, properly speaking.

\(^{43}\) Hobson (1998: 122-5 [124]) also notices the resonance between Derrida’s reading of the time of the photograph here—i.e., as structure “which maintains reference by division of the referent”—and his “deconstructive” reading of texts more generally: “In this structure, the repeatability of writing, the ‘iterability’ of the ‘mark’, is cross-cut with the effect of [the unrepeatable “now” in meaning and time]…[and] causes to emerge…[that] which itself is ‘offstage’, ‘out of focus’…that is, the effect comes from the work of composition with, or negotiation of a relation to what is irredeemably other, what is extra-(photo)graphic” (my emphasis). The point to be made here is that even if the inexpressible in language and the unrepresentable in time are, as such, ultimately ungraspable in their totality, they are not simply absent altogether from the page (or the print) but instead leave a mark that allows one to intuit something of their broader “reality.”
ekphrasis and so on, through all the other binary oppositions in the writing—i.e., the ἀντίψυχος as parergon—is thereby revealed, through the reappearance of the shudder, to be the “now,” the unrepresentable in time. The ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc as inexpressible in language because unrepresentable in time: our aim in this thesis will be to test this hypothesis—still, admittedly, to be unpacked some more—against the logic of the conceptual dichotomies in the text.

We have said that one of the most interesting aspects of 4 Macc is the strange nature of time in the work. DeSilva (1998: 21-2), for example, puzzles over the implications for the mise en scène of the work of the author’s continual reaching out through the page to his listeners in direct, imperative address—in his command that they now “pay earnest attention to philosophy,” for example (4 Macc 1.1b; cf. 14.11, 13; 16.5; 18.1; etc.)—and in his appeals to the “present occasion” (3.19; cf. 1.10), etc. Whether or not these rhetorical forms are evidence that 4 Macc was intended for actual oral delivery—deSilva’s manifest query at this point—they do show the way in which the temporal planes of the different worlds of the heroes, author, and auditors of the work come to converge and intersect. “Even now,” writes our author, “we ourselves shudder as we hear of the suffering of these young men” (14.9): the point is that this “now” of 4 Macc could just as easily name any one of the experiences of living, writing or hearing the story or all of these together.44

Does this running together of the dimension(s) of time in 4 Macc, then, have anything to do with the ἀντίψυχος: i.e., the all-important spatial “adornment” to the text—parergon by ekphrasis—to which the temporal “work” of historical narrative must bend? In the first place, let us consider (an awkwardly literal rendering of) 4 Macc 6.26-30, the first appearance of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice in our text:

44 That is, who exactly are the “we ourselves” here? The “shudder” of the direct experience (“now”) of the sound of the martyrs suffering could, conceivably, be that of the martyrs themselves (as, for example, those martyrs “who were left behind” were not swayed by the cries of those “dragged away,” 4 Macc 13.18; cf. 15.21), that of the author himself (having heard of the story from 2 Macc and/or Jason of Cyrene; cf. e.g. 17.14-16), and/or that of the listeners of 4 Macc themselves (as on the face value of the present verse, 14.9). This strange “now” of 4 Macc—indeterminate, undecidable and, for that reason, also unrepresentable—would then be analogous to the unrepresentable “now” of the photograph which, as we have seen, could be either that of its subject, its executor, or its beholder (see Barthes above).
...[H]aving already [ἡδή] been burnt [κατακεκαμένος] to his very [μέχρι] bones and being about to [μέλλων] expire, [Eleazar] lifted up [ἀνέτεινε] his eyes to God and said [ἐίπεν], “You have known [οἶσθα], O God, that though it is up to me to save myself [παρόν μοι σώζεσθαι], I should die [ἀποθνῄσκω] in burning torments for the sake of the law.... Make [ποίησον] my blood their purification, and take [λαβὲ] my life in exchange [ἀντίψυχον] for theirs....” (6.26-27, 29; trans. author, modifying NRSV)

Here “having been,” “already,” “until” (μέχρι)⁴⁵, “about to,” “at hand” (παρόν)⁴⁶, etc. serve as so many circumlocutions—metonymies or ekphraseis—for the “now” of the ἀντίψυχος which, as we hypothesised above, is ultimately unrepresentable. Another way to grasp this is to ask when, precisely, Eleazar, or the other martyrs, actually become the ἀντίψυχος, vicarious substitute and sacrifice: on the basis of 4 Macc 6.26-30, at least, it is at some moment—undecidable, unrepresentable—between the perfect “having been burnt” and the subjunctive “I should die,” between the present “being about to” and the future-oriented “take my life.” But this “now” of the ἀντίψυχος is never actually named in 4 Macc, except by strange ekphraseis such as these in 6.26-30; this is to be compared to our author’s ease in declaring the “now” (νῦν) of the successful demonstration of his thesis after the accounts of Eleazar (6.33) and the brothers (13.3; cf. 1.12; 3.19), the “now” (νῦν) of the “more bitter pains” endured by the mother (15.16), and the “now” (νῦν) of the martyrs’ presence before the divine throne (17.18). And yet these strange ekphraseis of the “now” of the ἀντίψυχος are repeated in 17.17-22, the second and last appearance of the this figure in our work (again in an awkwardly literal translation):

The tyrant himself and all of his council marvelled [ἐθάμησαν] at their endurance, because of which they now [νῦν] have stood [παρεστήκασαν] before the divine throne and live [βιοῦσιν] the life of eternal blessedness. For Moses

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⁴⁵ As well as being a preposition of place—translated as such in the NRSV at 4 Macc 6.26—μέχρι is also a preposition of time: “how long,” “up to,” “till the end of,” etc. See LSJ: s.v.

⁴⁶ The translation of 4 Macc 6.27a in the NRSV—“...You know, O God, that though I might have saved myself...”—preserves the impersonal sense of the πάρειμι + dative structure in the Greek: “it depends on me, is in my power to do,” etc. (LSJ: s.v.). It also provides additional warrant for our decision to translate ἀποθνῄσκοι in 6.27b in the subjunctive rather than the indicative.
says, “Having been made holy [ἡγιασμένοι], all [πάντες] the holy ones [are] under your hands [ὑπὸ τὰς χειρὰς σου].” These, then, upon being made holy [ἁγιασθέντες] for the sake of God, have been honoured [τετίμηται], not only with this honour, but also in that they made the enemies not to rule [μὴ ἐπικρατήσῃ] over our nation, the tyrant to be punished [τιμωρηθήναι] and the homeland to be purified [καθαρισθῆναι]—they having become [γεγονότας], as it were [ὅσπερ], a ransom [ἀντίψυχον] for the sin of the nation. And through the blood of those devout ones…divine Providence preserved [ὅιόσωσεν] Israel that was mistreated [προκακωθέντα]…. (17.17-22; trans. author, modifying NRSV)

Here in these verses the only trace of the elusive “now” of the ἄντίψυχος—again between the perfect, the aorist, and so on—is in the “now” of the “life of eternal blessedness” (τὸν μακάριον βιόσιν αἰώνα): a state that we will see in this thesis to be an undecidable—hence unrepresentable—due to the disjunction between νῦν—proper to the time of χρόνος—and αἰών—the “eternity” which, by definition, can admit of no “now”48. This unrepresentable time of the ἄντίψυχος would, then, be captured ambiguously, ekphrastically, in the notice of the martyrs “having become” the vicarious substitute in the indeterminate past of the “as it were” (ὅσπερ). And the strange English subjunctive here—simple past of the second person singular, or first, second and third person plural, for the third person singular—may hold up in fact, in the Greek, if we read the temporal sense of ὡς- (with the intensifier -περ): something like “as long as” for “even as,” “just as.” …[Ὡ]σπερ ἄντίψυχον γεγονότας, “having become an ἄντίψυχος, as long as…”—what? For “as long as” the “now” lasts: the ἄν (“when?”, “what?”), and the τι (“who?”, “which?”: “anyone,” “anything”), of the ἄντίψυχος.

3.5.2. The unrepresentable “now” in the painting of the “history of your religion”: writing, painting and re/inscribing the ἄντίψυχος

At least logically, if not chronologically, “before”—or perhaps because—it is unrepresentable the ἄντίψυχος is a question, a doubt: whose life—what life—when—

47 In this exact quotation from Deut 33.3 (LXX: Anderson 1983: 2.563 n. d), the verb “to be”—in the present tense or otherwise—is missing in the Greek.
48 See Chapter 3 of this thesis below on the notions of Aion, Chronos and Kairos in 4 Macc.
for whom? How, then, does the author of 4 Macc envision putting this question—this doubt—in the fiction of the still life of 17.7-10? Might his (word-)painting, his ekphrasis, of the ἀντίψυχος—unrepresentable question of the “now”—give us some clues as to how to write it or render it present—a task we might have thought impossible, after Derrida? Though our scribe reveals very little of his mind in these matters in the verses just mentioned we do, in fact, have more than enough to go on, in his words, with which to try and answer our questions:

If [εἰ δὲ] it were [῾Ην] possible for us [ἐξὸν ἢμῖν] to paint [ἐπὶ τινος ζωγραφήσαι] the history [τὴν…ἱστορίαν] of your religion [τὴς εὐσεβείας σου] [as an artist might49], would not [οὐκ ἄν] those who...beheld it [οἱ θεωροῦντες] have shuddered [ἐφριττον] as they saw [ὄροντες] the mother of the seven children enduring [ὑπομείνασαν] [their50] varied tortures to death [μέχρι θανάτου] for the sake of religion? And so [καὶ γὰρ] it would be [῾Ην] proper [ἀξιον] to inscribe [Ἀναγράφατι] on their tomb [ἐπ᾽ αὐτοῦ τοῦ ἔπιταφιον] these [words51] as a memorial [εἰς μνείαν] to the [heroes52] of our nation [τοῖς ἀπὸ τοῦ ἔθνους]: “Here [ἔνταθα] lie buried [ἔγκεκτηδέωντα] an aged priest and an aged woman and seven sons…” (4 Macc 17.7-9; trans. author, modifying NRSV; my emphasis)

The key to the whole pericope, we here submit, is that the ἀντίψυχος (word)painting—painting of the unrepresentable now—is intended to occasion a shudder (φρίκη)—a shudder of uncertainty (ἀντίψυχος)—in those beholding it (οἱ θεωροῦντες). Not only would this shudder provide us with a convincing way to read ἐξὸν, “possible,” at the beginning of the initial phrase—“if it were possible for us” in

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49 As we have already noted, this expression—absent in the Greek, though inferred by Townshend (1913: 2.683) on the basis of ἐπὶ, in its sense of “in the style of”, and following him the translator of the NRSV—strikes Anderson (1983: 2.562 n. b) as “rather forced,” particularly in the light of the fact that “[t]he Gk. has no word for “picture,” but reads lit. “as on someone” or “as on something (τινος)”. In the course of this thesis we intend to make much of this seeming absence of a surface for the ἀντίψυχος painting, and will conclude, as we have already hinted, that it has everything to do with the unrepresentable nature of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice.

50 Absent in the Greek, as already noted, which has simply ποικίλας βασάνους with no indication of whom exactly suffered these “varied tortures.”

51 Again, absent in the Greek but supplied here on the basis of the presence of λεγόμενα: i.e., there must be words to which this “saying” or “telling” refers.

52 Preferring the alternative reading in the NRSV—because it makes better sense of the τοῖς ἀπὸ here—to the standard “as a reminder to the people of the nation.”
the sense of if our subject material were representable—but this sense of “possibility,” or representability, would also then provide us with an unforeseen echo between ἐξόν in v. 7 and ἄξιον in v. 8: since (καὶ γὰρ) it is not possible (ἐξόν) to paint (ζωγραφέω) the ἀντίψυχος, we declare it a kind of a conceptual bridge—an axiom (ἄξιον)—to inscribe (ἀναγράφω) it instead. But why should ἀναγράφω be more reliable than ζωγραφέω, or indeed, γράφω—or put a different way, why should this inscribing open up the possibility—finally—of representing the unrepresentable ἀντίψυχος in a way that painting and writing have been unable to do? The secret, we here suggest, lies in the aspect of the chronicle to ἀναγράφω: or more precisely, its way of going over, again (ἀνά), “what happens”—its way of writing (γράφω) the event twice, or its writing it in parallel.

In 17.9 the author of 4 Macc, for the first time in his text, is able to pin down the “here” of 4 Macc 17.9 by a writing practice he calls anagrapy (ἀναγραφή, 17.8). On one level, then, the “here” of 4 Macc 17.9 refers to the burial site (real or

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53 We follow on this the interpretation of Anderson (1983: 2.562 n. b), who, commenting on the translation of 4 Macc 17.7a in Townshend 1913: 2.683, writes: “Townshend’s translation [“And it had been lawful for us to paint...”]...implies that what is involved here is our author’s interpretation of the second commandment as prohibiting all forms of pictorial art. On the other hand, however, we have to bear in mind not only that Hellenism made much of pictorial art and analogy, and that 4Mac is permeated with hellenistic influence, but also that the religious paintings in the synagogue at Dura-Europus near Antioch...most probably suggest that pictorial representation among the Jews was even at a considerably earlier stage [i.e., before the third century C.E.]. Hence, our translation of vs. 7 [“If it were possible for us to paint...”] implies only that our author thinks of the whole scene of the martyrdoms as too awesome that it is beyond artistic depiction.” Emphasis mine.

54 Boisecq (1916: s.v.) gives the following etymology of ἄξιος that shows up the paucity of translating it in 4 Macc 17.8 as “proper” (NRSV), “appropriate” (Anderson 1983: 2.562, etc. without further comment: “litt. qui entraîne par son poids, qui est de poids”, d’où ‘qui vaut ; qui mérite, digne de ; qui en vaut la peine’; ἄξιον ‘évaluer, apprécier ; juger digne ; juger convenable ; prétendre’. Cf. ἅγω ‘entraîner par son poids, peser, évaluer, estimer, apprécier’, lat. agīna ‘châsse d’une balance’ exagium ‘pesage’ exāmen ‘languette d’une balance’...”; “[A]ξίος”, then, “represents agtios, ‘that draws or pulls by its weight, pulls it own weight’” (Partridge 2002: s.v.), and the ἀντίψυχος, or so we suggest here, becomes an axios or an axiom—i.e., “pulls it own weight” as a concept, in writing and the written argument of 4 Macc—via a technique not of writing (γράφω) or painting (ζωγραφέω) but instead by anagrapy (ἀναγράφω). Exactly how this takes place we will go on to suggest below.

55 A common meaning of the word ἀναγραφή, as in, for example, Hippias’ chronicle of Olympic victors (his Ὠλυμπιακῶν ἀναγραφῆς; Christesen 2005). But, as Vogelín points out, the import of ἀναγραφή is very often greater than that of a simple “list,” as in the case of the “novel” or “utopia” that is the ἑλπὶ ἀναγραφῆ of Euhemerus: “[I]t is highly probable that the phrase sacra historia has penetrated into the Western vocabulary from the Egyptian usage [of the phrase hiera anagraphe], mediated through the Hiera Anagraphe of Euhemerus and its Latin translation...” (2002: 131-5 [134-5]).

56 As we shall see in more detail in section [3.5.3] below.
imagined) of the “aged priest,” the “aged woman,” and the “seven sons”: one possible meaning of ἀναγράφω is to “engrave and set up publicly,” “set up a pillar with an inscription on it”, etc. (LSJ: s.v.). “They vindicated their nation, looking to God and enduring torture even to death” (17.10), another possible meaning: “reduce to a formula or prescription” (cf. Hippocrates, Decent. 9). But ἀναγράφω has at least one further sense that would destabilise the idea that the words of 4 Macc 17.8-10 function only as an inscription on a tomb:

“…For I imagine you [Egyptians] might have built temples for them [the gods]…without introducing any image [of them] at all [ἀγαλμα δὲ μὴ ἐσφέρεν], but leaving it to those who frequented the temples [to imagine57] the images of the gods; for the mind [ἡ γνώμη] can more or less delineate [ἀναγράφει] and figure [ἀνατυποῦται] them to itself better [κρεῖττον] than can any artist [δημιουργίας]; but you have denied to the gods the privilege of beauty [τὸ…καλός] both of the outer eye [ὁρῶσθαι] and of inner suggestion [ὑπονοεῖσθαι]…” (Philostratus, Vit. Apoll. 6.19; trans. Conybeare 1912: 2.81)

In the prelude to this particular passage the philosopher Apollonius of Tyana has been criticising the “Egyptian” practice—supported by his interlocutor Thespasion—of representing the gods as “dumb” and “worthless” animals, defending instead the “very honourable” and “very pious” “Greek” way of depicting them anthropomorphically. “[T]he sage explains that what is at stake…is a matter of principle:…as beings on a lower ontological plane than humans, animals are fundamentally ill suited to serve as models for divine representation” (Kindt 2012: 172). To do without any images of the gods at all would be better than to have only zoomorphic divine forms, argues Apollonius, for:

…[i]magination [φαντασία]…[is] a wiser and subtler artist [σοφώτερα…δημιουργός] by far than imitation [μιμήσεως]; for imitation can only create as its handiwork what it has seen [ὁ εἶδεν], but imagination equally [δὲ καὶ] what it has not seen [ὁ μὴ εἶδεν]; for it will conceive of its ideal [ὑποθήσεται] with reference [πρὸς τὴν ἀναφοράν] to the reality [τοῦ ὄντος], and

57 Absent in the Greek but required—arguably—to make meaning in the English.
imitation is often baffled [ἐκκρούει] by terror [ἐκπληξίας], but imagination by nothing; for it marches [χωρεῖ] undismayed [ἀνέκπληκτος] to the goal which it has itself laid down [ὑπέθετο]…. (Vit. Apoll. 6.19; trans. Conybeare 1912: 2.79)

Anagraphy, then—in this “other” sense in which Philostratus has Apollonius use it—would be a technique (along with its analogue, anatypography: ἀνατυπόω) to render the “august” (σεμύνον) and “awe-inspiring” (ἐμφοβον) that both zoomorphy and anthropomorphy—either in words or images—only point to or miss entirely. And to take this observation one step further: the “anagraphy” of 4 Macc 17.8-10 would serve, on our reading, not only as an epitaph on a tombstone but also as an imaginary—or better perhaps, phantasmic—image of an overwhelming, mysterious “reality” that, like this “reality”, is both “seen” and (δὲ καὶ) “not seen,” both “here” and not “here” (ὑπο-θήσεται, from ὑπο-τίθημι). That “reality” would be none other than the ἀντίψυχος: but whereas the mimesis of the painting of 4 Macc 17.7 will have been waylaid (ἐκκρούει) by “terror” (ἐκπληξίας)—terror of the shudder which, as we have seen, announces the unrepresentable “now” and “here” of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice without being coextensive with either—the imagination, through anagraphy, “marches undaunted” (χωρεῖ…ἀνέκπληκτος) straight towards (πρὸς) this impossible proposition (ὑπέθετο). In the cool outlines of the graven letters on the stele of 17.9-10, the author of 4 Macc would “describe” the ἀντίψυχος as a geometrical figure (cf. e.g. Plato, Men. 83b)—as opposed to a strictly “literary,” metrical one—and would leave it to the reader or listener to imagine it and to “fill in the gaps,” in the same way that Aristotle—having sketched out the outline (περιγεγράφθω) of the Good—was content to leave it to another “to fill it in afterwards” (ὑπεριστερον ἄναγράψαι; Eth. nic. 1098a17)59.

3.5.3. From “anagraphy” to “anagrammaticality”

An inscription or an impressionistic appeal to the imagination is one thing, but we still must find a way to make concrete use of “anagraphy”—this nebulous technique of

58 Cf. Vit. Apoll. 7.14, where Apollonius says that “conscience [ξύνεσιν]…brought up before Orestes and depicted in his imagination [ἀνέγραψε] the shapes [τὰ…ἐξὸν] of the Eumenides, when he had gone mad with wrath against his mother…” (trans. Conybeare 1912: 2.189).
59 These two senses for ἀναγράϕω—viz., “describe lines and figures mathematically” and “fill up outlines”—are taken from LSJ: s.v.
suggestive invocation—in the very particular, very rigourous context of this thesis. From this idea, this word—*anagraphy*—it is but a short lexical step to “*anagrammaticality,*” another idea of which Derrida makes use in his “deconstructive” reading. At base this word names, in fact, a special case of the *undecidability* of all language that we noted above—the way in which the word *pharmakon* in the *Phaedrus*, for example, contains echoes of other words (e.g. *pharmakeus*, “sorcerer”; *pharmakos*, “scapegoat”) that, in their resonances, impinge on the paths of signification and interpretation (Johnson 2004: xxvi)—but for Wills (2005: 39) the idea of “*anagrammaticality*” has a certain *ethical* edge that is lacking in the seemingly anarchical free play of “*undecidability*”:

The passage through the aporia of the…undecidable is…marked by the surprise of a sort of conceptual anagram, reversing the terms (but in such a way as to permanently displace them) of what might appear as a logical insistence. It is therefore no surprise to find an experience of the ethical abyss in Derrida’s work that parallels yet rewrites his analysis of the parergonal abyss in Kant’s aesthetics.

But how exactly does this reversal *beyond recognition* of the terms of the “logical insistence” give on to “an experience of the ethical abyss”? If I resituate and recontextualize, says Wills, the poles of the binary opposition, say—much as I might rearrange the letters of a word to form an anagram—I *cannot know in advance* the form that this dichotomy, or this word, will take when I have finished. The unforeseen revelation of the paranomasia or wordplay, then, would approximate to an exposure to, or of, the inexpressible, unrepresentable *Other* in the text—and “[i]t is only by keeping utter otherness in play that…relations can be developed on the basis of forms of mutual human respect,” rather than on those of homicidal loyalties to the Same (Wills 2005: 36-40 [37, 39]). To review and resite the binary oppositions in 4 Macc by deconstructive, “*anagrammatic*” logic, then—on the model of the author of the work who re-views, re-sights, and re-works his text (and painting) by anagraphy in

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60 See n. 40 above.
61 The reader will notice, then, that for Derrida the work of the anagram goes further than its definition in a dictionary might seem to allow: that is, it is more a new word formed by a simple and literal rearrangement of the letters of another one.
17.7-10⁶²—and to rework these for their ethical implications: such will be the task that awaits us in each of the chapters of this thesis as we seek to bring the ἀντὶ-ψυχος to the forefront of our gaze. Or, to put our goal in the terms of the quote from Blanchot which we have borrowed both for the title and an epigraph to this study: our work will be to counter-write by “anagrammaticality,” in a counter-language never inscribed but always prescribed, the (counter-)vision of the ethical in 4 Macc represented by the counterlife, the ἀντὶ-ψυχος—seeking all the while to understand the tragic, gruesome deaths of the nine martyrs of the work in all their unspeakable, overwhelming, “disastrous heaviness.”

4. The occasion, aim and content of the thesis

4.1. The occasion and aim

The search for the ἀντὶ-ψυχος in 4 Macc with which this thesis will be occupied, therefore, will be a search for the differences, for the binary oppositions—or more specifically, the forgotten, neglected and undecidable terms of the latter—by means of which the author or reader of the work, consciously or not, attempts to conceive of the concepts of vicarious substitution and atonement. Before we go on in this section to set out the landmarks that will mark our journey here, however, perhaps a word on the specific occasion for the present work may be in order.

In our section on methodology above we mentioned that, in the first place, the loose threads of meaning in 4 Macc which tangle around the oppositions in the text, thereby drawing our attention to them, are simply irresistible invitations to read. It is vital to emphasise this, and to ensure we prepare ourselves to enjoy them as readers, first and foremost, rather than attack them as exegetes as interpretive “problems” to solve. In the second place, however, it is important to acknowledge that even a casual reading of 4 Macc raises certain questions with which the reader must engage in a difficult and protracted struggle. One such challenge lies at the very heart of this study, in fact: how can it be that the few (Eleazar, the boys, their mother) can substitute for the

⁶² I.e., as he leads the reader/beholder of the work from casual “seeing” (ὁ-ψοντες, 17.7) to involved and deliberate “looking” (θε-ψοντες, 17.7) and finally to an imaginative, anagraphical, iconographical and “stere-optic” in-spection (ὑ-ψοντες, 17.10).
many (Israel) in 4 Macc (vicarious substitution), and can take upon themselves a punishment from God which is not personal but corporate (vicarious atonement)? Such notions are completely alien to us, this side of the Enlightenment, and as such have the potential to poison us against particular readings that would challenge dearly held preconceptions.

Commenting on the fourth Servant Song in Isaiah 53—a text not unconnected with 4 Macc—Hofius well reflects the fear of the Other which precludes the very project we are proposing here:

Exegesis concerned with the truth of texts faces here the problem of whether the existential substitution described in the Song can be thought at all possible. Is it conceivable that one person should be able to suffer substitutionarily [sic] the punishment justly due others? Are guilt and punishment transferable between persons?… In the legal realm personal guilt is non-transferable; the punishment to be borne by any given person can under no circumstances be substitutionarily [sic] taken over and atoned for by another person. Yet biblical-theological considerations pose this question as well…. (2004: 168; emphasis original)

While Hofius here poses questions that appear, at face value, to overlap with the ones with which we will be occupied, he poses them in terms that are supremely unhelpful. For to succumb, from the outset, to the criteria of the “true,” the “possible,” the “conceivable,” the “legal,” the “biblical-theological,” and so on is to obliterate ab initio the different, the Other, upon which meaning depends, as we have already seen. The fact that Hofius (2004: 168 n. 27) has recourse to Kant here serves to show up in greater detail the self-serving nature of his argument, for, as Janowski shows, Kant frames the question of substitution—in an essay fundamental for much German scholarship on the matter, “Religion Within the Boundaries of Mere Reason”—“from a particular view of humanity, namely, from the axiom of the nonrepresentability of

63 Croy (1998: 105-6) sums up well the most important parallel between 4 Macc and Isa 53 which we need to take account in this thesis: in both texts, he argues, “the notion of vicarious suffering is related to punitive suffering in that sin is presupposed, but it diverges from the traditional punitive understanding in that the sufferer and the sinner are not one and the same” (106). For this reason Croy concludes that “[a] significant sub-category of the punitive” in Second Temple Judaism—“or perhaps a type [of suffering] all its own”—“was [the] expiatory suffering represented in Isaiah 53 and 4 Maccabees” (ibid.: 216).
In short, the criticism to be made here is that Hofius betrays his texts by claiming a universal applicability for what is in fact a very narrow reading of them—constrained, as he is, by a very modern political and jurisprudential orthodoxy that ill-fits, in fact, the times, places and contents of the texts he studies.

In contrast to Hofius—it is unfair to single him out, in fact, for the kind of thinking we have just outlined appears in a great deal of exegetical and theological reflection on the notion of substitution—we undertake in this thesis to expose, at every step of the way, the dangers of opting for one particular stitch(-up) in tying-off the loose threads in 4 Macc. We also make a claim here to interest ourselves, not only with the kinds of questions posed by Hofius, but precisely in what he might call the untrue, the impossible, the inconceivable, the illegal with regard to the ἀντίψυχος. All this is not to pretend that we can somehow transcend our time, place and presuppositions in a way somehow superior to Hofius and his ilk. It is only to say that, in approaching a non-canonical text such as 4 Macc—and that much from a literary-critical perspective, rather than a theological one—we aim in this thesis to explore some of the more uncomfortable implications of the meaning-making process in this text.

4.2. The content

In this thesis, then, we will go in search of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc (6.27-29; 17.19-22), the exceptional figure in whose person inheres the totality of his author’s theology of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement. This quest has already been conceptualised as a search for that figure as s/he stands out against the backdrop of 4 Macc as painting: as image whose play of light and shade—text and margin, inside and outside, work and adornment, exhaustive chronicle and popular history, etc.—shrouds a multitude of other binary oppositions which, when read “deconstructively,” will reveal in negative the silhouette of the ἀντίψυχος. Accordingly, each of the chapters in the present work will take as its starting point the identification of a binary opposition in the text, the poles of which will then be

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64 Janowski 2004: 51, commenting on Kant’s essay “Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der bloßen Vernunft.” Emphasis original. Janowski goes on to explain more of what lies behind this view: “[A]s long as the subject sets the standard for his own responsibility, guilt, too, remains his alone and cannot be taken away by anything or anyone.” Worth quoting here too is Friedrich’s convenient shorthand on the subject, quoted by Janowski on the same page: “Guilt is always one’s own, because it is attached to the ego, and no one can give anyone else his ego.”
“overturned” and “displaced” via a deconstructive reading. Finally, in an effort to get a clearer picture of the implications of the retrieval of this excluded Other, we will turn, chapter by chapter, to treatments of similar oppositions in literature, philosophy, history, theology, and above all, ethics, putting these readings in dialogue with the present study so as to suggest new and intriguing ways of understanding the ἄντίψυχος and vicarious substitution and atonement in 4 Macc.

4.2.1. Chapter 1: Between Jew and Greek: the “Egyptian”

While it is clear that 4 Macc contains both “Jewish” and “Greek” elements—as in, for example, its self-address to the “children of the Israelites” (18.1; cf. 9.6, 18; etc.) and its focus on the cultivation of the virtues (1.2-4, 18; 5.23-24; 15.10; etc.) respectively—it is much less obvious how best to combine these elements in a historically plausible and scholarly synthesis. Should the commentator regard the text as more “Jewish” than “Greek,” more “Greek” than “Jewish,” or as “Jewish” and “Greek” in equal measure? What might these labels and syntheses even mean, both in the work’s original context and in our context as interpreters today?

In this chapter we will attempt to go around this impossible impasse—“impossible” because the essentially “Greek” form of the academic exegesis forecloses on any trace of the “Jewish” from the outset—by trying to think of 4 Macc as an “Egyptian” text. In the same vein as Derrida, who tried to think “Egypt” as logically prior to both “Jew” and “Greek” (e.g. id. 1997; 2004c; Bennington 1994), we will read the ἄντιψυχος as a hieroglyph: as the “bird of ashes” that appears in Hesychius (one of the very few attestations of ἄντιψυχος outside of 4 Macc), and the “bird of sand” (ḥol) of Jewish folklore that, instead of synthesising life from death as does the phoenix, brings forth an altogether more unstable new beginning (e.g. 4 Macc 18.4-5).

In a suggestive text that brings together the insights into “deconstructive” reading—“undecidability” or the “undecidable term,” the “binary opposition,” etc.—that we have only had the opportunity, thus far in this introduction, to discuss rather obliquely, Derrida sums up the “double science” of his deconstruction in the following terms: “On the one hand, we must traverse a phase of overturning…. To deconstruct the opposition, first of all, is to overturn the hierarchy at a given moment. […] That being said—and on the other hand—to remain in this phase is still to operate on the terrain of and from within the deconstructed system…. [W]e must also mark the irruptive emergence [or “displacement”] of a new “concept,” a concept that can no longer be, and never could be, included in the previous regime…. [These concepts] I have called undecidables… that can no longer be included within philosophical (binary) opposition, but which, however, inhabit philosophical opposition, resisting and disorganizing it, without ever constituting a third term…” (1981: 41-3; emphasis original).
4.2.2. 2: Between economy and sacrifice: the “impossible gift”

Each of the common translations of the word ἀντίψυχος in Bibles, lexica, and the like all seem to rely on economic metaphors: “[a] life for [a] life,” “[a] life in exchange for [a] life,” “[a] life as a ransom for [a] life,” etc. What, then, is the nature of this economy that haunts the ἀντίψυχος—not only in scholarly apparatuses, in fact, but also in the very few other uses of the word in literature contemporaneous with 4 Macc: in the Lexiphanes of Lucian, for example? Should the ἀντίψυχος be considered to be a commodity, along the lines of Seleucus’ funding of the temple services (4 Macc 3.20-21) or the system of profit and loss of the temple treasury (4.1-14), as a sacrifice, according to the cultic language with which it is closely associated in 4 Macc (17.21-22)—or is its economy, in fact, of a entirely different order altogether?

In this chapter we will consider these three options on the economy of the ἀντίψυχος, reading them through Derrida’s writings on the “impossible gift” (e.g. id. 1994; 2008). We will see that the author of 4 Macc—unsatisfied as he is with the economics of both the treasury and the sacrifices, not to mention the foreign patronage of the temple itself—uses the idea of the ἀντίψυχος as a kind of “counterfeit” coin by which one piece, or one sacrifice, becomes several (if no plural for ἀντίψυχος ever appears in his text) and for-give-ness—“letting go”—comes to transcend any mere give-and-take.

4.2.3. 3: Between Aion and Chronos: the Kairos

The question of whether the author of 4 Macc believes in the immortality of the soul or the resurrection of the body is one to which commentators on the work have yet to come to a consensual answer. Some give greater weight to verses such as 18.23, for example, in which the author states that the martyrs “have received pure and immortal souls from God”, while others emphasise the fact that the author appeals to the “query of Ezekiel” in 18.17: “Shall these dry bones live?” (cf. Ezek 37.2-3). But could it be possible that our author believes in both of these propositions: in other words, that he believes that the martyrs live simultaneously a spiritual “immortality in endless life” (17.12) and a bodily “life of eternal blessedness” (17.18)?
In this chapter we will demonstrate the truth of this hypothesis by analysing the *time* in which the author of 4 Macc believes life before and after death to take place: that is, the way in which our author organises the dimensions of *αἰών, χρόνος* and *καιρός*, along with their associated concepts, in his text. Taking our cue from Deleuze’s reading of time in the Stoics (id. 2004)—key philosophical influences on the author of 4 Macc—we will see how the martyrs of the work play out the *role* of the ἀντίψυχος in life *both* before and after death by becoming a καιρός, a “favourable moment,” for Israel (e.g. 4 Macc 1.10; 3.19).

4.2.4. 4: Between masculine and feminine: the androgynous

Stripped, flogged, hacked to pieces, kicked, burned, beaten, mangled, flayed, scalped and strung out on the rack: the martyrs of 4 Macc endure just about every torture imaginable as they hold out against their Greek persecutors and call their fellow Israelites back to observance of the ancestral law. But even though Antiochus and his troops mean, by this cruel abuse, to utterly humiliate and *emasculate* the martyrs—to show the world that these Jews, like all Jews, are a bunch of soft, pathetic, vanquished women, far inferior to the Greeks in power and honour—the tortures of the martyrs actually become an opportunity for them to prove their “masculine courage” (*ανδρεία*, e.g. 4 Macc 1.11).

Are the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος, then, the pitiable “women” totally subdued by the Seleucids or the courageous “men” lauded by the Jewish author of 4 Macc? In this chapter we will argue that they are *both*, and that this “androgyny” is a key to understanding their involvement in the vicarious substitution and atonement in the text. We will see, with the help of Bataille (e.g. id. 1988), how the martyrs’ wounds, like genitals, open them up to the possibility of interpersonal exchange or intercourse: to what Bataille calls intersubjective “communication.”

4.2.5. 5: Between subject and object: the abject

“[O]ur philosophy…,” says Eleazar, “…teaches us self-control…courage…justice…[and] piety” (4 Macc 5.22-24). The law in 4 Macc, in fact, teaches the Jew subject to it so much more. As the work explains in detail, for a man to respond to the law with
his reason (1.15-17)—for the Jew in 4 Macc, although a biological woman, must always behave like a virtuous man (as in the case of the mother-martyr of the text, 15.30)—he must learn to separate himself from all that is “natural”: from “gifts of nature” such as pork, for example (5.8-9). But what would it mean, in that case, that the martyrs of 4 Macc—responsible for “reviving observance of the law” (18.4)—are still depicted as living in thrall to their human nature: as being motivated—in the case of the brothers, for example—by the brotherly love which was nourished at their mother’s breast (13.19-27)?

In this chapter we will see how the author of 4 Macc places the martyrs on the border between “law” and “nature”—described so well by Kristeva (e.g. id. 1982)—so as to reinscribe the former from within the latter: that is, to include within the law the possibility of a new figure—the ἀντίψυχος—based not on the logic of the one God but on that of many-sided, diffuse, infinitely substitutable nature (cf. 4 Macc 1.28-30).

4.2.6. 6: Between the Other and the Same: the psyche

At the heart of his attempt to think against the greater part of the Western tradition and secure ethics, rather than ontology, as “first philosophy,” Levinas developed a terminology of “substitution” to name the way in which the self is reliant on, and forever indebted to, the Other for its coming to being (e.g. id. 1998b). Before I am at home in my self, according to this philosopher, I am in exile with the other, compelled to answer for—to provide for—his needs, wants and desires without having anything myself to call “my” own. And forever obsessed, forever possessed, by this claim of this other over “me”—this putting of himself in me—I will only ever respond—always too little, always too late—by putting myself in him: by substituting myself for him, assuming myself responsibility for him, atoning for the lack in him I have failed to fill up.

How, then, would this Levinasian account of “substitution” relate to the vicarious substitution effected by the martyrs of 4 Macc? In this chapter we will attempt to answer this question by comparing the Levinasian “psyche”—the animating and correlating principle between the Other and the Same (self)—with the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc. We will see that, for both of the authors to be studied in this section of the
thesis, the ethical demand of “substitution” is guaranteed by a particular philosophy
that is itself underwritten by justice (e.g. 4 Macc 5.22-24).

4.2.7. 7: Between tyranny and democracy: the antipolitical

“Because of [the martyrs] the nation gained peace,” says the author of 4 Macc at 18.4,
“and by reviving observance of the law in the homeland they ravaged the enemy.”
What, then, does this “peace” and “observance of the law” that the martyrs bring look
like as a political concept? For what our author tells us, it is clearly not equivalent to
the “tyranny” of Antiochus (1.11; 11.24; 17.2, 9, 14, 21; etc.), but neither is it of the
same order as the “ancestral constitution” (πάτριος πολιτεία)—whether best described
as “theocratic” or “democratic”—that previously held sway in Jerusalem, before the
barbarism of Antiochus, under the high priest Onias and the king Seleucus (e.g. 3.20).

In this chapter we will concentrate on four “tragic” elements of 4 Macc—“tragic”
since taken from the ancient Greek theatre—that suggest that the martyrs of the work
found an antipolitics that opens up the polis and its (male) citizens to the (female)
stranger. With the help of this interpretative tool of Loraux (see id. 2002a; 2002b),
and by analysing how the martyrs of 4 Macc insist on mourning, vengeance, memory
and the strange, we will see how they represent to the city, as ἀντίψυχος, the
originary, exclusionary violence on which the city must unavoidably be founded.

4.2.8. Conclusion: the sublime

Is the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc, then, some kind of sum of the undecidable concepts in the
text that we will seek, in this thesis, to bring to the surface—of the “middle” terms of
the binary oppositions in the work that we will try to unpack? Does the explanation
that we search after here of the mechanisms of vicarious substitution and vicarious
atonement in the text lie hidden, somehow, in the accumulation of the theories and
models that we will examine? The principal problem with us assuming such a
conclusion to this thesis lies in its ignorance of the fact that the undecidables of 4
Macc that form the basis for each of our chapters here are of themselves inherently
unrepresentable—even, and especially, for the selfsame author of the work.
In the Conclusion to this thesis, then, we will change register and analyse the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc from an aesthetic rather than literary perspective—art, rather than literature, being more capable of expressing the inexpressible through feelings and desire, according to Lyotard (e.g. id. 2012). We will return to the image that provided us with the impetus to embark on the adventure of allowing 4 Macc to deconstruct itself—that of the hypothetical painting of the “history of your religion” in 17.7—to imagine how the ἀντίψυχος, as well as its mechanisms of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement, might be represented in images, and sentiment, rather than words alone. Each of the undecidables, or “anagrams,” that we will have discovered in each of our chapters will then be re-arranged one final time so as to re-emphasise—to throw into relief—their essential textual quality: that is, to re-affirm their ana-logical connection to the ana-graphy by which the author of 4 Macc, in 17.8-10, can finally write the “here” and the “now” of the ἀντίψυχος.
CHAPTER 1:
BETWEEN JEW AND GREEK: THE “EGYPTIAN”

By the roadside stood a tree,
Its roots were bare and jagged;
A single tree, alone it stood,
Its head was white and ragged.
The tree was there hundreds of years,
Its roots were in the water;
They say its heart was made of earth
From Jerusalem, Zion’s daughter.
In this earth, so people say,
There lived a bird, a wonder!
It could not die by any death,
This bird of sand and wonder.
Then one day, the bird was killed,
A blaze reached up to heaven;
It burned the holy seat of God,
Destroyed the tree for ever.
The leaves alone, they did remain,
Like little birds a-flying;
They flew to Israel’s promised land,
And there they still are lying.

(Ben-Zion Tomer, Children of the Shadows)

Introduction

That 4 Macc represents an intricate and rather idiosyncratic interweaving of elements of Jewish religion and ancient Greek philosophy (or rhetoric) is a datum on which commentators on the work seem to have reached broad agreement. Beyond general assertions of the “Hellenistic” flavour of the work, however, lie unknowns that have proved far more difficult to tease out: what “Jew” and “Greek” mean in the world in, behind and in front of the text, for example, or the relationship of these labels to each other—even the question of later “Christian” interpolation. In this chapter we propose to go in search of textual markers in 4 Macc that provide us with a window on the

1 The full text of this play in an English translation by Halkin can be found in Tomer 1996: 127-85.
religio-cultural identity of the community presupposed by this text. That is, we will consider what sense it makes to say that 4 Macc is “Jewish,” “Greek,” or both “Jewish and Greek” (or “Greek and Jewish”): the order matters)—both with reference to its original context, as far as this can be reconstructed, and in the context of the study of the work today. Taking a leaf from several important recent books on the apostle Paul (e.g. Engberg-Pedersen 2001; Boyarin 1997; Seesengood 2010) and his religious milieu (e.g. Davila 2005b) which have attempted to rescue the apostle and his first-century Judaism from an unhistorical Judaism/Hellenism divide, we propose to interrogate the Jew/Greek dichotomy both in 4 Macc itself and in much of its interpretive literature. Since the very project of the *exegesis* is marked by a certain “Greek” logic (ἐξήγησις; ἐξηγεῖσθαι), the danger is that the “Jewish” will get lost along the way—as, in fact, has been the case with many of the commentaries on 4 Macc. Remaining highly sensitive to this interpretive hazard, our goal here in this chapter is to keep the “Jewish” character of 4 Macc firmly in front of our eyes at all times: or, more precisely, to retrieve this aspect of the work from an all-too-common overemphasis on the “Greek” or the “Hellenistic.” This we propose to do by concentrating on what we will call the “Egyptian” elements of the writing (section [3] below)—other “other” of the “Greek” and analogue of the expressive, enigmatic language of Hebrew Scripture.

1. 4 Macc as Jewish text

We begin with a question so fundamental it has often gone unasked, or its answer at least taken for granted: what makes 4 Macc a “Jewish” text? In contrast to other scholars who beg the question or resort to the criteria of self-evidence—sustaining that 4 Macc is Jewish because its author/heroes are Jewish, because it is included in the apocrypha, because it displays a clear familiarity with Jewish religion/life/customs (however these are understood), and so on—Davila attempts to return to first principles, setting 4 Macc in context by comparing it with ancient works that are “Jewish beyond reasonable doubt” (such as the texts preserved at Qumran) and as such reveal certain “signature features” of the Jewish literature of the period (2005a: 56; 2005b: 15-20). Since these distinguishing characteristics provide a much more solid heuristic base that serves to ground the initial suspicions of the informed reader of 4 Macc without resorting to circular reasoning, they will be a useful starting point
for us as we set out to explore, and eventually disrupt, the Hebraic/Hellenistic opposition in the text.

1.1. *Jewish “signature features” in 4 Macc*

The great merit of Davila’s model of the “signature features” of ancient Jewish texts, as we have already hinted, is that it provides a way to argue for the Jewish provenance of a work from *positive* evidence, rather than from *negative* evidence (such as a lack of undoubtedly Christian features in a text) or from silence. Simply assuming a work is Jewish can be hazardous, and the work known as the Testament of Abraham provides a case in point. If one accepts Davila’s contention that early Christians were perfectly capable of writing works that contain no distinguishing Christian characteristics (see, for example, the *Heptateuch* of Pseudo-Cyprian; see e.g. White 2000: 99-104)², then the matter of reconstructing the Jewish Urtext of the *Testament of Abraham* becomes more complicated than simply excising the later overtly Christian additions (such as the doxology present in the majority of the manuscripts; Sanders 1983: 871-2, 902), and ultimately probably unnecessary (Davila 2005b: 199-207). Davila’s eight “signature features,” then, function as a “polythetic” description of common Judaism in the late Second Temple period: none of the characteristics is a *sine qua non*, as in other “monothetic,” essentialist/reductionist descriptions, but taken together they represent “general trends shared in antiquity by many or most Jews” (Davila 2002). How are these features represented in 4 Macc? It is to this question that we now turn³.

1.1.1. *Worship of the God of Israel*

The first of Davila’s signature features of ancient Judaism is well encapsulated in 4 Macc in the phrase Eleazar speaks at 5.24: “[our philosophy] teaches us piety, so that with proper reverence we worship the only living God.” To worship God in 4 Macc, however, is less a matter of participating in the Temple sacrifices than of living

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² Other early Christian works marshalled by Davila here in support of this proposition include sermons of John Chrysostom on Genesis, a sermon by Augustine on Micah and Psalm 72, and sections of Ephrem the Syrian’s commentaries on Genesis and Exodus. See Davila 2005b: 84-111.

³ Here I am working from Bauckham’s treatment of Davila’s argument in Bauckham 2010: esp. 470-80, as well as on Davila himself.
according to God’s law practising self-control, courage, justice and piety (e.g. 5.23-24; 11.5): a reflection, perhaps, of the growing importance of the Torah study that was to become a cornerstone of later rabbinic Judaism (Tuval 2012: 237).

1.1.2. Acceptance of the Scriptures

Our reading of 4 Macc in this thesis accords with Kraft’s balanced judgment that the author of the work operates with “a perspective conscious of a wide array of scriptural writings,” though without a particular theology of a fixed “canon” as such (Kraft 1996: 1.211-212). As Albl (1999: 85, 163-4) observes, the author is interested not only in specific scriptural texts (as in the direct quotes in 18.14-19) but in broader “scriptural patterns” (as in 18.10-13): the stories of the suffering righteous ones—Isaac, Daniel, the youths in the fiery furnace, and so on (e.g. 13.9-17; 16.3, 16-21; etc.)—that are important because of the example of courage, endurance, faith, and vindication they model for the community.

1.1.3. Acceptance of a sacred history based on the Scriptures

DeSilva (1998: 134-5) has helpfully explained the overarching historical theology of 4 Macc in terms of the covenant between God and Israel. Comparing our text with Deut 28-30, deSilva shows that the author believes that when the Jewish people live by the Torah, God grants them peace and prosperity (e.g. 3.20; 18.4; etc.)—but when they alter their way of life and violate the law, they anger the divine justice and bring pain and suffering upon themselves (4.19-21). The community behind 4 Macc believes in God not only as the power of “Providence” (9.24; 13.19; 17.22) that orders the whole of human history but also as a sympathetic, personal power who watches closely over his people (e.g. 5.13, 26), remaining intimately involved with then and giving them, above all in the Torah, what is “most suitable for [their] lives” (5.25-26).

1.1.4. Observance of scriptural customs, laws, and rituals

Despite the presence in 4 Macc of various positive and negative legal commandments—for example, the exhortation to lend without interest to the needy (2.8; cf. e.g. Exod 22.25; Lev 25.35-37; Deut 23.19-20), the injunction not to engage in sexual relations
outside marriage (2.1-5; cf. e.g. Exod 20.17), and so on—the paramount law in the mind of the author is the prohibition on eating pork (and food sacrificed to idols: 5.2, 6-38; 6.15; etc.). Various commentators have noticed the way in which, for the author of 4 Macc, eating pig’s flesh is tantamount to capitulation to the tyrant Antiochus and his forces (and equivalent to ingesting the very essence of “Otherness” itself; Rosenblum 2010: 50-52); this is likely because pork was the meat most widely known by non-Jews to be unclean for Jews, as well as the most widely available non-kosher meat available in general in antiquity (Kraemer 2007: 31).

1.1.5. Self-identification as Jews

By far the most common self-designation of the Jewish people in 4 Macc is οἱ Ἑβραῖοι (4.11; 5.2, 4; 9.6, 18; 17.9), which, as Harvey sustains, is an insider’s label that designates the “pious and traditional members of a nation persecuted precisely for its piety and its relationship with God” (1998: 141). It is opposed to the outsider’s label οἱ Ιουδαῖοι, a word that may have had negative connotations (as on Antiochus’ lips at 5.7; van Henten 1997: 195 n. 41). “The Hebrews” in 4 Macc, then, are a people with their own history, laws and homeland, and it is clear that the author is addressing himself to them, as in 18.1 (“O Israelite children...”; cf. 17.1).

1.1.6. Other Jewish signature features in 4 Macc

Davila’s three other signature features of late Second Temple Judaism—an attachment to the temple cult in Jerusalem, acceptance by a Jewish community, and recognition of Palestine as the Holy Land—are altogether less prominent in 4 Macc, though their tracks may still be followed (in the work’s references to Jerusalem, for example, in 4.3, 20, 22; 18.5). That the author of our text should be apparently unconcerned with Palestine is unsurprising given that he is likely writing in the Diaspora after the fall of the temple, as we have already mentioned in this thesis. It should be remembered too that Davila’s “signature features” model is not meant to be exhaustive; rather, it is an attempt to provide a kind of “lowest common denominator”

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4 As van Henten observes, furthermore, with respect to οἱ Ἑβραῖοι: “…the designation is sometimes used in the specific context where Jews and non-Jews are fiercely opposed to each other. 2 and 4 Maccabees in particular are evidence of this usage.…” (1997: 195).

5 See sections [1.4]-[1.6] in the introduction to this thesis above.
picture of the panorama of “Jewishness” at the time the apocryphal writings were written. We have made use of it here, at any rate, in a merely suggestive way—attempting, as we have been, to formulate the Jewish side of the Jew/Greek equation in 4 Macc.

1.2. Models of Jewish priority: the horror of dilettantism

Does 4 Macc work as an exclusively “Jewish” text? Is it possible that the community behind it, and the author who gave voice to their stories and opinions, were only minimally influenced, if at all, by the Greco-Roman society in which they lived? What would such a community have looked like? No modern scholar has defended the thesis that 4 Macc should be understood solely from a strictly Jewish worldview, though a few have arguably come close. Barclay, for example, comparing 4 Macc with the works of Aristeas and Philo, writes that in our text “the level of acculturation... is distinctly inferior.” Barclay continues:

[The philosophical claims of the work appear somewhat pretentious and its achievements limited in scope.... It is likely that the many inconsistencies and repetitions [in the work] are the result not of interpolation or textual corruption...but of the author’s inability to sustain a controlled and organized treatise. (1996: 369-80 [371])

Whence these grave charges that Barclay levels at the author of 4 Macc of pretentiousness, the inability to manage philosophical concepts, and general authorial incompetence? Granted, our author has likely had an “advanced Greek education” with “training in rhetoric” and some exposure to Hellenistic philosophy and literature, but overall he is an “eclectic,” inconsistent, repetitious, amateurish apologist for the Jewish religion out of his depth, what is more, with Greek ideas (Barclay 1996: 371).

“It is noticeable,” Barclay offers by way of proof of his allegation, “that no attempt is made [in 4 Macc] to show the value of the law by allegorical exegesis,” a technique often associated with Philo, Aristeas and the highly-hellenised “Alexandrian school” of Judeo-Christian biblical interpretation (1996: 374 n. 73; so also e.g. Goppelt 1982: 55 and the authors he cites in n. 61; Thiselton 2009: 68). While we would not wish to
buy into the assumption that the absence of allegory in an ancient Jewish text is a reliable indicator that the work as a whole is free from Hellenistic influence, accepting Barclay’s premise here so as to challenge his example will be a useful means by which to demonstrate that the Greek influence on the author of 4 Macc is more profound than he admits. For both Klauck (1989: 713 n. 26b) and Cheung (1999: 46) do see allegory in Eleazar’s words at 5.26, in the manner of the exegesis of Aristeas in *Let. Aris.* 144-148⁶, and even though Barclay admits this kind of treatment of the dietary laws in this verse “is possible” if “by no means explicit” (1996: 374 n. 73), we would suggest his rejection of the allegory argument has more to do with a horror of lowbrow popular *dilettantism* than with any kind of considered scholarly doubt. Schürer makes explicit what lies just beneath the surface of Barclay’s comments on the education, motive and cultural literacy of the author of 4 Macc (in observations such as “…[he] has absorbed his education only insofar as it will support the literal meaning of his Scriptures…”; 1996: 75) when he writes that “[w]hether or not [the author of 4 Macc] worked within an existing philosophical school, he was only a dilettante in *philosophicus*” who gave his Judaism “a philosophical veneer” (Schürer 1986: 1.590; deSilva 1998: 51-2).

And yet it is precisely the figure of the *dilettante* who returns to wreak havoc with Barclay’s models of Jewish-Greek interaction as reflected in the text, whether that of “cultural antagonism” or of “cultural convergence” (1996: 375, 379). This first model does not imply that a given author did not receive a Greek education. Rather, it suggests that he is concerned to take up his training to defend Judaism from the misunderstandings and criticisms of non-Jews, and to present these last, in turn, as threatening “‘enemies,’ ‘aliens’ or ‘fools’” whose persons and culture are deserving of scorn (Barclay 1996: 181 and passim). The second model denotes an attempt at *integration*, on the part of the Jewish community behind a given writing, of their Scriptures, customs, laws and rituals with the norms and values of the Greek world (Barclay 1996: 126 and passim). The categories Barclay uses to nuance these models, those of “acculturation,” “assimilation” and “accommodation,” have been called “by far the best model of Jewish life in the Roman Diaspora that we have” (Sanders 2000: 498) but also “somewhat strained and artificial” (Gruen 2010: 427)—and it is with

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⁶ So Klauck: “Das scheint eine allegorische Interpretation der Speisegesetze im Blick zu haben, wie sie ausführlich der Aristeasbrief bietet, vgl. nur Arist 144-148. Eine Schriftenruflage in Dtn 30,11-14.”
this last comment that we must side on the basis of Barclay’s comments on 4 Macc. For throughout his section on 4 Macc Barclay seems to express doubts about his account of the work as an example of “cultural antagonism”: “[i]t is striking,” the commentator writes at one point, “that…in 4 Maccabees…‘Greeks’ or ‘Gentiles’ are not themselves described in derogatory terms” (1996: 375-79 [376]; in contrast to 2 Macc, e.g. 8.1-7, 16-17; 10.2-5; 13.9-12). “Striking” we might say only for someone prepared to cast aspersions on the education and intellectual capability of an ancient author whose literary product does not measure up to expectations of what an apocryphal text should be, not to mention totally unaccustomed to the liminal figures of the diletante or the eclectic who move all too fleetingly through the fixed categories of the historian. Perhaps in our need to be brief here we have criticised Barclay unduly; however, the overall point still stands, that to read 4 Macc as nothing more than an exclusively “Jewish” text is an interpretive move that is blind to the “popular,” or “lowbrow,” manifestations of ancient Jewish-Greek interaction, as opposed to its “official,” “orthodox” intellectual forms.

1.3. Postulating Jewish priority as interpreter

Even if it is untenable to consider 4 Macc an exclusively “Jewish” text, as we have just seen, still we must reckon with the idea that it is more “Jewish” than “Greek”—i.e., that “the ‘philosophy’ of the treatise is present only to serve the interests of the author’s Jewish commitments” (Barclay 1996: 371; his original marks of derision). More precisely, we must take into account the consequences, in a time and place beyond late Second Temple Judaism in Palestine and the Diaspora, and its reconstruction in the hermetically-sealed environment of modern “biblical studies,” of labelling a particular text as “Jewish” (or more “Jewish” than “Greek”). How do we hear the word “Jewish” in our own world, and from where do these reverberations that reach our ears emanate?

7 “Orthodox,” to be sure, only on the side of the “Greek”: since it makes little sense to speak of Jewish “orthodoxy” at the time 4 Macc was written, we mean the label to refer to the more “pure,” “scholastic” manifestations of Greek “philosophy” that Barclay and Schürer, and their ilk, seem to prefer. See, for example, Barclay’s disparaging of non-specialist, non-technical bowdlerisations of Greek philosophy in comments such as the following: “The Stoic ethos of the piece is modified and mixed in various respects, and the author’s eclectic approach appears to be evidence not of his command of the different schools of though but of his dependence on current popularizations of philosophy” (1996: 371).
The proposition—“4 Macc is a “Jewish” (or mostly “Jewish”) text”—seems accurate (and innocent) enough at first glance, but on closer inspection a problem immediately presents itself: *in Hebrew, language of the “Jew,” there is no present tense of the verb “to be”* (Sherwood 2004: 197; cf. Derrida 1982: 201). To say “4 Macc is…” is already to speak *Greek*, rather than *Hebrew*: just as the very author of the work can only express his thesis—“that devout reason is [ἐστιν] sovereign over the emotions” (1.1; etc.)—in *Greek* and not Hebrew. For Derrida, this *ontology* of the copula is one of the legacies of Platonism inherited by the “whole history of Western philosophy”: “the presumed possibility of a discourse about what is, the deciding and decidable *logos* of or about the *on* (being-present)” (2004a: 204). And what it means is that in “all the Western methods of analysis, explication, reading or interpretation” (Derrrda 1997: 46)—such is the very project of biblical/extra-biblical *exegesis*—it will be impossible to get a handle on what is truly Other-than-Greek, or in this case, the “Jewish.”

In connection with this inherent “violence” of Western metaphysics, it is worth mentioning the attempt of Levinas to circumvent the problem (1991; or at least Derrida’s reading of it [2001e]) to see if his project might provide a precedent for us by which to affirm the predominant “Jewish” quality of 4 Macc. In *Totality and Infinity*, Levinas attempts to recast *ethics* as first philosophy, rather than ontology, by appealing to Plato’s placement of the Form of the Good beyond Being in the *Republic*. For the attempt to stick, he has to think of the Good as a kind of *non-being*—not the opposite of Being, but an *Otherwise than Being* (cf. Levinas 1997)—which the Eleatic Stranger in the *Sophist* calls an act of “parricide” because it amounts to an attempt against “father” Parmenides (*Soph*. 241d). But the attempt to think through this alterity is doomed to failure, or so Derrida believes, just as it proves impossible for Plato speaking through the Stranger: non-being, “which is in itself unthinkable... ineffable... unpronounceable... foreign to discourse and to reason” (*Soph*. 238c), can

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8 The Hebrew manifestation of the phenomenon known in linguistics as a “zero copula” is explained thusly by Kuzar (2012: 56-7): “…Hebrew has traditionally been described...as having a bipartite “nominal sentence” with no copula. While this is a valid claim with regard to Biblical Hebrew...it is no longer true for Israeli Hebrew...since the zero copula is now in pertinent opposition with the copula *hu* [i.e., the third person masculine pronoun]” (57). But still, since the modern Hebrew copula is a pronoun, rather than a *verb*, we will allow the present observation to stand.

9 See the passages from the *Republic* collated by Narbonne (2006: 52-3 [53]) in which Plato “…is...able to convince us, with a certain number of salient expressions and metaphors, of the special character of the Good and of the distinguished place that is its own.”
only be thought of in a dialectic, as Other relative to Being’s Same, and not as “absolute nothingness or simple opposite of Being” (Derrida 1996: 34; cf. Soph. 256b, 259c)\(^\text{10}\). Derrida asks:

…[W]ill a non-Greek ever succeed in doing what a Greek in this case [Plato] could not do [i.e., murder “father” Parmenides], except by disguising himself as a Greek, by speaking Greek, by feigning to speak Greek in order to get near the king? And since it is a question of killing a speech, will we ever know who is the last victim of this stratagem? Can one feign speaking a language? (2001e: 110; emphasis original)

The answer to this last question for Derrida is yes. For even if we cannot, in the final instance, think “otherwise than Being” except in a dialectic movement, Levinas lodges himself “within a traditional conceptuality in order to destroy it” (Derrida 2001e: 139)—that is, in Robbins’s words, “he speaks Hebrew under a feigned appearance of speaking Greek” (1991: 118; emphasis original). Levinas’ dissimulation allows us “to dream of an inconceivable process of dismantling and dispossession” whose (non-)site is “at the heart of the desert, in the growing wasteland” (Derrida 2001e: 101; my emphasis)—i.e., cut off from the “home,” the homeland (πατρίδα, cf. 4 Macc 17.21)—“a movement of the same unto the other which never returns to the same” (Levinas 1986: 348-9)\(^\text{11}\). But as Robbins points out, “the necessity for this dissimulating strategy is also its potential undoing”—while the speaker feigning to speak Greek may understand himself to be speaking Hebrew, there is no guarantee that his hearers will hear him like that, or even that he can keep from mingling the two identities in his person (1991: 118). How then to realise the “dream” of speaking of the other-than-Greek, or in this case the “Jewish”—in the context of the “Greek” exegesis—if not by dissembling and thereby running the risk of assimilation? Rather than lodging ourselves within the tradition as Levinas we need to situate ourselves as somehow prior to it—but that will be our project in section [3] of this chapter below.

\(^{10}\) All quotations here in this paragraph from the Sophist are taken from Derrida 1996: 34.

\(^{11}\) In a sentiment that will have great resonance for us further on in this chapter, Levinas continues: “To the myth of Ulysses returning to Ithaca, we wish to oppose the story of Abraham, who leaves his fatherland forever for a yet unknown land.”
2. 4 Macc as Greek text

Moving on now to the other side of the Jew/Greek divide in 4 Macc: what makes this text “Greek”? Although Davila does not formulate a series of Hellenistic “signature features” in the apocryphal texts—being more interested as he is in defining late Second Temple Judaism, as revealed in its literature, over and against its Christian, Samaritan and contemporary Greco-Roman (Gentile) Others—we propose here to undertake precisely such a task, so as first to highlight the Greek inflections of the Judaism of 4 Macc before moving on to consider ways to conceptualise the apparent “synthesis” the text represents.

2.1. Greek “signature features” in 4 Macc

Barclay and scholars of his ilk aside—who, as we have already seen, seek to downplay and trivialise the Hellenistic features of 4 Macc—a considerable majority of commentators on the text have characterised it as a literary manifestation of one type of “Hellenistic Judaism.” Those aspects of the text that have prompted the leading element in this label may be summarised according to the headings to follow.

2.1.1. Virtues

As van Henten rightly observes (1997: 281), at the centre of the “divine philosophy” (7.9) espoused in 4 Macc is the virtue of εὐσέβεια, “piety”—a quality included in Eleazar’s catalogue of virtue in 5.23-24 (here at the expense of φρόνησις, “rational judgment,” cf. 1.18) that is revelatory of our author’s philosophical preferences in that it lacks a real parallel in the contemporary sources. Discussions of the cardinal virtues—courage, justice, self-control and rational judgment—are of course common in ancient Greco-Roman philosophy; Hadas (1953: 116) argues that the doctrine in 4 Macc can be traced all the way back to Plato, but Renehan (1972: 238) suggests, more convincingly, that it has more likely come via an intermediary source such as Posidonius.

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12 With the exceptions, perhaps, as van Henten notes, of [Pseudo-]Plato, *Epin.* 989b, and Cicero, *Tusc.* 1.64—this last with its mention of the veneration of the gods (*cultus*) among the cardinal virtues.
2.1.2. Control of the passions

The opinion of the author of 4 Macc that the passions cannot be uprooted or eradicated entirely but only controlled and directed by divine reason (1.6b; 1.28-29; 3.2-5; etc.) has caused no lack of confusion on the part of scholars. For the unmistakeable Stoic influence elsewhere in the work (e.g. in the idea of the freedom and “kingship” of the wise man, 2.23; 7.23; 14.2; the pre-eminence of “rational judgment” [φρόνησις] among the cardinal virtues in 1.18; etc.) is here rather more obscure, for the Stoics more usually taught that the emotions were to be extirpated completely (e.g. Zeno, Chrysippus). But again, Renehan shows that the more moderate position taken in 4 Macc finds a parallel in the Περὶ παθῶν of Posidonius, or at least as it has been preserved in Galen’s work of the same title—adducing the vocabulary of κρατέων (e.g. 4 Macc 1.5, 6; 2.6, 15, 20), κυριεύειν (1.4; 2.12), ἐπικρατεῖν (1.3, 31; 2.4, 11), δέσποζειν (1.5; 2.13, 16), and so on common among the three as a principal support (1972: 237 etc.).

2.1.3. Reason/wisdom

The definition of “reason” offered by the author of 4 Macc is, at first glance, entirely consonant with the standard interpretation of the word in Hellenistic philosophy: “Now reason [λογισμός] is the mind that with sound logic [ὀρθοῦ λόγου] prefers the life of wisdom. Wisdom [σοφία], next, is the knowledge [γνώσις] of divine and human matters and the causes of these” (1.15-16). 1.16 in particular—our author’s definition of “wisdom”—is a commonplace in ancient Greek thought, and despite the scholarly tendency to restrict the phrase to the Stoic school, it can actually be found in a wide range of Greco-Roman works (e.g. Cicero, Tusc. 4.26.57; Philo, Congr. 79; Seneca, Ep. 89.5; Plutarch, [Plac. philos.] 1.1-213. Where the author of 4 Macc does depart from the Greek philosophers, however, is in his suggestion that wisdom is “education in the law” (1.17)14.

13 With the exception of the curious substitution in 4 Macc of γνώσις for ἐπιστήμη. Renehan comments on this replacement: “I am reluctant to read too much into this, but nevertheless, if one recalls the pregnant meanings γνώσις had come to have in Hellenistic Jewish circles, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that this is a conscious and deliberate (philosophic!) change on the part of the author of Fourth Maccabees” (1972: 229; gloss in round bracks original). Certainly 1.16 merits further study in light of the substitution.

14 On this verse Hadas writes: “The equation of “wisdom” and “the Law,” like the qualification of
2.1.4. Equality of all sin

Wolfson (1948: 2.271-2) and Hadas (1953: 117-8) have both suggested that the mention of “petty sin” in 4 Macc (μικρά ἁμαρτία; 5.19) represents a diversion from the orthodox Stoicism that taught that all sins were of equal gravity. But as Renehan (1972: 230-231) has countered, the phrase here only echoes the argument by which Antiochus tries to convince Eleazar to eat pork (5.5-13), and indeed the following two verses, 5.20-21, do echo the conviction that all transgressions, small or great, are of “equal seriousness” (5.20). The Stoic and Jewish doctrines of sin, Renehan ventures, “are distinct but potentially cognate ideas” which the author of 4 Macc is here combining (1972: 231; emphasis original).

2.1.5. Bipartite (or tripartite) soul

In contrast to deSilva’s assertion that “4 Maccabees does not involve itself in the discussions concerning the parts of the soul” (1998: 56), Heckel (2002: 127) does see an allusion to the Platonic doctrine of the tripartite soul in 4 Macc 7.14. The mention in this verse of the “many-headed rack” (πολυκέφαλον στρέβλαν) parallels, according to this author, the image in the Republic of the appetitive part of the soul as a “many-headed hydra” (e.g. Resp. 588b-589e, 590b; 620a-d)\(^\text{15}\). Other scholars, such as Hadas (1953: 116), suggest that the evidence for the division of the human being in 4 Macc into body, soul and intellect is not as strong as the evidence for a body/soul anthropology only; perhaps the discrepancy here can be explained by suggesting that our author, like Philo, saw in the idea of the tripartite soul a way to fuse Aristotelian and Stoic ideas (Stowers 2003: 539)\(^\text{16}\).

\(^{15}\) The language of a “many-headed hydra” here is Heckel’s; the precise language in this part of the Republic is that of a “many-headed beast” (θηρίου... πολυκεφαλοῦ or πολυκεφαλὸ θρέμματος; trans. Shorey 1942: 2.401, 403), but cf. the use of the phrase τῷ ὄντι ὀσπέρ Ἑδραί τεμνόσιν (“trying to cut off a Hydra’s head) at Resp. 426e for a “labour in vain”; trans. Shorey 1942: 1.343.

\(^{16}\) For more on the notion(s) of the “soul” in 4 Macc, see Chapter 3 of this thesis below.
2.1.6. Immortality of the soul

Commentators have very often observed that the author of 4 Macc consistently excises those passages in his source, 2 Macc, that give voice to a hope in the resurrection of the body (2 Macc 7.9, 11, 14, 22-23; etc.) while expressing a preference himself for the notion of the immortality of the soul (9.22; 14.5-6; 16.13; 17.12; 18.23; etc.). While the matter is not, in actual fact, as “clear-cut” and “striking” as some scholars might like (e.g. Anderson 1983: 2.539)—for as we have attempted to explain elsewhere in this thesis, certain verses in 4 Macc (such as 18.17) can in fact be interpreted as evidence for the “Jewish” as opposed to the “Greek” belief—it seems likely that the references to “endless life” in the work do represent some kind of an assumption of a Hellenistic sensibility.

2.1.7. Providence

Like the doctrines it teaches of the liberty and regal nature of wisdom, the place of rational judgment among the cardinal virtues and the equal gravity of all types of sin, the belief in “Providence” expressed in 4 Macc (9.24; 13.19; 17.22) is an unmistakeably Stoic topos (cf. Epictetus, Discourses 3.11.6; deSilva 1998: 130; Aitken 2002: 284). The idea in our work is not reflective of some rigid “determinism” (εἱρµαρµένη) that precludes the possibility of “free will” (ἐπ’ ἀνθρώπων ἐκλογή), despite that to which Josephus testifies of the Judaism of his time (B.J. 2.163-4; cf. A.J. 18.13, 18)\(^\text{17}\); rather, it simply expresses the view that nature is essentially accommodating and generous, rather than hostile and forbidding (cf. e.g. D.L. 7.85; Jackson-McCabe 2001: 102-3).

2.1.8. Other Greek signature features in 4 Macc: the “philosophic koine”

In addition to the doctrines we have resumed, all too briefly, under the headings above, various other ideas from the Hellenistic philosophical tradition(s) also make their way into 4 Macc: the very form of the text as “protreptic discourse”; the theories it expounds of brotherly and parental love (Klauck 1990), the make-up of the natural

\(^\text{17}\) E.g. B.J. 2.162-3; “…[t]he Pharisees…attribute everything to Fate [εἱρµαρµένη] and to God…” (trans. Thackeray 1956: 2.384-5).
world, the life of the philosopher as a "spectacle" or "contest", and so on. Space prevents us from going into these too deeply here but they can all be summarised as component parts of the current of "philosophical koine" which undergirds our work. Renehan, in his seminal work on the Hellenistic influences on 4 Macc to which we have already alluded in this section, expresses a certain satisfaction with this designation of the philosophical provenance of the text “provided that one does not thereby intend to deny the presence of some specifically Stoic notions in the work” (1972: 227-8). In any case, we believe we have done enough by means of the brief orientations to the specifically “Jewish” and “Greek” elements of 4 Macc offered above to be able to move on now to explore how these come together, which task is the principal object of this chapter.

2.2. Models of Greek priority: the idea of “hellenisation”

It is clear now that 4 Macc is neither a strictly “Jewish” text nor a strictly “Greek” one; instead it is a writing that somehow “fuses” or “synthesises” elements from both of these traditions. But asserting this fact invites a further question: how should this “fusion” or “synthesis” of the Hebraic and Hellenistic in the text be spoken of, analysed, even conceptualised? Is the work more “Jewish” than “Greek,” more “Greek” than “Jewish,” or a “mixture” of the two in equal parts? Is the language of “fusion,” “synthesis” or “mixture” appropriate here, or even really meaningful?

Above we made a special note of the language Hadas uses to describe “the equation of “wisdom” and “the Law”, “reason” and the “religious,“ in 4 Macc (1953: 149 n. 17; my emphasis), and of Renehan’s observation that the text, in general, represents a combination of Judaism and Stoicism (1972: 231). We have alluded, too, to other instances of the same kind of language: deSilva writes of a “remarkable synthesis of Hellenistic philosophy and Jewish piety” (1998: 11), Anderson of the “wedding [of] Greek philosophy to Jewish religion” (1983: 2.532), Rajak of the blending of the “Greek philosophy current in the Roman empire…with a parade of rhetoric and a serious Jewish ideology” (2001b: 111), and so on (my emphasis in all three cases). Each of these conceptualisations of the “integration” of things Jewish and things Greek in 4 Macc fits into the broader paradigm of the “hellenisation” of the Judaism of the Second Temple period: a phenomenon that has been defined as—
...[T]he process of acculturation by which behavior, manners, culture (literature, philosophy, art), religious belief, ethical, social, political, economic, and material norms, etc., of a person or a group [in this case, the Jews and Judaism both of Palestine and the Diaspora] might be affected by the kind of Greek culture that spread in the lands that came under the rule of Alexander the Great… (Feldman 2006a: 4; Rappaport 1992: 1; Levine 1998: 16-32 [esp. the authors cited here on p. 16 n. 18])

But this model of “hellenisation” and “Hellenised Jews,” which derives in large part from Hengel’s important study Judaism and Hellenism of some forty years ago (Hengel 1974; 1980; 1989), has not been without its critics (Grabbe 2008: 2.130-33; Rajak 2001c: 3-9), who see it as a framework which is unfaithful to the historical reality in pre-Maccabean Jerusalem—which may have been far less “hellenised” than Hengel makes out—as well as “a highly charged ideological concept,” both in the ancient and contemporary world, “that should be handled with the utmost care” (Alexander 2001: 69).

Both of these two main criticisms of Hengel’s model may be illustrated by reference to 4 Macc. In the first place: to what extent does our author portray Jerusalem as having been “hellenised” before the high priest Jason’s apostatising reforms? The question is an important one because, for “hellenisation” (using the definition just above) to be intelligible and practicable as a historical phenomenon, it must be shown to have begun early, during the time of the Ptolemies. But allowing even for the ideological commitments of its author—who is concerned, as we have already seen, to maximise the evil, precipitousness and hysteria of Antiochus, Jason and their fellow conspirators—the picture in 4 Macc is rather different. Indeed, the story only really makes sense if the changes to the nation’s “way of life” (4.19-20)—to its government, system of education, religious commitments, etc.—were introduced in a sudden burst of reformist activity rather than over the course of more than a century of gradual “acculturation.” Hengel has in fact acknowledged this criticism of his “hellenisation” model, amending his original 1974 thesis to the effect that:

A more thorough ‘Hellenization’, which also included the lower classes, only became a complete reality in Syria and Palestine under the protection of Rome...
It was Rome which first helped ‘Hellenism’ to its real victory in the East. (Hengel 1980: 53)

Remembering, then, that 4 Macc is a late first–century C.E. retelling of early second-century B.C.E. events—or in other words, that is was likely written before the phenomenon of “hellenisation” achieved its maximum penetration in the Eastern Mediterranean under Trajan (98-117 C.E.)—should give us pause for thought before applying the label of “hellenised” Jew to its author.18 “Greek-influenced,” he certainly was; thoroughly “hellenised”, in the strict historiographical sense of the word, we cannot say for sure.

The second and more consequential criticism of the model associated with Hengel that is discernible in the very text of 4 Macc is its blindness to the ideological weight of terms such as “Hellenism” in the ancient Jewish world (and the contemporary one too; see section [2.3] below). For even if we were to accept the proposition that the author of 4 Macc, and the community he belonged to, were “hellenised” Jews, how could we differentiate them conceptually from those “certain persons” referred to in the text (3.21) who, in collaborating with Antiochus and the Seleucids to bring the Greek way of life to bear on the Jewish nation, could also be said to be “hellenised” Jews? Given that, for ancient Jews, the label of “Hellenism” denoted a very precise set of positions (Alexander 2001: 66)—specifically, the approval of Greek political domination, idolatry and other foreign religious practices (the so-called “ways of the Amorites”19)—the fact is that it is Jason and his circle who should more properly be characterised as “hellenised” rather than the author of 4 Macc and his community. The latter group might have felt at home in the literary and philosophical universe of their day but, as Alexander has shown (2001: 70-71 etc.), this world was not as homogenously “Hellenistic” as it appears at first glance.20

18 This is not of course to say that our author is totally uninfluenced by Greek culture: that would be going against all the evidence we have collected in section [2.1] above. It is only to begin to think about whether the particular label of “hellenised” Jew—which carries with it very particular assumptions and implications, as a historiographical hypothesis, beyond the question of literary influence—is strictly appropriate in his case.
19 For more on this term which, in its broadest sense, “signifies activity prohibited on account of the scriptural prohibition ‘and do not go according to their laws’ (Lev 18.3),” but which refers more concretely to divination and other sorcery practices, see for example Harari 2006: 2.528-9.
20 Against the all-too-common assumption that “Hellenistic” culture “was in origin all but autochthonous” – i.e., originally, essentially and axiomatically Greek – Alexander pits the fact of the
2.3. Postulating Greek priority as interpreter

What happens if we privilege those (apparently) “Greek” elements of 4 Macc and put the accent on the first term of the Hellenistic Jewish label applied to the work? What would be the assumptions and implications behind such a move? These may be glimpsed, we suggest, in the close examination of the arguments of those scholars who argue that the martyrdoms in 4 Macc fit the literary pattern of the “Greek” tradition of the “noble death.”

The motif of the “noble death” in Greco-Roman literature has been defined as the heroic yet violent death of a person on behalf of others, or on behalf of a religious, philosophical or civic ideal (Finlan 2005: 8, 52-6, 75; id. 2007: 2, 15-6, 18, 28). According to the majority view of scholars, the form finds its archetype in the death of Socrates (e.g. Phaedr. 63d, 64a; Crito 49c-51e, 52d; Elledge 2006: 105 n. 102), though this is by no means the only, or even the most powerful, example: Antigone, so concerned to bury her brother Polyneices, dies at the hands of Creon for the cause of justice and piety (e.g. Ant. 89, 447-70); Iphigenia dies so that Agamemnon and his fleet can continue their journey and ultimately defeat Troy (e.g. Iph. aul. 1397-98; 1553-55); Alcestis dies to fulfil the bargain her husband Admetus struck with Apollo (e.g. Alc. 644-47), and so on. Seeley, reviewing these and other examples, suggests that the noble death “form” is made up of five constitutive elements, each of which is present, in turn, in 4 Macc: “(1) obedience, (2) the overcoming of physical vulnerability, (3) a military setting, (4) vicariousness, or the quality of being beneficial for others, and (5) sacrificial metaphors” (1990: 13). In fact, 4 Macc displays each of these details so clearly and coherently that Greenberg, following Seeley, can call it “the epitome of the Hellenistic-Jewish form of the Noble Death,” as well as “an exemplary text” (2009: 58-9). But this language of literary forms, archetypes and exemplarity should give us pause for thought, if only from a methodological, as opposed to teleological, perspective. For even if Seeley and Greenberg are correct here (by coincidence)—that Greek and Roman conceptions of centuries of “constant flow back and forth…of cultural exchange” among the peoples of the Levant and ancient Near East by the time of “late antiquity,” and suggests that we think in terms of a “cultural pattern generic to the whole region [not to be called “Hellenism” necessarily] that has been specified in each subculture in slightly different ways” (2001: 69-71).  

21 For further examples and treatment of this theme see, for example, van Henten 1997: 157-9.
the “noble death” are the principal influence on the portraits of the martyrs’ suffering and execution in 4 Macc—it is worth reflecting on the ultimate utility of the idea of this motif as literary formula, which, in the hands of other scholars, becomes little more than a rudimentary “checklist” (see e.g. van Henten 2007: 195-218 [195])

The problem we have just identified with applying a “formula” to 4 Macc is that the search for and/or use of an “essence” of a form or text, or of an idea, is an exclusively “Greek” gesture: such a move excludes the “Jewish” by definition. The very language of essences, forms, archetypes and exemplars is inextricably bound up from the beginning with Platonic thinking (Derrida 2004c: 165; Bennington 1994: 213). Moreover, the literary “formula” is like the pharmakon we have already encountered in this thesis that is both (and neither) “remedy” and “poison”: what is intended to serve as an clarificatory aid is always already an obfuscatory hindrance. The difficulty here is the same one we encountered with Levinas and Derrida in section [1.3] above, and similar to the one faced by Davila in his search for the “signature features” of late Second Temple Judaism (see section [1.1] of this chapter above) that leads him from a monothetic description of the phenomena to a polythetic one: the One of the “perfect” and “unique” must be displaced by the many of the “common” and “shared,” a taxonomic principle that is equally valid but less ideologically fraught (Davila 2002; Smith 1982: 2-8).

Another way of putting our objection to the kind of Greek/formulaic thinking of 4 Macc represented by Seeley, Greenberg and van Henten is in terms of Derrida’s contrast between the “triplicity of death” and the “living triplicity of the concept” (2004b: 20). Here is Seeley, for example, on the representation of the deaths of the martyrs in 4 Macc and of Jesus in Paul:

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22 Further to van Henten’s language of a “checklist” of noble death passages in Josephus, see also his “minimal definition” (his language) of the phenomenon as “1) focus on a violent death, sometimes self-inflicted but in any case forced by the circumstance, 2) a positive assessment of this death, and 3) vocabulary and/or motifs typical for noble death passages” (2007: 195). It is ironic, and highly unfortunate, that the author of a fine piece on rhetoric in Josephus should miss the circular reasoning and ultimate indecipherability of his own argument.

23 See n. 40 of the Introduction to this thesis above.
Because both the philosopher’s noble death and the later Stories of the Suffering Righteous [the tales of the “proto-martyrs” of the Jewish tradition, such as Isaac, Esther, Daniel and Susanna] depict godly individuals who suffer and die for their godliness, it would have been simple to align them… (1994: 175-6; my emphasis)\textsuperscript{24}

Notice here the language of \textit{alignment}, which is, as the very name suggests, a two-dimensional concept (from the French \textit{à ligne}, “into line”). The effect is of a dry and dusty post-mortem or excavation of the text rather than a conceptualisation or exposition of its organic concepts. As Derrida puts it:

\ldots[S]uch philosophy [the kind of formalist, mathematical or scientific thinking we have just been considering] applies simple oppositions, formulas prescribed once and for all: somewhat as in…a museum of natural history where one can find collected, classed, and exhibited all manner of dead limbs and cold bones, skins dried like parchments, anatomical plates, and other tableaux and displays that pin down the living to death… (2004b: 17-20 [19])

Another name for this “museum of natural history” might be the museum of “Hellenocentrism”—a monument to the “ontological or transcendental oppression” of the Other by the Same under the cover of the relentless application of the “Greek” logic of rigid taxonomies, formulae, archetypes and essences (Derrida 2001e: 93-192; Leonard 2005: 202). One thing is certain, at any rate: the stories of the martyrs’ deaths in 4 Macc must be preserved from being pinned down and labelled as nothing more than specimens of the Greek “noble death” tradition. Instead, the literary remains of Eleazar, the mother and her sons must be allowed to live, must be repatriated—but if not to the Jewish homeland, from which they are forever “cut off” (see section [1.3] above), then to where?

\textsuperscript{24} Seeley ventures further on in a footnote that “[i]n 4 Maccabees, as in Paul, the patterns of the philosopher’s noble death and of the Stories of the Suffering Righteous \textit{have come together}” (1994: 176 n. 79; my emphasis). We suggest that the passive voice betrays him here: his formulaic thinking, just expressed in the metaphor of the “alignment” of the two traditions, is ultimately too simplistic to be able to hold.
3. Thought experiment: 4 Macc as “Egyptian” text

We have seen in sections [1.3] and [2.3] of this chapter above that the attempt to isolate, analyse and/or prioritise either the “Jewish” or “Greek” elements of 4 Macc in an exegetical project is at best a chimera and at worst a metaphysical injustice. For Derrida, the attempt of Levinas to realise infinite alterity—Good before Being, ethics before ontology—is doomed to failure, for this infinity always ends up inscribed in the totality of the logos. As Derrida explains with respect to one possible name for this transcendence, the name of “God”:

[If God is alterity, transcendence, infinity, exteriority]...God is nothing (determined)...because he is everything...at once All and Nothing, Life and Death. Which means that God is or appears, is named, within the difference between All or Nothing, Life and Death. Within difference, and at bottom as Difference itself... (2001e: 144; emphasis original)

As Thomson (2007: 115) explains, the point is that “[a]bsolute difference cannot be thought except within an infinite series of finite attempts to think difference, and would not escape its own inscription as a possibility within finitude, within language, and within the world.” Dialectical thinking thereby reasserts itself. Or, to take an example from 4 Macc: any attempt to think through the radical passivity of obedience to the law (cf. [1.1.4] above) cannot but make mention of the ego’s mastery of the passions ([2.1.2]), for, as even Levinas must concede, in the ethical relationship “each contributes everything, except the private fact of one’s existence” (1987b: 40-41; emphasis mine). Self/same/being cannot be avoided—unless, that is, we can manage to stop ourselves from speaking Greek and somehow situate ourselves prior to our Western philosophical “system” (cf. [1.3] above). But what language might we take up to that end?

Prior to the anti-Jewish offensive launched by the Greek Antiochus in 4 Macc—prior to his attempts to use torture “to compel everyone in the nation to eat defiling foods and to renounce Judaism” (4 Macc 4.26)—our author situates us in Egypt: “When [Antiochus] was warring against Ptolemy in Egypt, he heard a rumour of his death had spread and that the people of Jerusalem had rejoiced greatly” (4.22). Egypt is, in
other words, a narratological *sine qua non* for the appearance of the martyrs of 4 Macc as ἀντιψυχός (6.29; 17.21). It is fortuitous for our purposes in this chapter that Derrida also recurs to “Egypt” in his attempt to think and speak beyond the Hellenocentrism of the western tradition. Via the close analysis of the story Plato recounts in the *Phaedrus* of the Egyptian Theuth’s invention of writing, for example—25—to highlight just one aspect of this suggestive complex of images—Derrida tries to confront Western *logos* culture “with its own fears, distress, confusion, and blindness with regard to the nature of its own origin” (Butler 2007: 72; Bennington 1994: 213). Metaphorically speaking, at least, “Egypt” is logically “prior” to “Greece” because it represents the Other against which the “Greek” Same was defined: in the privileging of speech over writing, presence over absence, being over non-being, etc. And “Egypt” is also “prior” to the “Jew” as Other-than-Greek in the sense that Moses, who led the Jews out of exile in Egypt, may even have been an *Egyptian* himself: the adopted son of Pharaoh’s daughter (Exod 2.10), “slow of speech and slow of tongue” (a fact which, as Bennington recalls, Freud interprets as a distorted recollection that Moses spoke a language other than Hebrew [1994: 219]; Exod 4.10).

“Egypt,” therefore, is Derrida’s name for that non-site of the “desert” (as opposed to the Greek *locus* of the “home”) to which we have seen Levinas attempt to orient us ([1.3] above), and the “Egyptian” language—*hieroglyphics*—his name for a “writing older than speech” (Derrida 1997: 142), for the language of the “dream” of dismantling and dispossessing the “Greek” philosophical register. The hieroglyph challenges the *logos* insofar as, in deciphering it, one must detour first through its pictographic and ideogrammatic elements before arriving at its phonetic expression (Johnson 1993: 88-9 [88]). This kind of “graphic” reading and writing (Moore 2010c: 42) therefore provides us with an alternative method of tracing the non-Greek in 4 Macc that approximates for us much more faithfully the language of “the Orient of Holy Scripture” (Derrida 1998: 52) than does the Greek/occidental word of being and presence (or “fusion,” “synthesis,” “signature features,” etc.). And as such it is to this kind of project that we now turn in the remainder of this chapter.

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25 See n. 40 of the Introduction to this thesis above.
3.1. “...As though being tortured in a dream...” (4 Macc 6.5):
Eleazar’s prayer to be accepted as ἀντίψυχος (6.29) as “hieroglyph”

What would happen if we took an interpretive flight of fancy and interpreted ἀντίψυχος not as the Greek word/symbol it appears to be on face value but as a pictograph or ideogram, as a hieroglyph? The author of 4 Macc stages its first appearance in the work (at 6.29) in the context of a “dream”—which, as we have already seen, would provide us with the provisional licence for such a move26.

After they [the guards] had tied his arms on each side they flogged him...But the courageous and noble man, like a true Eleazar, was unmoved, as though being tortured in a dream [ὁσπερ ἐν ὑνείρῳ]... (4 Macc 6.3, 5)

If we are in a dream here, though, we must allow the dream-words to swell in their range of possible meanings, the path from signifier to signified being even more torturous in night-language than in the “scientific” discourse illuminated by the light of the clear Platonic sun. As Moore has it, the world of dreams and the unconscious “is irreducibly “literary” in its workings” (2010c: 42, 45 [45]): “It is a realm of metaphoric condensations, metonymic displacements, graphic word-images, startling associations, surrealist spectacles, bad jokes, and Joycean multilingual puns.” And, unsurprisingly, the ἀντίψυχος is no exception to this (un)rule, for hidden within the lexicon—after “given for life” and “giving one’s own life for another’s”—we find the following note: “name for οἱ Μέμνονος ὄρνιθες, “Memnon’s birds”” (Hesychius α 551727; LSJ: s.v.).

3.1.1. “Memnon’s bird” as a figure for the phoenix

The Μέμνονος ὄρνιθες or “Memnon’s birds” were the black birds “with the form of hawks” that flew every autumn from the region around Parium and Cyzicus on the Propontis (the Sea of Marmara) to the tomb of Memnon, the champion of Troy and

26 As in sections [1.3] and [3] in this chapter above, the dream is associated with the “desert” of the non-Greek non-site beyond the Greek home, with the attempt to avoid “speaking Greek,” and with the pictographic/ideographic and idiomatic/idiodelectric elements of language.

27 Specifically, the entry in Hesychius is as follows: “ἀντίψυχοι· ὁτίος καλοῦνται οἱ Μέμνονος ὄρνιθες” (see Latte 1953: 1.189).
native of Ethiopia, on the Trojan plain (Aelian, *Nat. an.* 5.1; Arnott 2007: 208). There half of the flock would “fight” against the other half—thereby “reenacting” the battle between the Greeks and Trojans in which Memnon died at the hands of Achilles—until one half was killed and the other half flew home victorious. Other ancient authors tell the story slightly differently—Dionysius of Philadelphia, for example, suggests that the birds’ migration from Ethiopia was instead due to the excessive heat there that burned their eggs (*Av.* 1.8)—but the real interest for us here is the tradition that the birds of Memnon were originally fellow soldiers of his who were metamorphosed so as to honour their leader for ever and keep watch at his tomb.

While Papaioannou is probably correct to posit Ovid as the originator of this “birds of Memnon” legend (2005: 189; 2007: 262), it is important to recognise the earlier strata of the story, in Pausanias, for example. Although the geographer writes in the second century C.E., in book 10 of his *Description of Greece* he describes a painting by Polygnotus, probably of the fifth century B.C.E. (Arnott 2007: 208), in the λέσχη (hostel) at Delphi in which Memnon is depicted wearing a cloak of embroidered birds, called “Memnonides”:

…[A]nd the people of the Hellespont say that on stated days every year they go to the grave of Memnon, and sweep all that part of the tomb that is bare of trees or grass, and sprinkle it with the water of the Aesepus from their wet wings… (*Descr.* 10.31.6; trans. Jones 1935: 4.549)\(^{28}\)

Only in Ovid, however, do we find a full-blown “narrative fusion of hero cult, hero transsubstantiation [*sic*], avian metamorphosis and epitaph memorializing” (Papaioannou 2007: 262)\(^{29}\), as well as some intriguing parallels to 4 Macc. Like

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\(^{28}\) Later in the fourth century C.E., too, Quintus of Smyrna would elaborate on the legend in book 2 of his *Trojan Epic* (or *Posthomerica*, esp. 2.642-650).

\(^{29}\) The tale in Ovid in full is as follows: “But Aurora, though she had lent her aid to the Trojan arms, had no time to lament the ruin and the fall of Troy and Hecuba. A nearer care, grief for her own son, harassed her, the loss of Memnon, whom she, his bright mother, had seen dead by Achilles’ spear on the Phrygian plain. She saw and those bright hues by which the morning skies flush rosy red grew dull, and the heavens were overcast with clouds. And when his corpse was laid upon the funeral pyre his mother endured not to look upon it, but, with streaming hair, just as she was, she disdained not to throw herself at the knees of mighty Jove and with many tears to pray: “Though I am least of all whom the golden heaven upholds (for in all the world but few and scattered temples rise to me), still as a goddess I come. I ask not that thou give me shrines and sacred days and altars to flame with sacrificial fires. And yet, shouldst thou consider what service I, though but a woman, render thee, when each new dawn
Memnon, for example, the brother-martyrs die as brave soldiers in the heat of battle (as do their mother and Eleazar, e.g. 7.4; 9.18, 23-24; 16.14; 17.23-24). As the “innumerable sisters,” too, of the first bird rising out of the smoke bellowing from Memnon’s funeral pyre which are said to spring “from the same natal source” (*eadem natalis origo*), so the brothers in 4 Macc are said to grow “from the same blood” (ἀπὸ τοῦ αὐτοῦ ἁματος, 13.20-27 [13.20]). Though we could go on, it is enough to observe that Ovid’s account of the Memnonides suggests a new and thought-provoking way to interpret the comparison of the Maccabean mother with the mother-bird that protects her young “by flying in circles around them in the anguish of love, warning them with her own calls” (14.15-17 [14.17]; cf. the birds in the *Metamorphoses* that circle the pyre and flap their wings in unison, 610-11), or the author’s note that the chorus of the seven brothers danced around piety “just as the seven days of creation move around the hebdomad” (14.7-8; cf. Ovid’s mention of the birds returning every year once the sun has passed through the signs of the zodiac, *Metam.* 618-19). Though the correspondence between the two texts is not exact, in the realm of the unconscious into which the author of 4 Macc thrusts us we must be prepared to lie down with strange bedfellows. Memnon and the Maccabean martyrs, Ovid and an anonymous Jew of the Diaspora: these are precisely the kind of unsettling topographical displacements and free associations of words, images and concepts that we suggested above make up the landscape of the dream.

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I guard the borders of the night, then wouldst thou deem that I should have some reward. But that is not my care nor is that Aurora’s errand, to demand honours which she may have earned. Bereft of my Memnon I come, who bore brave arms (though all in vain) in his uncle’s service, and in his early years has fallen by Achilles’ warlike hand (for so you willed it). Grant then, I beg, some honour to him as solace for his death, O most high ruler of the gods, and soothe a mother’s wounded heart.” Jove nodded his consent, when Memnon’s lofty pyre, wrapped in high-leaping flame, crumbled to earth, and the day was darkened by the thick black smoke, as when rivers send forth the fogs they have begotten, beneath whose pall the sunlight cannot come. Dark ashes whirled aloft and there, packed and condensed, they seemed to take on form, drew heat and vitality from the fire. (Its own lightness gave it wings). At first, ’twas like a bird; but soon, a real bird, it flew about on whirring pinions. And along with it were countless sisters winging their noisy flight; and all were sprung from the same source. Thrice round the pyre they flew and thrice their united clamour rose into the air. At the fourth flight the flock divided and in two warring bands the fierce contestants fought together, plying beak and hooked talons in their rage, wearying wing and breast in the struggle. At last these shapes kin to the buried ashes fell down as funeral offerings and remembered that they were sprung from that brave hero. The author of their being gave his name to the new-sprung birds, and they were called Memnonides from him; and still, when the sun has completed the circuit of his twelve signs, they fight and die again in honour of their father’s festival. And so others wept while the daughter of Dymas bayed; but Aurora was all absorbed in her own grief; and even to this day she weeps pious tears and bedews the whole world with them” (*Metam.* 13.576-622; trans. Miller 1984: 2.269-73).
But where is the “Egyptian” in the story of Memnon’s birds, or of the Maccabean martyrs as ἀντίψυχος? We must continue to probe since speaking the Latin of Ovid amounts to the same, in the end, as speaking the Greek of Plato or Parmenides. While there is an obvious link here in the monument known as the “colossus of Memnon” at Thebes—the statue of the pharaoh Amenhotep III that was famed in antiquity for the eerie “twang” it emitted at sunrise (supposedly Memnon greeting his mother, Dawn, but in reality the result of the sandstone expanding; see, for example, Platt 2011: 299-312)—a more profitable connection may be found in Bernal’s suggestion that the tale of the Memnonides being created from the smoke of Memnon’s pyre “could be a parallel to the story of the Phoenix rising from the ashes” (1991: 262): the myth of the phoenix, of course, being thought to have been modelled on the Egyptian “sun bird” (benu, bnw; van den Broek 1972: 15-32). An image begins to appear through the fog: just as the ancient authors report that the phoenix is reborn by fire, so the martyrs in our story are “transformed by fire into immortality” (9.22; cf. 14.5; 16.13; 17.12), and Jerusalem is renewed in a new era of peace and stability (18.4).

As might be expected, however, the tightly snarled loose ends in 4 Macc here cannot be unravelled (or tied up) so easily, simply by suggesting that the word-picture of the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος as Memnonides is a straightforward image of restoration and new beginnings. Van den Broek considers the parallel between the Memnon birds and the phoenix and concludes that “the differences…are so great that a closer connection between the two myths may be considered as excluded” (1972: 411 n. 1), and in a way he is correct: for what could the beautiful, multicoloured, majestically tufted bird with the golden halo, which feathers its nest with spices and feeds on sunbeams and sea spray, have to do with a diminutive, combative, ugly little bird composed of nothing more than “black smoke” and “dark ashes”? If the author of 4 Macc meant to say that the martyrs of his tale, as ἀντίψυχος, are phoenix-like revivers of the

30 In Glas, Derrida reflects on Hegel’s description of these statues, remarking that the sound (Klang) that they emit “is not yet voice or language”—yet more evidence that the Egyptian “language” remains hieroglyphic, non-phonetic, lacking in signification (Derrida 1986: 3ai, 251a).

31 Papaioannou argues that the story of Memnon’s death and the birds rising from his burning remains—like the story of the heron (ardea) rising from the ashes of the Rutulian city of Ardea and its king Turnus (Metam. 14.568-580), which it parallels in many details—functions as an image of the vagaries of history in anticipation of the prophecy of Pythagoras in Metam. 15.420ff.: fame and glory, decline and fall, destruction and restoration (2005: 187-97).

32 The exact details of the appearance, diet, habits and regeneration of the phoenix vary from one ancient author to another. The principal details of these divergent traditions can be found in Arnott 2007: 276-78.
nation, why would he have not done so directly, instead of employing a circuitous double-layered metaphor involving the Memnonides? After all, the figure of the phoenix is not at all unknown in apocryphal writings contemporaneous with 4 Macc (e.g. 3 Bar. 6-8), nor even in the Old Testament and New Testament themselves (e.g. Ps 92.12; Job 28.18; perhaps John 12.13: Hill 1992: 611-13). The answers to these questions may perhaps lie in the lack of any reference in the stories of Memnon and the Maccabean martyrs to Heliopolis, the city to which the phoenix returned periodically as the centre of the Sun-cult but also the site of the enabling breaks that laid the foundations for Western metaphysics: the turn from the source of the logos (the Sun, the Good) to logos itself, from Egyptian polytheism to rigid monotheism, from the many and common to the one and unique, and so on (Derrida 2004; Bennington 1994: 215-6; Butler 2007: 74-5).

3.1.2. The ἀντίψυχος as “bird of ashes” and “bird of sand”

The fact that it is the Memnon bird, and not the phoenix, that images the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc suggests that the language of “fusion,” “synthesis,” “mixture,” etc. of “Jew” and “Greek” in the work is finally inappropriate. Jewish “Providence” and Greek “Reason”—traces of which we have found in 4 Macc in sections [1] and [2] of this chapter above—together make up what Hegel called Geist (“Spirit”), the “active force that shapes and drives history by the force of its own inner logic” (Kelley 2002: 6; Bernstein 1999: 14-19). This “inner logic” is the dialectical process that marks the human attempt at “self-becoming, self-mediation and self-completion” (Desmond 1997: 76) through “all the phenomena characteristic of consciousness”: psychology, law, politics, art, religion, philosophy, and so on (Petry 2002: 1.15). This “hard, infinite struggle” of potentiality to actuality of the Geist (Hegel 1953: 69)—the movement from thesis to antithesis to synthesis—Hegel describes as being like a phoenix rising from the ashes:

...[R]uin is at the same time emergence of a new life...out of life arises death, but of death, life... In the...image of the Phoenix...[this thought] refers to all natural life, continuously preparing its own pyre and consuming itself so that from its ashes the new, rejuvenated, fresh life continually arises.... The Spirit, devouring its worldly envelope, not only passes into another envelope, not only
arises rejuvenated from the ashes of its embodiment, but it emerges from them exalted, transfigured, a purer Spirit. (1953: 89; emphasis original)

If the mixture of “Jew” and “Greek” in 4 Macc were to be figured as a synthesis, in other words—that is, if the ἀντίψυχος were a phoenix—the disappearance or absence of terms such as “Jew” and “Greek” (in favour of “Jewish-Greek” or “Greek-Jewish”) could only ever be figured as a presence (the appearance of the third term), which would mean falling again into the trap of “speaking Greek” in exegeting the work (see section [1.3] above). The “scar” of the other in 4 Macc would completely heal up, and the ashes of the Jewish martyrs of the work (9.20, 15.20) would liquefy and reincarnate as nothing more than the ink of a Greek philosophical treatise.

But what if instead of bringing life the death, the ashes, of the “Jew” and “Jewish” (and the “Greek”) brought death—ashes, absence, memory, mourning (cf. Ofrat 2001: 3-4)? Since we will attempt to read 4 Macc “from the ashes” elsewhere in this thesis, here we will make use of another related metaphor, that of sand. The ἀντίψυχος as Memnon’s bird—the bird of smoke and ashes—is nothing other than the Jewish phoenix (in Hebrew, ḥol) as the bird of sand (ḥol). This homonym, which lies beneath Job 28.18, forms the basis of several rabbinic commentaries, as Ginzberg reports (see the sources cited in 1938: 5.51 n. 151). But thinking this “bird of sand” with both the author of 4 Macc and Derrida may help us to see that the new beginning promised by the Maccabean martyrs as ἀντίψυχος (e.g. 1.11; 17.20-22; etc.) is not as triumphant and robust as we might have assumed. Not only is “the transformation of the individual...more complex than...the phoenix rising from the flames” (Zlomislic 2007: 131), but the transformation of a community—from war to peace (4 Macc 4.21; 18.4), lawlessness to restoration (4.19; 9.3; 18.4), divine “mistreatment” to preservation and deliverance (4.21; 17.22; etc.)—is more complex than the organic return of the Geist to itself. The day after for the “nation” will be just as “bitter...and yet not bitter” as the day on which Antiochus attempted to humiliate them by

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33 I owe this image of the “scar” and its inflection to Malabou’s discussion of “plasticity” in Hegel—i.e., the perpetual return of the Geist to itself—and of her three paradigms of “healing, reconstitution, return, and regeneration”, those of the phoenix, the spider and the salamander (2011: 67-89 [73]).

34 E.g. “The destiny of Jesus of Nazareth, restored to life to ascend from his sepulcher to the heavens, is not imprinted upon the philosophical consciousness of Derrida, the Jew whose crucifixion is relentless and lifelong...” (Ofrat 2001: 3).

35 See Chapter 2 of this thesis below.
torturing and killing the martyrs (cf. 18.20)\textsuperscript{36}. The interpretation of a text such as 4 Macc, too, is a more complicated matter than simply speaking of a Greek-Jewish or Jewish-Greek “fusion,” “mixture,” “combination,” “wedding,” “blending,” “synthesis,” etc. Like a bird made of ashes (άντίψυχος) or sand (ḥol) that resists any attempt to catch it—that disintegrates upon the very touch of a handler—so the non-violent conceptualisation of “Jew” and/or “Greek” in 4 Macc proves, in the last instance, to be evanescent and elusive.

**Conclusion**

We have covered a great deal of territory in this chapter as we have attempted to understand and interrogate the Jew/Greek dichotomy both in the commentaries on 4 Macc and in the work itself. Using Davila’s model of the “signature features” of late Second Temple Judaism as our base, we began by trying to identify those characteristically “Jewish” features of 4 Macc (section [1.1]). This effort led us to consider what sense it would make, with respect both to the original setting of the work ([1.2]) and our setting as modern-day exeges (1.3), to prioritise these features in the process of interpretation—that is, we attempted to uncover the implications, both then and now, of describing 4 Macc as an exclusively “Jewish” or predominantly “Jewish” (“Jewish-Greek”) text. Next, we attempted to read 4 Macc as an essentially “Greek” work. After highlighting those aspects of the book that scholars have labelled “Hellenistic” ([2.1]), we ventured to apply Hengel’s model of the “hellenisation” of the Mediterranean to 4 Macc ([2.2]) and found that the hypothesis that the author of the work was a “hellenised” Jew just does not fit: not only was the book written before the tidal wave of “Hellenistic” culture achieved its maximum penetration in the ancient Near East, but the label in its historical context actually more properly describes the opponents of the martyrs—Simon, Jason and the “reformist” party—and hence of the author. Lastly, in section [3] of this chapter we attempted to address ourselves to a problem that we identified with speaking the descriptions of “Jewish-Greek” ([1.3]) and “Greek-Jewish” ([2.3]) as interpreters: the logic of synthesis represented by the hyphen as a “Greek” mark (Greek ὑφ᾽ ἑν,\textsuperscript{36} See Chapter 7 of this thesis below for more on the challenges of reconstructing the community (whether in Jerusalem or some site in the Diaspora) in the wake of persecution and the irruption of the ἀντιψυχος (or, more precisely, the challenge of the “antipolitical”).
“together”) necessarily excludes the “Jewish” by definition. Our uncovering of the ἀντίψυχος as a Memnon bird (Hesychius; [3.1.1])—an “Egyptian” image in its character as a dream “hieroglyph”—thus served two purposes: the recovery of something of a “Jewish” way of speaking about 4 Mace (the “bird of ashes” as Jewish phoenix [hol] as bird of sand [hol]; [3.1.2]), and the unveiling of the future brought about by the Maccabean martyrs as an ephemeral new beginning marked by contingency and confusion.
CHAPTER 2:
BETWEEN ECONOMY AND SACRIFICE: THE “IMPOSSIBLE GIFT”

There are two different coinages, so to speak, in circulation, God’s and the world’s, each with its own distinctive marking...

(ignatius of Antioch, Magn. 5.2)

Introduction

The rare Greek word ἀντίψυχος—found in the Jewish and Christian literature of late classical antiquity only in (Jewish) 4 Macc and the (Christian) epistles of Ignatius of Antioch (Smyrn. 10.2; Pol. 2.3; 6.1; Eph. 21.1)—is usually translated in these texts as “ransom” or life “in exchange.” So 4 Macc 17.20-21 (NRSV), for example: “These, then [the martyrs of this work]...are honoured...they having become, as it were, a ransom [ἀντίψυχος] for the sin of the nation” (cf. 6.29). For want of a more readily available concept, perhaps, an equivalence has thereby been created with (Christian) texts such as 1 Tim 2.5-6 (NRSV): “…Christ Jesus, himself human, who gave himself as a ransom [ἀντίλυτρον] for all...” (cf. λύτρον, Matt 20.28; Mark 10.45). But are the ἀντίψυχος and the ἀντίλυτρος really the same idea—the same currency, as it were?

In this chapter we propose to interrogate this “economic” translation and interpretation of the word ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc as “ransom” or life “in exchange” and to sift it for its appropriateness and utility. Derrida’s principal meditations on the aneconomy of the “impossible gift” that is justice for the other as Other (1994; 2001b; 2008)2 will be important intertextual resources for us in this enterprise; or in particular, his insights into the way in which eco-nomy and law (nomos) are mutually

2 As we shall see throughout this chapter, the particular word “aneconomy” denotes for Derrida the interruption of all codes of social mediation between self and other—reciprocal relations of favours, obligations, gratitude, indebtedness, etc.—by the experience of the absolute alterity of this other. However, it is vital to note right at the outset that this “aneconomy” does not then stand in a relationship of simple opposition to “economy,” as the prefix “an-” (or later for us in the context of 4 Macc, “anti-”) might seem to suggest: rather, since mediation must carry on in order for us to take account of this other, whether we like it or not, “aneconomy” would then be a “third term” between the opposition between “self” and “other”—an undecidable between this mediation and this interruption, this relation and this incomprehension, as indeed we shall argue in more detail below (cf. n. 18).
implicated in, and sustaining of, the one and the other\(^3\). In short, we will see that if the report of the author of 4 Macc of the economic and legal functioning of the temple treasury (3.20-4.14) contains within it subtle notes of a critique of this institution (section [1] below)—and if for this same scribe the system of temple sacrifices “for the sake of the [L]aw\(^4\)” is always hijacked by very this-worldly economic and legal concerns (section [2])—then the functioning of the key soteriological term in his text, the ἀντίψυχος, must be of a very different order altogether to these give-and-take economic and legal systems of treasury and sacrifice. One possible aneconomy of the ἀντίψυχος, as we have already hinted, is suggested by Derrida’s reflections on the “impossible gift”: a “counterfeit coin” given to one who can, however, never be sure of its return\(^5\)—whether the deception will succeed and bear fruit, or not (section [3] below).

1. The coin of the world: economy and laws

As part of the historical background to the martyrdoms of Eleazar, the seven sons and their mother (4 Macc 3.19-4.26), we read that King Seleucus—predecessor of the cruel Antiochus under whom the martyrs will perish—“appropriated money to [the Jews] for their temple service [χρήματα εἰς τὴν ἱερουργίαν αὐτοῖς ἀφορίσαι] and recognised their commonwealth [τὴν πολιτείαν αὐτῶν ἀποδέχεσθαι]” (3.20). Anderson (1983: 2.548) reports that although some exegetes have preferred to read that Seleucus merely “sanctioned the exaction of the Temple tax” (cf. Exod 30.13; 2 Chr 24.6), “a more likely meaning of the Greek” is that the king set money aside “out of

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\(^3\) E.g. Derrida 1994: 6: “What is economy? Among its irreducible predicates or semantic values, economy no doubt includes the values of law (nomos) and of home (oikos, home, property, family, the hearth, the fire indoors). Nomos does not only signify the law in general, but also the law of distribution (nemein), the law of sharing or partition [partage], the law as partition (moira), the given or assigned part, participation….”

\(^4\) In this chapter “law” with lower-case “l” will refer to the law(s) of Seleucus and Antiochus, on the one hand, and those of the Jewish nation, on the other. “Law” with upper-case “L” will be reserved for the divine Law of the Jewish religion—at least as the author of 4 Macc understands it.

\(^5\) A compelling reading of how a counterfeit coin can serve as an example of Derrida’s “impossible gift” that is justice, or forgiveness, for the other as Other—one that we mean to keep in the background for the length of this chapter—is given by Horner (2001: 213-4). In Derrida’s reading of Baudelaire’s short story “La fausse monnaie”—in which the narrator refuses to forgive a friend who has given what he says is a counterfeit coin to a beggar—Horner writes: “…[G]iving means letting go. It is not just “letting be”…but letting go of all demand for the rendering of accounts. […] It is the giving up of the right to pursue, the right to condemn, and even the right to remember. Forgiving really must be forgetting: forgiving is the forgetting where there is no longer anything forgotten…” (Horner 2001: 214).
his own state revenues” (cf. 2 Macc 3.1-3). We have, therefore, a clear picture of Seleucid patronage of the service of sacrifices—and it seems, at least at first glance, that the author of 4 Macc approves of this state of affairs: Seleucus’ funding of the temple service goes hand in hand with a situation of “profound peace,” prosperity and “public harmony” (3.20-21). In fact, the Jewish people even seem to enjoy divine favour: “angels on horseback with lightning flashing from their weapons” appear (4.10), for example, to counter the raid mounted by Apollonius and Simon and their troops in search of the “tens of thousands in private funds” (πολλὰς ἱδωτικῶν χρημάτων μυριάδας) allegedly deposited in the temple treasury (4.3). But does this supposed divine oversight of the temple mean that the author of 4 Macc actually approves of the economy that it represents, both with respect to the donations of Seleucus and its status as a “bank”

The question is a vital one in terms of our task here in this chapter: to attempt to decide upon the economic and legal currency of the metaphor of the ἀντίψυχος.

1.1. The “philanthropy” of the king (4 Macc 5.12)

With regard to the notice of the patronage of the king in the verse just mentioned (3.20), first of all—one interpretive option here might be to read the fact of Seleucus’ giving money to the temple in 4 Macc as a matter of him paying homage to the holy place in his own way, as in 2 Macc 3.2, for example: “…[I]t came about that the kings themselves honoured the place and glorified the temple with the finest presents….”

The point, then, would be that although Seleucus may wield power on earth, his power ultimately derives from the “Power” in heaven who watches over all. Such a relativisation of the king’s sovereignty would then enable a theology in which the benevolence of Seleucus serves the purposes of God, in much the same way as the ferocity of Antiochus will come to do further on in the work, in 4.21, for example: “The divine justice was angered [ἀγανακτήσασα ἡ θεία δίκη] by these acts,” our

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6 Or, as Stevens (2006: 137) would have it: “…[T]he description of the ancient temple as a “bank” is imprecise and inaccurate. More precisely, temples function as “treasuries” or “depositories,” a place for the storage and retrieval of (precious) commodities and metals by the depositor…. [T]he more precise designation for the role of the temple in antiquity would be “financial intermediary”…” (emphasis original).

7 As echoes of this thought elsewhere in 4 Macc, we could cite Antiochus’ provocation of Eleazar in 5.13—“…if there is some power watching over this religion of yours [σι…τίς ἐστιν τῇ σοι τῆς θρησκείας ὑμῶν]…,” the seventh brother’s appeal to Antiochus in 12.11 that “…you have received good things and also your kingdom from God [τοῖς θεοῖς λαβόν τὰ ἀγαθὰ καὶ τὴν βασιλείαν]…,” etc.
author tells us with respect to the apostasy of the Jews of Jerusalem under the high priest Jason, “and caused Antiochus himself to make war [ἐπολέμωσεν] on them.” So it is that Portier-Young (2011: 86-88) can conclude that imperial rule—and by extension, we might say, imperial money as well—is not problematic “per se” for the author of 2 (or 4) Macc (2011: 88). What matters most for these authors is not the rule of kings but the rule of God. When the people obey the divine laws, God protects them and causes them to prosper, such that even the kings of the world contribute to their prosperity; when they disobey, punishment and ruin ensue. Referring precisely to the situation reflected in 4 Macc, van Henten (1997: 257) expresses a similar thought: the financial support provided by Seleucus is, for him, a sign of a “golden age,” as are the peace, prosperity and harmony that we noted above.

The principal problem with this reading of the Seleucid backing of the temple in 2 and 4 Macc, however, is that it ignores the fact that these funds are the proceeds of war and plunder. How can the author of 4 Macc, in our case, be enthusiastic, or even neutral, about imperial money—as Portier-Young, van Henten and others would have it—when he knows its shady provenance: conquered Egypt (4.22), Persia (17.24; 18.5), etc., even Jerusalem itself (4.23)? As it turns out, moreover, the king’s money is the very antithesis of peace and stability. It is no accident that the mention of the king’s largesse in our text (3.20) is immediately followed by a notice that “certain persons” attempted a “revolution [νεωτέρισαντες] against the public harmony [πρὸς τὴν κοινὴν ὁμόνοιαν]” which caused “many and various disasters [πολυτρόπους... συμφοράς]” (3.21). Such an outright distrust of Greek backing fits in well with the portrayal throughout 4 Macc of the slippery slope of unthinking acculturation to the Hellenistic way of life. What seems like the innocent acceptance of Greek money by the Jews starts a snowball effect: it leads to dangerous “innovations” (νεωτέρισαντες, 3.21), factionalism (4.1), the profanation of the temple (4.9), a change in the nation’s “way of life” (ἐθνος) and “form of government” (ἐξεπολύτευσεν) “in complete violation of the law” (ἐπὶ πᾶσαν παρανομίαν, 4.19), the construction of a gymnasium “at the very citadel of our native land” (4.20), occupation and plunder (4.22-23), the outlawing of Judaism (4.23) and, finally, outright persecution and genocide (4.25-26).

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8 As already set out in this thesis in section [1.6] of the Introduction above, for example.
9 Νεωτερίζω not only means to “use forcible measures,” “attempt political changes,” “make revolutionary movements,” etc., as we just suggested (following the NRSV) – more literally it means to “make innovations”: νεώτεροι (LSJ: s.v.).
The path to ruin in 4 Macc, in other words, does not start so much with the reforms of Jason (4.19-20) as with the acceptance of the king’s money (3.20)\textsuperscript{10}, and the sting in the tail only arrives that much sooner than in 2 Macc owing to our author’s lightning-fast rehearsal of his background story. Such a reading would make better sense of the section 4 Macc 3.19-4.26 as a whole which, as we have already seen in this thesis\textsuperscript{11}, is a self-contained unit which sets out the historical background to the martyrdoms to be recounted.

To further reinforce our sense of the opposition of the author of 4 Macc to foreign funding of the temple services we might also cite the boys’ outright rejection of Antiochus’ offer of friendship and benefaction at another point in the work. “Trust me [πιστεύσατε], then,” the tyrant beckons to the brothers in 8.7, “and you will have positions of authority [ἀρχὰς…ἡγεμονικὰς] in my government [τὸν ἐμὸν πραγμάτων]” (cf. 8.3-11; 12.5; etc.). Rather than submit to Antiochus (or Seleucus) as their patron, however, Eleazar, the children and their mother submit to God, the real “power watching over [their religion]” (5.13), their true beneficent Protector (or “Providence,” πρόνοια, 9.24; 13.19; 17.22), the one with whom their loyalties really lie (πίστις, 16.22)\textsuperscript{12}. This loyalty to God displayed by the martyrs thereby amounts to a further rejection on the part of the author of 4 Macc of the “philanthropy” offered by the king but founded on war and indenture (cf. 5.12, where he offers Eleazar what he calls his “humane advice,” τὴν φιλάνθρωπον παρηγορίαν), and of the system of rewards and punishments that it sets in motion: “Just as I am able to punish [κολάζειν] those who disobey [τοὺς ἀπειθοῦντάς] my orders,” says Antiochus at 8.6, “so I can be a benefactor [ἐὐεργετεῖν] to those who obey [τοὺς εὐπειθοῦντάς] me.”

\textsuperscript{10} This we assert pace Portier-Young (2011: 88), who writes with respect to 2 Macc 4.16: “For the epitomator [the author of 2 Macc], the exchange of ancestral traditions for Greek ways spells disaster…” (my emphasis).

\textsuperscript{11} In section [1.8] of the Introduction above.

\textsuperscript{12} DeSilva (1998: 127-31) explains the logic of the choice in 4 Macc to trust the king or trust God (e.g. 8.7; 16.22) in the following terms: “To place pístis in a patron is to trust him or her to be able and willing to provide what he or she has promised… Pístis also represents the response of loyalty on the part of the client. Having received benefits from a patron, the client must demonstrate pístis, ‘loyalty’, toward the patron…” deSilva then goes on here to illustrate the loyal response of the martyr clients in 4 Macc to their patron, God, with reference to 4 Macc 16.18-22; 7.19; 15.24 and 17.2-3.
1.2. The usury of the temple treasury

Does the author of 4 Macc have a more positive understanding of the role of the Jerusalem temple as a kind of “bank”? As we have already suggested in [1.1] above, at first glance his opinion is indeed an approving one: he has angels appear to protect the people’s deposits from the greedy hands of Apollonius and his men (4.10-14). On closer inspection, however, and on comparison with the corresponding account in 2 Macc, some ambiguities in his estimation appear. 2 Macc 3.10-11, for instance, corrects Simon’s claim earlier in that work “that the treasury in Jerusalem was full of untold sums of money, so that the amount of the funds could not be reckoned.” In fact, according to 2 Macc 3.10-11, within the treasury in Jerusalem at the time there were only to be found some “deposits” (παρακαταθήκας) belonging to “widows and orphans” and to one Hyrcanus, “a man of very prominent position,” the total sum of which was “four hundred talents of silver and two hundred of gold.” 4 Macc is silent on both points of the high priest’s explanation, though the observation is explicitly made in 4 Macc 4.9 that “women and children” are among those who rush to shield the temple from the Seleucid incursion. On the other hand, when Antiochus comes to power in 4 Macc and removes Onias as high priest, it is said that Jason, his brother, purchased the office for “three thousand six hundred sixty talents annually”: an astronomical figure that represents a high increase on the figure reported in 2 Macc (590 talents in sum; 2 Macc 4.8-9) and suggests the considerable means of the upper strata of society. Which is more likely, then: that the temple “bank,” according to the author of 4 Macc, functioned as a safe haven for the money of, or for, widows and orphans only—with perhaps a few exceptions—or that it represented an opportunity for all members of society to entrust their goods for safekeeping?

Given that Simon’s claim that the treasury contained “tens of thousands” of talents is allowed to go unchallenged in 4 Macc, unlike in 2 Macc, there are perhaps only two explanations for this high but apparently realistic figure: 1), that the Jews were hoarding the money given to them by Seleucus (Goldstein 1983: 204-5, with respect to 2 Macc); or 2), that the figure represented the deposits of the whole community, not just the widows and orphans (Pastor 1997: 46). Option 1) would seem to be precluded by the phraseology in 4 Macc of “private funds” (ἰδιωτικῶν χρημάτων: 4.3, 6), and by the fact that in 4.7 the “people” without distinction (τοῦ ἔθνους: i.e., not just the
temple administrators) protest Simon’s announcement that he has come to seize their money. And indeed, the picture of the temple “bank” being open to all is one we find in primary sources such as Josephus, who describes the wealth in the treasury at the time of the Roman conquest in 70 C.E. in the following terms:

They [the Romans] further burnt the treasury-chambers, in which lay vast sums of money, vast piles of raiment, and other valuables; for this, in short, was the general repository of Jewish wealth, to which the rich had consigned the contents of their dismantled houses. (B.J. 6.282; trans. Stevens 2006: 143; cf. Wardle 2010: 27)

Josephus’ account invites the further question, though: how was all the accumulated wealth administered? Could the temple officials really have avoided the temptation to usury and profit taking? This is a possibility that does not seem to have occurred to commentators on both 2 and 4 Macc, thrown off the trail as they are, it would seem, by the stories of divine intervention as Heliodorus/Apollonius and their armies cross the temple threshold. As we have already seen, these scholars tend to argue that the scenario in which a few priests and temple officials made themselves rich by “administering” the deposits of the many—like the scenario in which the king provides money for the temple services by robbing the territories he conquers—factors into the idyllic picture of peace, law observance, prosperity and harmony enjoyed in the homeland (4 Macc 3.20). The question of the management of the temple treasury takes on added poignancy in 4 Macc, though, given our author’s concern with the ethical use of money elsewhere in his work (e.g. 1.26; 2.8-9).

Commenting on the catalogue of treasure caches in the Copper Scroll recovered from Qumran, Stegemann ventures to suggest that by the time of the Roman siege of Jerusalem in 66 C.E. the temple “bank” there, owing to its “lucrative business” levying taxes on deposits, enjoyed a reputation “like that of Switzerland today” among “foreigners, merchants and politicians” of the ancient Near East (1998: 72). Not

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13 Stegemann’s conclusion here is worth citing in greater detail: “Apart from various objects of value described in the scroll [the Copper Scroll], more than one hundred tons of gold and silver, in the form of coins and bars, had been brought to the sixty-four hiding places [described in the text]—a truly impressive store of deposits in the Temple bank… in addition to the actual Temple treasure” (1998: 72).
only did the temple charge these deposit taxes, however, but it also leant (at interest) as well. “It seems reasonable to expect,” argues Stevens (2006: 147-51), “that the temple did make loans of its surplus commodities, especially silver and grain” (150-51). Even if Stevens’s comment is allowed that a certain tolerance towards lending at interest had always existed among the Israelites “else a remission of debt would not be necessary” as a part of the law (e.g. Deut 15.2: Stevens 2006: 147), the extent to which the practice had become institutionalised in Jerusalem as all over the ancient Near East must have made it seem to the author of 4 Macc that the lenders of the temple ran the risk—if they had not already succumbed to the temptation—of becoming “greedy” and “lovers of money” (2.8-9).

1.3. Laws of “philanthropy” and usury

We suggested right at the beginning of the present chapter, following Derrida, that economic systems—such as we have now seen Seleucus’ funding of the temple services and the taxes and loans of the temple “bank” itself to be—are implicated in, or sustained by, legal systems (nemein as nomos and vice versa). What, then, is the nature of the laws that underpin the “philanthropy” of the king and the usury of the temple treasury in 4 Macc? Are they capable of ensuring the requisite “economic” conditions in which the ἀντίψυχος of the text could appear as a free giving—a free “gift”—of the self?

With regard to the self-interested “philanthropy” (or “tied aid,” we might say today) of the king, first of all: the only notice we have in 4 Macc of Seleucus’ economic policy in Jerusalem comes in 3.20, as we have already seen—

At a time when our ancestors were enjoying profound peace [βαθεῖαν εἰρήνην] because of their observance of the law [εὐνομίαν] and were prospering [ἐπραττον καλὸς], so that even Seleucus…had both appropriated money to them for the temple service [χρήματα εἰς τὴν ἱερουργίαν αὐτῶν ἀφορίσαι] and recognized their commonwealth [τὴν πολιτείαν αὐτῶν ἀποδέχεσθαι]…

Hadas (1953: 161 n. 20) writes that 4 Macc 3.20 is an “abbreviation” of 2 Macc 3.1-3, but more than simply abbreviate, in fact, the author of 4 Macc has altered the key
word describing the king’s proportioning of the funds in his source, changing χορηγεῖν— from χορηγέω, literally to “defray the cost of bringing out a chorus [χορός] at the public festivals” (LSJ: s.v.)—to ἀφορίζω. This suggests that he wishes, with this particular term, to make a particular point about the king’s economic and political administration. For at the heart of any policy of “appropriation” (ἀφορίζω) lies division (ἄπο; ὀρίζω): laws of banishment, casting out, casting off, ostracism (LSJ: ἀφορίζω) or, as we saw above ([1.1]), situations of “revolution” and “many and various disasters” (3.21). Seleucus’ economics of “appropriation” only paves the way, then, for the divide and conquer, pillage and slaughter tactics of his successor, Antiochus:

…[A]fter [ὡς] he had plundered them [ἐπόρθησεν αὐτοῦς; i.e., the people of Jerusalem] he issued a decree [δόγμα ἔθετο] that if any of them were found observing [φάνονεν] the ancestral law [τῷ πατρίῳ πολιτευόμενοι νόμῳ] they should die… (4.23)

It is vital to note here how a particular economic system—that of “plunder”—is immediately (ὡς) secured by the snap imposition of a particular legal system in which law is opposed to law, and hence is incapable of producing justice: this last being the sine qua non, as we have already noted, of self-giving and of gift.

What of the laws that underwrite the usury of the temple “bank” in 4 Macc? Although in 4.13 our author expresses a conviction that “divine justice” (θείας δίκης) is the ultimate guarantor of the treasury system—for it had, after all, preserved the sacred deposits from the rapacity of the Seleucids (through the intervention of the heavenly army, 4.10-11)—the introduction in this same verse, 4.13, of the possibility that Seleucus could have understood that his henchmen had been defeated by “human treachery” (ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιθεουλης) suggests that this last was also a potent force in the maintenance of the temple “bank.” But how could that be so? In 4.7 we read:

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14 This alteration is even more intriguing given our author’s demonstrated familiarity, and ease, with other pieces of theatre jargon in his work (4, 17; 8.4; 8.29-9.9; 13.8-18; 14.7-8; 18.23; etc.)—for comment on which see section [2.2.1] of Chapter 3 and section [3] of Chapter 7 below.

15 Here we note also the irony of 4.4-5 in that, after having been persuaded by Apollonius, Seleucus gives his assent to what will amount to a Seleucid appropriation of funds that, at least in part, the king himself had appropriated for the Jews.
The people indignantly protested [σχετλιάζοντος ἀντιλέγοντός] his words [those of Simon, who has come to seize the temple funds], considering [νομίσαντες] it outrageous [πάντεινον] that those who had committed deposits [οἱ τὰς παρακαταθήκας πιστεύσαντες] to the sacred treasury should be deprived [στερηθήσονται] of them…

Now, the people’s considering that it was abhorrent to rob the depositors to the temple of their funds can actually be better thought of (against the NRSV here) as a legislative initiative: the verb used here, νοµίσαντες, is from νοµίζω (and therefore related to νόµος). But where the reader would expect this law governing the sacred treasury would usher in “divine justice” for the people of Jerusalem, on the one hand, and Apollonius, Simon and their soldiers, on the other, that will have to wait for the verdict of Seleucus in 4.13:

…[The high priest Onias] prayed for him [Apollonius] so that King Seleucus would not suppose [μὴποτε νοµίσειν] that Apollonius had been overcome [ἀνηρήσθαι] by human treachery and not by divine justice.

Again, in precisely the same way as the people of Jerusalem have done in 4.7, the author of 4 Macc has Seleucus engage in a (hypothetical) legislatorial act (νοµίσειν is again from νοµίζω), but the difference is that this time the king’s law is in fact capable of achieving a “conviction” (ἀνηρήσθαι, from ἀναφέρω)16 according to the dictates of “divine justice” where the law of the Jewish “commonwealth” had failed to provide one17. This “condemnation” of Apollonius by Seleucus, then, would expose the hypocrisy—or the treachery—of those human laws made by the Jews (such as the one governing the temple treasury) that, although they aim at “divine justice,” are in fact far from actually achieving it.

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16 Among the meanings in LSJ: s.v. for αἰρέω are “convict,” “get/obtain a verdict for conviction,” “of a thing or circumstances which convict,” etc.
17 Such a conclusion—which at first glance seems improbable at best—garners a certain credibility in the light of the theology of 4 Macc, upon which we have already commented on (in [1.1] above), that sees the Seleucid kings as agents of God’s purposes (see, for e.g., 4.21 for a connection between Antiochus and the “divine justice” that would echo the link we are here arguing for between Seleucus and the same heavenly authority).
2. The coin of God: sacrifice and the Law

Having just seen in section [1], then, something of the aversion of the author of 4 Macc to the economic logic of Seleucid “philanthropy” and Jewish usury—and, by extension, his aversion to a “philanthropic” and usurious economy of the ἀντίψυχος—we need to seek another “economic” metaphor for the mechanism(s) of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement in his text. Such a simile could well be suggested, in general terms, by the presence in the work of the idea that the martyrs died “for the sake of religion” (ὥσπερ ἐπεὶ ἔσοβεν: 9.30; 11.20; 13.12, 27; 16.13, 17; 17.7; 18.3; cf. 7.22) or “for the sake of God” (ὅσοι τὸν θεόν, 16.19, 21, 25; ὑπὲρ τοῦ θεοῦ, 10.20; χία θεόν, 17.20). That is, this idea might move us beyond the notion that the martyrs as “ἀντίψυχος for the sin of our nation [τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ ἁµαρτίας]” (17.21) is a matter of Israel paying a “debt” to God in the same way that Seleucus paid an amount to the Jewish people for the provision of the sacrifices, that the territories conquered by the king paid the heavy price of defeat, and that the depositors of the temple treasury paid a tax for that privilege. As has already been suggested, the author of 4 Macc would have serious reservations about the economic logic at work in each of these systems being extended to the “ransom” or “vicarious substitute,” the theological and literary touchstone of his text.

2.1. Abraham and Isaac

In particular terms, the notion of death “for the sake of religion” or “for the sake of God” in 4 Macc has, as its archetype, the sacrifice (or near-sacrifice) of Isaac by Abraham (7.14; 9.21; 13.12; 14.20; 15.28; 16.20; 17.6; 18.11). “You ought [ὀφείλετε] to endure any suffering [πάντα πόνον ὑπομένειν] for the sake of God [ὥσπερ τὸν θεόν],” the mother-martyr instructs her sons at 16.19-20, for example: “For his sake also [ὁτ’ ὁν καὶ] our father Abraham was zealous to sacrifice his son Isaac….” But how could giving oneself to death “for the sake of religion” or “for the sake of God” be different from giving “philanthropically” ([1.1] above) or for increase for one’s own sake ([1.2])?

To reflect on the place of the story of Abraham and Isaac in 4 Macc in general, and on its possible implications for our understanding of the ἀντίψυχος in the work in
particular, we turn now to Derrida’s reading of this story, developed in several places in his work but above all in his “The Gift of Death” (2008). As background to Derrida’s interpretation, we note that for him the concept of “economy”—precisely in the sense that we have used it in [1.1] and [1.2] above, as a circle of debt and exchange—encompasses “the values of law (nomos) and of home (oikos, home, property, family...)” (Derrida 1994: 6-7 [6]). “But is not the gift, if there is any,” Derrida asks (1994: 7), “also that which interrupts economy?” He goes on (and the emphasis is original): “If the figure of the circle is essential to economics, the gift must remain  
aneconomic”—that is, “opposed” to the law of the home18. The shift in terminology we are making here, from “economy” to “gift” (soon to “sacrifice” as well), is especially important since “gift” is, for Derrida, precisely the condition of the sacrifice of Isaac:

The sacrifice of economy, that without which there is no free responsibility or decision…is indeed in this case the sacrifice of the oikonomia, namely of the law of the home (oikos), of the hearth, of what is one’s own or proper, of the private, of the love and affection of one’s kin. This is the moment when Abraham gives the sign of absolute sacrifice…putting to death his absolute love for what is dearest, the only son… (Derrida 2008: 95)

Is “gift” then, too, the condition of the martyrs’ self-sacrifice in 4 Macc? On the face of it, it would seem so: the law of the home in the work is suspended in the name of the other—or by the Law of God as totally Other (cf. Dooley 1999: 182)19—and the call of the law imposed on the “home” by this Other, the Torah, is loud and insistent:

For [the life of devout reason] prevails even over affection for parents, so that virtue is not abandoned for their sakes. It is superior to love for one’s wife, so that one rebukes her when she breaks the law. It takes precedence over love for children, so that one punishes them for misdeeds. It is sovereign over the relationship of friends, so that one rebukes friends when they act wickedly. (2.10-13; cf. 13.19-14.1)

18 Not that, we quickly hasten to add, any idea of an “aneconomy” here should necessarily be interpreted in opposition (“an-”) to one of an “economy,” as we pointed out in n. 2 above—especially with respect to 4 Macc, where the prefix ἀντι- behaves in an especially slippery way, as we shall see in section [3.1] of Chapter 3 below.
19 For a much more in-depth discussion of the “Other” in 4 Macc, in Levinasian perspective, see Chapter 6 of this study below.
But does Abraham’s sacrifice really succeed in stepping outside the circle of debt and exchange, according to Derrida? The problem, if we could call it that, is that acting for the other’s sake—“for the sake of religion” or “for the sake of God”—is only the other side of the coin of acting for one’s own sake, as in hostile “philanthropy” or avaricious usury: or, more precisely, that (my) loss is only the opposite of (my) gain—

It is…in renouncing…the life of his son…that Abraham gains or wins…. [M]ore precisely, having renounced winning, expecting neither response nor recompense…he sees that God gives back to him…the very thing that he had already…decided to sacrifice…. (Derrida 2008: 96-7)

As Wyschogrod suggests, it is the case that “loss without recompense”—as in (self-) loss for the sake of the other—is still “tied to the win-or-lose law of the circulation of goods in an economy” (2002: 8). But why should this be so? The factor in what is now the exchange between God and Abraham that disrupts the initial movement of Abraham’s “gift” outside the home is not God giving Isaac back to him but that this is done in secret. God does not give reasons as to why the life of Isaac is spared; as Derrida says, God’s sovereign will “is not required to consult” (2008: 58 n. 3). But still: it is one thing to recognise that God might have his reasons, but quite another to move on to interpret these reasons as the giving-back of some kind of “reward,” as an opening of a gift onto an economy (Derrida 2008: 96). There remains a choice for the interpreter here: to share or keep God’s “secret” and buy back into the logic of gain and loss, debt and exchange—here smuggled into the discussion under the cover of sacrifice—or to attempt to demystify, or destabilise, such an operation: to uncover the economic logic that “reappropriates the aneconomy of the gift as a gift of life or, what amounts to the same thing, a gift of death” (Derrida 2008: 96; my emphasis).

2.2. “For he did not forget to teach you the song that Moses taught…”
(4 Macc 18.18-19): the price of the “gift” of sacrifice

What, then, is the fate of the “secret” between God and Abraham in 4 Macc? If the martyrs’ self-sacrifice was ever a gift—just as, in principle at least, the sacrifice of Isaac was—a “secret” economic logic dictates that they have become, by the end of the book, “a ransom for the sin of the nation” (17.21; my emphasis). “[T]hrough the blood
of those devout ones and their death as an atoning sacrifice, divine Providence preserved Israel that had previously been mistreated,” we read at 17.22, and the same (pseudo-)“peace,” “prosperity,” “obedience,” and “harmony” that held sway under the tyranny of Seleucus and the temple-treasury returns as a sign of an economy of exchange and debt (18.4-5): the martyrs giving themselves in exchange for a new beginning for the homeland20. But even if God’s ways are apparently inscrutable, the same secret economic logic that appropriates the aueconomy of the gift into an economy of sacrifice rears its head in the mother-martyr’s final speech in 18.6-19 with the sudden introduction of the figure, and teaching, of her husband, the boys’ father. Whether or not her speech is a later addition to 4 Macc21, its placement at the conclusion to the work invites the reader to use it as a hermeneutic with which to read what has gone before. Here, for example, in the context of the mother’s recounting of the manner in which “he taught you the law and the prophets” (18.10), the story of Abraham and Isaac again figures as it has done earlier in the work (18.11), as do the stories of Joseph (2.2-6; 18.11), the three youths in the fiery furnace (16.3, 21; 18.12; cf. Dan 3), Daniel (16.3, 21; 18.13; cf. Dan 6), and of David (3.6-17; 18.15). The effect of these repetitions works, we argue, to strengthen an economy of sacrifice based on an eternal give-and-take: “For he did not forget to teach you the son that Moses taught, which says, “I kill and I make alive; this is your life and the length of your days” (18.19). In fact, it is worth quoting at greater length from this “song that Moses taught” (Deut 31.30-32.43) in order to underline something more of the logic of debt and exchange which comes into play here:

…See now that I, even I, am he;
there is no god besides me.
I kill and I make alive;
I wound and I heal;
and no one can deliver from my hand… (Deut 32.39; cf. Deut 30.20)

20 Are the “peace” and “observance of the law” won back for Jerusalem by the martyrs’ deaths (18.4) the same “peace” and “observance of the law” that held sway in the city before the genocide initiated by Antiochus (3.20-21)? In sections [2.1] and [3] of Chapter 7 of this thesis below we will examine this question in more detail, and will find that the “antipolitics” inaugurated by the martyrs’ sacrifices ensures that civic life can never be the same again.

21 See, for e.g., Moore and Anderson (2010: 195-8) for a discussion on whether 4 Macc 18.6-19 is a later interpolation to the work or indeed an original, if somewhat ad hoc and clumsy, “feminisation” of a heroine that the author himself had allowed to become too masculine.
Once again, God acts “just as the king acts as he intends without revealing his secret reasons, without having to account for his actions or explain them” (Derrida 2008: 58 n. 3): “there is no god besides me.” The ἀντίψυχος as “gift,” then—in the same way as the sacrifice of Isaac as “gift”—returns to the circle of debt and exchange: death/life, wounding/healing. But is there a way of demystifying, of destabilising, the secret of the father/husband’s “economic” teaching? “The point of a “demystifying” analysis is to force out into the light of day the secret contract that allows one to do one thing under the cover of its opposite…” (Caputo 1997: 218). How exactly does the father/husband turn the aneconomy of the martyrs’ self-giving into an economy of sacrifice? It is to this question that we will turn in the final part of this chapter (section [3] below).

2.3. Sacrifice and the Law

If both the Seleucid and Jewish temple economies are supported in 4 Macc by laws underwritten by appropriation and division, on the one hand, or by “human treachery” and hypocrisy, on the other, does the Law meant to guarantee the (an)economy of death “for the sake of religion” or “for the sake of God” in the work meet with a more just foundation which would then provide the requisite conditions for the appearance of a (self-)“gift”? 

On a superficial reading it would seem as though the answer to the question just posed might be in the affirmative: the Torah, through “divine reason”, is said several times in the work to “master[] the emotions that hinder one from justice, such as malice” (1.4; cf. 1.6, 18; 2.6; etc.)22. Not only that, however, but in 2.8-9 we read that a life in conformity with the divine Law is incompatible with the kind of lending for self- or monetary interest which, as we have seen above, underlie the injustices of “philanthrophic” and usurious systems:

Thus, as soon as one adopts a way of life in accordance with the law [τῷ νόμῳ πολιτευόμενος], even though a lover of money [φιλάργυρος], one is forced to act

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22 See also, in this respect, Eleazar’s apology for the law (or his “divine philosophy”) at 5.22-24: “…[I]t instructs us in justice, so that in all our dealings with act impartially…” (5.24). For a discussion and subsequent destabilisation of this verse, however, see section [5.2] of Chapter 6 of this thesis below.
contrary to natural ways [βιάζεται τὸν αὐτὸ τρόπον] and to lend without interest [δανείζων χωρίς τόκον] to the needy and to cancel the debt [τὸ δάνειον...χρεοκοπούμενος] when the seventh year arrives [τῶν ἔβδομάδων ἑνστασάν]. If one is greedy [φειδωλός], one is ruled by the law through reason so that one neither gleans the harvest [ἐπικαρπολογούμενος τοῦ ἄμμου] nor gathers the last grapes from the vineyard [ἐπιρρογολογούμενος τοῦ ἀμπελόνας].

In the measure in which these two verses present difficulties for the translator (Anderson 1983: 2.546) they also pose thorny problems for the interpreter as well. “[I]s the entire debt, or only the interest, to be cancelled?” asks Hadas, for example (1953: 153 n. 8). In any case, suggests this last commentator, “the allusion is clearly to years of release”—that is, to the sabbatical years foreseen by texts such as Deut 15.1ff. But the word used in Deut 15.2 in the LXX for the mandated remission of debts is not χρεοκοπέω (or χρεωκοπέω) as in 4 Macc 2.8 but ἄφιημι: a fact that prompts us to look further afield for other more convincing, more exact parallels to our passage23.

The overwhelming sense of χρεωκοπέω in ancient literature more or less contemporary with 4 Macc, in actual fact, is not so much to “cut down a debt” (χρεω-κοπέω) as much as to “defraud one’s creditors.” In Plutarch’s De vitando aere alieno, for example—just one of the texts cited in LSJ under the word we are here interested in—we read the following invective against moneylenders (δανειστάς):

…[T]hey think it is a disgrace [δνειδός] to be a tax-collector [τελωνεῖν], which the law allows [τοῦ νόμου διόντος]; for they themselves lend money contrary to law [παρανόμως], collecting taxes from their debtors, or rather, if the truth be told, cheating them [χρεωκοποῦντες] in the act of lending [ἐν τῷ δανείζειν]; for he who receives less than the face value of his note [γράφει λαμβάνον ἔλαττον: i.e., the amount registered as borrowed] is cheated [χρεωκοπεῖται]… (Vit. aere al. 829c; trans. Fowler 1960: 10.324-5)

23 DeSilva (1998: 61) suggests, alternatively, that our author could have the jubilee rather than the sabbatical year in mind here—but in Lev 25.8-17, the specific text he puts forward as background, there is no concrete reference to the forgiveness of debts (though compare the very similar prohibitions in the two works on reaping the aftergrowth and harvesting the unpruned vines: Lev 25.11 par. 4 Macc 2.9).
What would happen if we read this alternative meaning of χρεωκοπέω back in 4 Macc 2.8-9? We would find that the same Law that regulates sacrifice in 4 Macc—that is, death for the sake of the other (e.g. 6.27, 30; 13.9; etc.)—is the same Law under which it is impossible to tell the difference between lending “without interest,” cancelling debts every sabbatical (or jubilee) year and forging these debts in favour of the lender/outlayer. The point would not be that the Law mandates this kind of forgery or “cheating”: it is enough for us to see that, as with the human laws of Seleucus and the Jewish nation providing for the maintenance of the temple treasury (see [1.3] above), there is a certain hypocrisy or treachery to the divine Law which regulates the self-giving—or self-gift—of sacrifice. It will be precisely this loophole in the divine directive—exposing this extending of the debt in the name of its remission as a way to return the economy of their sacrifice to the aneconomy of gift—that the martyrs in 4 Macc will exploit, as we will now see.

3. A counterfeit coin: “unbinding” justice and concord and the “impossible gift”

One of Derrida’s images for the condition, and effects, of the economy of debt and restitution is that of being bound (see e.g. 1994: 137). Indeed, in sections [1] and [2] above we have seen how the Jews are bound to Seleucus for the fact of his donations, how the Jews are bound to the treasury in its status as a “bank,” how Abraham bound Isaac and became bound to God, and so on. But, as we have already suggested too, Abraham’s pure “gift” of the sacrifice of Isaac—which is in principle outside the economy of calculation in that not only does it interrupt the “law” of the “home,” but it also can never be properly compensated for—is only exchanged for the gift of life (or the gift of death) at the moment of the sharing of God’s economic “secret.” Or, to relate this point to the martyrs of 4 Macc specifically, the self-giving, or gift, of the ἀντίψυχος is exchanged for the economy of sacrifice—death/life, wounding/healing—at the moment the father of the children makes his appearance in the work and puts a price on their deaths with his teaching of the song of Moses from Deut 31.30-32.43 (4 Macc 18.19). But is there a way to work backwards here from economy to aneconomy in order to recover the ἀντίψυχος from the careful calculations of the logic of sacrifice? We suggest that what Caputo would call a “demystifying” analysis (see [2.2] above) of the father/husband’s instruction in 18.9-19 provides just such a way forward—above all with respect to the notion of “remembering” that the
progenitor who “did not forget” (οὐκ ἐπελάθετο, 18.18) shares with the author of 4 Macc, as we shall see.

3.1. The ashes of the gift: recovering the martyrs’ “unbinding”

In the face of the seemingly inevitable return of the gift to the economy of debt and exchange through the imposition of strategic, secretive economic machinations, what Derrida calls the “absolute forgetting” that is the absolute precondition for the gift’s appearance proves a valuable tool of resistance and demystification. “For there to be gift,” Derrida writes,

…not only must the donor or donee not perceive or receive the gift as such, have no consciousness of it, no memory, no recognition; he or she must also forget it right away and moreover this forgetting must be so radical that it exceeds even the psychoanalytic categoriality of forgetting. (Derrida 1994: 16)

Forgetting is what unbinds from the binds/bounds of economy (see [3] above), and unbinds absolutely:

As condition of a gift event, condition for the advent of a gift, absolute forgetting should no longer have any relation with either the psycho-philosophical category of forgetting or even with the psychoanalytic category that links forgetting to meaning or to the logic of the signifier, to the economy of repression, and to the symbolic order. The thought of this radical forgetting as thought of the gift should accord with a certain experience of the trace as cinder or ashes… (Derrida 1994: 16-17; emphasis original)

Even if the gift, and the forgetting that makes it possible, prove impossible to think through—for they elude philosophical, psychological and psychoanalytic categories—“traces” of them remain behind as “cinder” or “ashes,” “not recollectable

24 Which calculations—cf. n. 2 above—can be as innocent (seemingly) as negotiating, or trying to negotiate, complex social codes of etiquette, manners, obligation, etc., even giving, and receiving, “thanks.” Derrida observes (1994: 12; emphasis original): “For there to be gift [i.e., outside of the economy of debt and exchange], there must be no reciprocity, return, exchange, countergift, or debt. If the other gives me back or owes me or has to give me back what I give him or her, there will not have been a gift….”
or presentable,” as a “non-absent absence” (Spitzer 2011: 138). This is easier to see with respect to 4 Macc: if the martyrs, as ἀντίψυχος, ever were a “gift,” all that remains of them and their gift now are their ashes (“flesh of children burned upon the flesh of other children” [15.20; cf. 9.20; etc.]). By the same token—and this is the point we seek to argue in this section—if there ever was the “absolute forgetting” that is the *sine qua non* of the appearance of their gift, this also “remains” (and yet does not remain) to be picked out of the ashes:

When you [the mother] saw the flesh of children burned upon the flesh of other children...you did not shed tears.... How great and how many tortments the mother then suffered as her sons were tortured on the wheel and with the hot irons! But devout reason...strengthened her to disregard [παριδεῖν]25, for the time, her parental love. Although she witnessed the destruction of seven children and the ingenious and various rackings, this noble mother disregarded [ἐξέλυσεν] all these because of her faith in God.... (4 Macc 15.20, 22-24)

The absolute power of forgetting to *unbind* (λύω; ἐκλύω) in 4 Macc can be seen both in this passage in two key objections to the author’s argument that “devout reason is sovereign over the emotions” (1.1) that haunt him from the very beginning of his discourse26:

How is it then, one might say, that if reason is master [δεσπότης] of the emotions, it does not control [οὖ κρατεῖ] forgetfulness and ignorance [λήθη καὶ ἀγνοίας]? But this argument is entirely ridiculous [κοµιδὴ γελοῖος]; for it is evident that reason rules not over its own emotions, but over those of the body. (2.24-3.1; cf. 1.5-6)

25 We mean to include the verb παριδεῖν here in the discussion to come on absolute forgetting in 4 Macc on the basis of the similarity it shares with the English word *forget*: παροράω (in the present tense) literally means to “look past”, “overlook” (παρ-οράω; LSJ: s.v.); English “forget,” from *for-*-, “denoting abstention, neglect, or renunciation,” -get, from Old Norse *geta*, also related to “guess” (OED).

26 Cf. in perhaps a slightly different sense David’s “unbinding” (λύουσα) by his “irrational desire for the water in the enemy’s territory” (3.11)—i.e., as a consequence of his *forgetting* the power of divine reason and the “temperate mind” (3.17-18).
“Forgetfulness and ignorance” are the only two plants in the “jungle of habits and emotions” that the “master gardener,” reason, cannot *bind up* and *tame* (1.28-30). But how can we write “with cinders on cinders” (Derrida 1995b: 209) of the “unbinding” modelled by the Maccabean mother that makes an *aneconomic* “gift” again, and not an economic *sacrifice*, of the martyrs’ self-giving?

### 3.2. The impossibility of recovering the martyrs’ “absolute forgetting”

The profound discomfort occasioned by the realisation that the mother-martyr’s first response to the “mass grave” of her beloved children (πολυανδρεῖον, 15.20)—now shredded into nothing more than “biological waste matter” (χόριον, 15.20; deSilva 2006d: 55)—is one of forgetting or *unbinding* (παριδεῖν, 15.23; ἐξέλυσεν, 15.24) is perhaps another sign that Derrida’s (or Abraham’s, or Isaac’s) gift really is *impossible*, can never be thought through, can never come to be. After all: can the interpreter of 4 Macc really be sure that the “forgetting” of the mother-martyr she recovers is that “letting go” which unbinds absolutely and not a sinister regime of *amnesia* imposed upon her by the father/husband/author? Forgetting can be curative and liberating, even if it is ostracising and blinding; amnesia is always binding, tyrannical, destructive. But still: we must “dwell a little longer with the possibility of forgetting…both because it is an inseparable and not always sufficiently recognized aspect of memory itself, and because some measure of forgetting is a necessary requirement for personal and civic health” (Whitehead 2009: 156-7). For to simply remember (or forget) the heroic achievement of the martyrs of 4 Macc is to miss the point, it seems: even the act of *remembering* can, and has been, hijacked by “strategic calculations and conditions,” the economy of debt and exchange (Whitehead 2009:

27 Going against the text of Rahlfs 2006 with these two words πολυανδρεῖον and χόριον (the reading in S) in 15.20—for πολυόνδρον (“a place where many people assemble”) and χωρίον (“place”) respectively—deSilva (2006d: 55) explains his rationale thusly: “Reading this variant [χόριον, literally “afterbirth”] in context, we find that it is meant to “rename” πολυόνδρον…This word, however, can also be read as πολυανδρεῖον [by itacismus], “mass grave”, a sense that is certainly more in keeping with the emphasis on carnage…in the preceding phrases.” He goes on to add, too: “…([S]ee also the use of the word in the author’s source, 2 Macc 9.4).” For a more in-depth analysis of χόριον and χωρίον (and other variants here), see section [3.2.2] of Chapter 5 of this thesis below.

28 And indeed, this is a question to which we will return in Chapter 7 of this thesis below, where we will see, among other things, that the author of 4 Macc—uncomfortable as he is with the antipolitics of the female lament—imposes on the mother-martyr a “man’s courage” (ἀνδρείας) for her woman’s “heart” (σπλάγχνα) and “emotions” (πάθησιν), short-changing her determined mourning for her sons for the political *amnesty* necessary for the foundation of the new order (chapter 7 below, section [3.2.3]).
We have already seen how remembering—in the person of the husband/father of 4 Macc who “did not forget” (18.18)—is integral to the conversion of the self-giving, of the gift, of the martyrs into the calculations of sacrifice by the economy of Moses (18.19). We could note too the way in which the tyrant Antiochus and his soldiers remember and “marvel” at the endurance of the martyrs and then, spurred on by their memory—made “brave and courageous” by their example—move on to conquer and pillage the Persians and their other enemies (17.17, 23-24; 18.5). By the same token, the establishment of a funerary monument and mourning ritual (cf. 17.7-10)—designed to aid a purposeful remembering—can actually become an institutionalised occasion to forget. With respect to modern war memorials, Rowlands (2001: 131) explains:

[M]emorials become monuments as a result of the successful completion of the mourning process. The dead are dead as an active process of remembering to forget, through the creation of an appropriate memory. Therefore the very physicality of monuments simultaneously presences the act and process of forgetting as much as remembering.

How can we walk, then, the fine line between strategic remembering and institutionalised amnesia in order to recover the trace—cinder or ash—of the absolute forgetting in 4 Macc that realises, or restores, the full value of the martyrs’ self-giving to death as gift? Precisely by reinterpreting this forgetting as an “unbinding” (ἐξέλυσεν, 15.24): as a response that works to undo all the legal and economic obligations of the temple treasury and sacrifices, and their analogues, in a similar way to that in which a counterfeit coin disrupts the law of the economy and the economy of the law.

3.3. The counterfeit or ersatz coin: ant(и)economy in 4 Macc

How could the ἀντίψυχος possibly be thought of as a counterfeit coin? In the first place, as we set out at the beginning of this chapter, one of the few places in which this rare word appears in ancient literature is in the epistles of Ignatius of Antioch
Commenting precisely on the interchangeability of this term between 4 Macc and Ignatius, Johnson (1979: 163 n. 17) observes that “Ignatius uses so many expressions found in 4 Maccabees [such as this one] that if he does not know [the] document they must already have been commonplaces”: for instance—and looking beyond the ἀντίψυχος—the images of “chorus” (Ign. Rom. 2.2; Eph. 19.2; cf. 4 Macc 8.4; etc.), “pains of birth” (Ign. Rom. 6.1; cf. 4 Macc 15.16; etc.), “the prize of God’s athlete is immortality and eternal life” (Ign. Pol. 2.3; cf. 4 Macc 17.11-16), etc. Could it be, then, that Ignatius and the author of 4 Macc also share the conceits of “God’s” coin and the “world’s” coin that Ignatius develops elsewhere in his writings—in particular, in his epistle to the Magnesians (Magn. 5.2)?

Lotz (2007) has argued that this notion of “spiritual coinage” in Ignatius could well be an oblique reference to particular coins minted throughout Asia Minor in the late first century C.E.: the so-called homonoia coins that celebrate the political ideal of “concord” (ὁμόνοια). As Lotz points out, Ignatius means by the image to encourage the Magnesians to “be eager to do everything in the concord of God” (Magn. 6.1), with the idea being that God will guarantee peace and unity in the churches just as the emperor guarantees harmony and agreement in the civil sphere (2007: 61ff.). In 4 Macc, on the other hand, the word ὁμόνοια occurs three times: once to describe the situation that obtained in Jerusalem before the treachery of Simon (3.21) and twice to refer to the fellow-feeling shared by the brothers (13.23 [A], 25; van Henten 1997: 286; Lotz 2007: 111ff.). And so, since we have already hinted (in section [2.2] above, cf. n. 20) that the “peace” the martyrs bring (18.4-5) is likely of an entirely different order to the “peace,” prosperity and “public harmony” that the Jews enjoyed under the reign of Seleucus and the treasury system, it seems we could conclude that if Ignatius and the author of 4 Macc share the conceit of the homonoia coin, with the former using it in a spiritual sense, the author of 4 Macc could well be using it in a counterfeit sense: the “making” (-facere) of an opposing (contra-) “political ideal” no

29 Of particular interest as parallels to the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc (because more intricate metaphors than the others) are Pol. 6.1—“I am an antipsychon of those subject to the bishop [ἀντίψυχον ἐγὼ τῶν υποτεσσαμένων τῷ ἐπισκόπῳ]”—and Eph. 21.1—“I am your antipsychon and that of those whom you sent for God’s honour to Smyrna [ἀντίψυχον ὑμῶν ἐγὼ καὶ ὑμῶν ἐπέμψατε εἰς θεοῦ τιμήν εἰς Σμύρναν]” (quoted and analysed in Mellink 1999: 138-9 [138]).

30 For an argument for this point in much greater detail see Chapter 7 of this thesis below.
longer based on the ruthless exchange, and indenture, of the ruthless laws of economics and economic (distributive) justice (cf. van Henten 1997: 286).

But perhaps we are moving too quickly here, for there is another step to be made in our argument which will bring the point we are trying to make more clearly into focus. Commenting on the concept of vicarious substitution in Christian theology, Schreurs warns of taking the idea “too literally,” such that the substituted person becomes an “ersatz” figure with his personhood, freedom and responsibility stripped away: “this annihilation of a person would have nothing to do with salvation,” he suggests (2003: 124-6). Schreurs reflects here a debate that is still current in much German Protestant theology of the atonement on whether Christ acted on the cross as a “replacement” (Ersatz) for sinful humanity or as its “representative” (Vertretung).

At issue here is the permanence of Christ’s substitution: replacement implies a final, irreversible supplanting of humanity, and representation a temporary, conditional and provisional standing in its place. As Graham explains in the context of a discussion of the work of Dorothee Sölle:

Substitution [or “replacement”, Ersetzung] presupposes an indifference to time by abstracting the replaced person as a being-in-time and relegating one to the status of a replaceable, timeless “thing” which neither remembers the past nor envisions the future…. [R]epresentation [Stellvertretung] maintains continuity by taking into account the person’s historical past and by making possible a future in which one can regain one’s position… (Graham 2005: 39-41 [40])

The most interesting thing in these clarifications, however, for our purposes in reading the ἀντιψυχός of 4 Macc—the “vicarious substitute” of that work, as we have defined it at several points throughout the length of this thesis—is not so much whether the martyrs are in fact an Ersatz or a Vertretung for the Jewish people but that the very possibility of them being the former opens up the chance to “demystify,” or “reform,” the economy of sacrifice in the work (according to the song of Moses)—or more precisely, to renew the gift dimension to their self-giving31. To clarify

31 “Ersatz” in English, of course, means “made or used as a substitute, typically an inferior one, for something else”—or alternatively, “not real or genuine” (OED). It functions in this sense, in other words, as a synonym for counterfeit.
precisely how that reform or renewal might work will be our task further below in this chapter; for now, though, we must consider another ancient parallel to the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc—this time, that of Lucian of Samosata in his Lexiphanes—to see whether it might shed any further light on the (for now hypothetical) counter- (or anti-) economy that could perhaps lie behind the word.

3.4. The χρήματα ἀντίψυχα in Lucian’s Lexiphanes

In §10 of Lucian’s Lexiphanes we are introduced to one Deinias, a compulsive gambler, hustler and thoroughgoing scallywag according to Megalonymus, who is telling the story at this point32. Bowersock, one of the very few commentators who have actually picked up on the parallel around the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc and the Lexiphanes, notes simply that “the terrified prisoner [Deinias]”—having been arrested for disrespecting the sacred mysteries—“wanted to pay χρήματα ἀντίψυχα if someone would take his place,” and also that “[t]he testimony of Ignatius [see section [3.3] above] and Lucian together implies that the social context for this metaphor (and the word ἀντίψυχος) was a local penal system in which a prisoner with money could pay another to take his place” (Bowersock 2002: 81). This is a good beginning, but it is clearly not the entire picture. What does it mean, first of all, that the phrase χρήματα ἀντίψυχα is embedded here at fifth remove—i.e., represents the words of Deinias as reported by Megalonymus, himself a character in a recasting of Plato’s Symposium written by Lexiphanes and recited for the benefit of Lycinus, who are both characters themselves in Lucian’s dialogue? And second of all, what implications might the

32 For the reader’s benefit, the tale is reproduced here in its entirety, in Harmon’s inimitable translation (1967: 5.291-327): “…Forthwith I [(M)egalonymus] hit upon the Torch-bearer and the Hierophant, with the other participants in unutterable rites, haling Deinias neck and crop to the office, bringing the charge that he had named them, albeit he knew right well that from the time when they were hallowed they were nameless and thenceforth ineffable, as being now all Hieronymuses. “I do not know,” said I [(L)exiphanes], “the Deinias that you mention, but the name intrigues me.” “A clove-engulfing haunter of gaming-houses,” quoth he [M.]; “one of those bezonians, those joculators, a curlilocks, wearing lace boots or pantoffles, with manches to his shirt.” “Well,” said I [L.], “did he in some wise pay the piper; or did he take himself off after setting his heel upon them?” “Verily,” said he [M.], “that fellow, the whilom swaggerer, is now ensconced; for, notwithstanding his reluctance, the magistrate decked him out with wristlets and a necklace and lodged him in the bilboes and the stocks. Wherefore, being impounded, the sorry wretch fusted for fear, and trumped, and was fain to give weregelt χρήματα ἀντίψυχα]” (Lex. 10).

Blackstone in his Commentaries on the Laws of England (1979: 4.308) defines the “weregelt” (or “weregild,” “woregeld,” etc. from were-, “man” [as in “werewolf”] and -gelt, “money”) as “a private pecuniary satisfaction…[that] was constantly paid to the party injured, or his relations, to expiate enormous offences” (such as homicide, etc.).
proximity of the idea of the ἀντίψυχος to characters of such disrepute and farcicality have for the interpretation of 4 Macc?

The fact that the mention of the ἀντίψυχος in the Lexiphanes comes only by Lucian reporting Lexiphanes reporting his work reporting Megalonymus reporting Deinias should alert us to the fact that all is not as it seems in this dialogue: that the work cannot be taken at face value. As scholars such as Whitmarsh (2005: 46) have pointed out, the Lexiphanes is a satire on “hyperatticism,” the tendency of the rhetoricians of Lucian’s day (time of the so-called “Second Sophistic”) to overuse the linguistic archaisms of the Attic dialect of the fifth and fourth centuries B.C.E.33. The effect of Lexiphanes’ relentless plundering of such old-fashioned and affected turns of phrase is to make his interlocutor, Lycinus, sick to his stomach—but as luck would have it, a physician, Sopolis, happens to pass by, and Lycinus prevails upon him to treat Lexiphanes for his speech disorder, explaining the infirmity thus:

Abandoning us, who converse with him now, he talks to us from a thousand years ago, distorting his language, making these preposterous combinations, and taking himself very seriously in the matter, as if it were a great thing for him to use an alien idiom and debase the established currency of speech. (Lex. 20)

Sopolis gives Lexiphanes a draught, originally meant for “an insane person,” that he may rid himself “of such impossible language”—and it seems as if the medicine has an immediate effect. Lexiphanes is purged of his pompous prolixity and the dialogue ends with Lycinus giving him instruction in the more becoming subtleties of rhetoric. After advising him to read the poets, the orators, Thucydides, Plato, and to discipline himself in “attractive comedy and sober tragedy,” Lycinus tells Lexiphanes:

When you have garnered all that is fairest from these sources, you will be a personality in letters. Before, you had unconsciously become like the images shaped for the market by the modellers of figurines, coloured with red and blue on the surface, but clay on the inside, and very fragile. (Lex. 22)

33 For the argument—now more and more common—that 4 Macc should also be counted as a product of the Second Sophistic, see, for e.g., Dupont-Sommer (1939: 75-86); Rajak (2001a: 44); van Henten (2002: 63).
The first observation to make from this reading of 4 Macc alongside the Lexiphanes is, then, that the ἀντίψυχος in the former now appears as an “outlandish distorted expression[]”, either resurrected from the grave of a superannuated Greek dialect (cf. Lex. 17) or plucked from the oedematous imagination of a nonsensical, outlandish charlatan (from the Italian ciarlatano, from ciarlare, “to babble”; cf. Lex. 18). The term comes into view as a specie of a debased “currency of speech,” or as a gimcrack “figurine” pawned off in the marketplace of language. But how precisely is this particular piece of silver used in the Lexiphanes?

One intriguing sign that Deinias and Megalonymus—and even Lexiphanes and Lucian—lie outside the everyday economy of debt and credit by trading in the ἀντίψυχος is Harmon’s curious note on Lex. 10: “[i]n my opinion χρήµατα ἀντίψυχα is misused here, for it means “blood-money,” or weregelt, rather than “ransom”” (1967: 5.309 n. 2). Here is the law of the eco-nomy imposing itself on the an(t)i)eco-nomy of gift again, foreclosing on the range of meanings in the text by means of a “secret contract” (Caputo; see [2.2] above). But what happens is we give full weight to what Harmon calls the “misuse” of the coin of the ἀντίψυχος here and attempt to force out into the light of day the economic logic of this corrective, interpretive conspiracy?

As we have already seen, Lexiphanes is a trafficker in strange wares: a dangerous peddler of products so out of date, or so outlandish, that they endanger the health of anyone who happens to consume (hear) them. Deinias is hardly a more reputable individual: he is an unscrupulous gambler (ἐν τοῖς σκιραφεῖοις…), a “garlic-eater” (ἐγκαινικῆδαλός)³⁴, a flatterer or parasite (αὐτολήκυθος)³⁵, a buffoon

³⁴ Was Deinias a Jew? The fondness of ancient Jews for garlic is well-attested, even to the extent that they seem to have turned the Roman insult “garlic eaters” into a something of a badge of honour (m. Ned. 3:10; Marks 2010: 217-18; Broshi 2001: 130). The Talmud contains a tradition according to which the prophet Ezra mandated the consumption of garlic on the Sabbath due to its nutritive, salubrious and aphrodisiacal properties (y. Meg. 75.1).

³⁵ Writing on the slave supposedly bequeathed by the hermaphrodite and philosopher Favorinus of Arelate to Herodes Atticus—whose name was apparently Ἀφυλόληκυθος (Philostratus, Vit. soph. 1.8)—Keulen reports that the word “recalls a term from the comic theatre for the type of the avaricious or poor man, who cannot afford a slave and hence is obliged to carry his own oil flask” (λήκυθος; 2009: 119). Later, Keulen continues, “in imperial literature… it also becomes an invective term for flatterer.” But the word also has “sexual implications” (cf. Demosthenes, Con. 54.14-17): “the name of Favorinus’ slave appears to mean that he was well-hung, which invites the reader to make inferences about the way he served his master” (Keulen 2009: 120). In the context of the Lexiphanes, we might
(αὐτοκάβδαλος)\textsuperscript{36}, immature and vain (κούριος), wearing women’s shoes (ἔνδρομίδας...βαυκίδας) and a women’s shirt (ἀμφιμάσχαλος), arrogant in all his ways and manners (a “swaggerer,” σαυλούμενος). At his moment of truth, festering in his prison cell, the poor bastard (ὁ κακοδαίμων) literally evacuated his bowels (πορδάλεος) for fear. Only at this moment, are we told, was he disposed to pay the χρήματα ἀντίψυχα. This offering of the “bail” money (Fuhrmann 2011: 701) therefore seems to be the last resort of a desperate degenerate, a shifty shyster, the last roll of the dice for a frequent “haunter of gambling-houses.” In that sense, Harmon is correct to say that the χρήματα ἀντίψυχα is not a “ransom,” as we have been sustaining all throughout this chapter—but neither is it “blood-money” or “weregelt.” Neither is it “bail” precisely, as Fuhrmann sustains. It is, instead, nothing more and nothing less than a fistful of counterfeit coins: a highly plausible, highly fitting end to a tale of an unscrupulous gambler told in an “alien idiom” that “debase[s]” the established currency of speech” by a pawnor of “preposterous combinations” of language.

3.5. “Counterfeit me, brothers” (4 Macc 9.23): “unbinding” justice and concord

We have now seen that, in the light of the Lexiphanes of Lucian, the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc—as χρήματα ἀντίψυχα—can be read as a counterfeit coin offered by the martyrs of the work. To whom would they offer such a piece? As we saw above in section [2.3], the economy of sacrifice underwritten by the divine Law in 4 Macc actually admits of this kind of forgery by way of the ambiguity in the text around the writing up/down/off of debt (χρεοκοπέω, 2.8). The martyrs would then pass off the counterfeit coin of the ἀντίψυχος to God with the result that their self-giving, their self-gift, would bypass both the economies of the world (Seleucus, temple treasury) and of God (sacrifice) altogether, ensuring that their systems of infinite give-and-take, debt and credit, offence and vengeance are disabled for all time.

Far from beginning with the mother’s “disregarding” or “unbinding” (ἐξέλυσεν, 15.24) of all that had happened in the immediate aftermath of the death of Eleazar and

\textsuperscript{36} Gerber elaborates upon this word with reference to a fragment by Semus of Delos and to Lucian: “Apart from Semus the most interesting reference to αὐτοκάβδαλοι occurs in Lucian’s Lexiphanes (10), in which it is used of seemingly disreputable entertainers who frequent dice-houses in outlandish costumes…. Lucian’s performer…wear[s] clothing that is also associated with women” (1997: 33).
her children—or with the “forgetfulness and ignorance” (λήθη και ἄγνοιας) that always already haunt the martyrs of 4 Macc because outside of the law (2.24-3.1; 1.5-6)—the operation by which the martyrs exchange the ὁμόνοια coin for a counterfeit one may actually be said to be already underway as early as 9.23:

“Imitate me [μιμήσασθέ με], brothers,” he [the first brother] said. “Do not leave your post in my struggle or renounce our courageous family ties. Fight the sacred and noble battle for religion…” (9.23-24)

What exactly, though, does this brother call his kin to “imitate”—or “counterfeit”37—here? Seeley, in his important study of what he calls the operation of mimetic atonement in 4 Macc—precisely on the basis of verses such as this one (cf. also 13.9)—suggests that the behaviour to be emulated is none other than unconditional obedience to the Law (e.g. 1990: 13-14; my emphasis):

The martyrs remain obedient to the [L]aw by overcoming their physical vulnerability and enduring torturous deaths.… If the martyrs disobey, then they lose; if they remain obedient, then they win.… The martyrs are admired for their obedience (18.3), their example revives observance of the law throughout Israel (18.4), and their persecutor, unable to make anyone else break the law, gives up and leaves (18.5). This indicates that the vicarious benefit of the martyrs’ deaths is imparted mimetically. Others imitate or re-enact the martyrs’ death-defying obedience in their own lives. Thereby, they become freed from the power of the evil tyrant (cf. also 1.11)…

But as we have already seen in this thesis, and will see again in chapters to come, the radical obedience to the Law that sets in motion the “mimetic chain” of atonement in 4 Macc (Moore 2010b: 164) actually begins in 4.24-2638:

37 “The word μιμητής is a word used in classical times that means an “imitator, copier,” as an actor who “impersonates” or, in the bad sense, an “imposter.” A word from the same root [μιμήμα] can mean a counterfeit. A good counterfeit is as close to the original as possible. The noun is not used in the LXX but the verb is found four times (Wis 4:2; 15:9; 4 Macc 9.23; 13.9) where people are called to imitate others…” (Hoehner 2002: 644; emphasis mine).
38 See nn. 35-36 of the Introduction to this thesis above for a more detailed argument that 4 Macc 4.24-26 represents in miniature, as mise en abyme, the action of the work as a whole.
When, by means of his decrees, [Antiochus] had not been able in any way to put an end to [καταλῦσαι] the people’s observance of the law [τὴν τοῦ ἔθνους ἐνομίαν], but saw that all his [or “its”: ἐαυτῷ] punishments and threats were being disregarded [καταλύομένας]...he himself tried through torture to compel everyone in the nation...to renounce Judaism... (4.24, 26)

By this reading the women and children “thrown headlong from heights” in defence of the Law in 4.25—who by their observance of the law lead Antiochus to change his policy towards the Jews from one of “punishments and threats” to “torture”—provide the model for the nine principal martyrs of 4 Macc who by their pious obedience ensure that this latter strategy of the Seleucid king is finally abandoned (18.5). But we must take account of how this unconditional obedience to the Law first modelled by the defenestrated women and infants and later to be imitated, or counterfeited, by Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother also involves the same kind of “unbinding” that we saw in [3.1] above to be an indispensable condition for the appearance of the gift (καταλῦο, 4.24, 26; cf. ἐκλῦο, 15.24). By modelling this radical “disregarding” of the “punishments and threats” of the law of the world—both those of Antiochus and those of the Jewish “people” (τοῦ ἔθνους): the reflexive ἐαυτῷ takes in both here—both the proto-martyrs and the hero-martyrs of 4 Macc disable their abusive, hypocritical and treacherous give-and-take economic systems. But it is only by counterfeiting this behaviour (9.23-24; 13.9)—by extending it to the nation and trading on its benefits (e.g. 18.3-5)—that Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother “disregard”, or “unbind”, the “punishments and threats” of the divine Law, or the divine economy of sacrifice, by exposing the hypocrisy that allows of this fraud while at the same time seeking to condemn it (χρεοκοπέω, 2.8).

Conclusion

Our search in this chapter after the economic characteristics of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc has lead us over some very rough terrain indeed. Such is the nature, though, of the strange ant(t)ieconomy that this figure represents, both in our text and in Lucian’s Lexiphanes. In effect, the ἀντίψυχος functions in both of these works as a kind of counterfeit coin minted especially by both authors so as to defraud, and thereby pass judgment on, important economic and legal regimes of their day (of king, [1.1] above,
temple treasury, [1.2], and temple sacrifices, [2.1]-[2.3], in 4 Macc; of gambling and the local penal system in Lucian, [3.4]). In 4 Macc the counterfeit ἀντίψυχος takes the form of a counterfeit ὁμόνοια coin in particular (Ignatius, [3.3] above). But where ὁμόνοια (and therefore the ὁμόνοια coin) are a sign of the “profound peace” (βαθεῖαν εἰρήνην) and “observance of the law” (εὐνομίαν) that obtained in Jerusalem before the “revolution” attempted by Simon and his collaborators (3.20-21), the counterfeit ὁμόνοια and ὁμόνοια coin of 4 Macc—first forged by the proto-martyrs of 4.25 and later copied and put into circulation by the hero-martyrs (9.23-24; 13.9)—is the sign of the radical “disregarding” (or “unbinding”: καταλύω, 4.24, 26; cf. ἐκλύω, 15.24) of the “threats and punishments” of the law of both king and nation (or world: 4.24; [3.5] above). As such the counterfeit ὁμόνοια coin that is the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc makes a mockery of the eco-nomies which these laws (nomoi) underwrite: “philanthropy,” foreign subvention, usury, etc. But the author of 4 Macc also passes judgment, through the ἀντίψυχος, on the law and economy of sacrifice as well (as in the “song of Moses,” 18.18-19), and this comes to pass in the way in which the martyrs, by capitalising on their counterfeit ὁμόνοια coin (e.g. 17.17-18.5), actually fulfill the competing demands of the Law both to jack up and write off debts (χρεοκοπέω, 2.8). Where the economy of the l/Law requires a soul, the martyrs pass off the counterfeit coin—and where the l/Law of the economy requires coin, the martyrs pay with their souls. That, we suggest, is one possible meaning of the ant(iti)economy of their self-giving, of their gift, as a “ransom for the sin of our nation” (17.21).
CHAPTER 3:
BETWEEN AION AND CHRONOS: THE KAIROS

Introduction

If the ἀντίψυχος can be broadly defined as a “life for a life”—if the martyrs of 4 Macc as ἀντίψυχος give their “lives” for the “life” of Israel—what is the meaning of “life” (or “lives”) in each of these propositions? Should each of these terms in the equation be understood as “eternal life” in the soul or “life on earth” in the body, if we can indeed draw a distinction between all these concepts, or should they be understood as some kind of combination of these?

In this chapter we will think through precisely these and other important, attendant questions, taking as our starting point the recent scholarly debates over whether the author of 4 Macc believes in the “immortality of the soul” [1.1] or the “resurrection of the body” [1.2]. From that point on, we propose to problematise this theological conceptualisation (hence the inverted commas around each idea) by means of a new definition of the problem: that is, in terms of the time, rather than the type, of the afterlife supposed in the work [1.3]. A turn to the use of the terms αἰών and χρόνος in 4 Macc as a handle on what its author believes in with respect to life after death will enable us to introduce into the debate a particularly pertinent intertext to the Stoic-influenced 4 Macc, Gilles Deleuze’s Logic of Sense (2004): a study, amongst other things, of Stoic notions of time (section [2] below). Deleuze will give us, in turn, a new range of vocabulary with which to make sense both of the afterlife and the ἀντίψυχος in our text. His notion particularly of the “counter-actualization”1 of the event as a way to freeze—to put it that way—and analyse “what happens” in the event

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1 The sense of this key Deleuzian term will become clear in due course—see, for example, section [2.2.1] and [2.2.2] below—but for now a brief working definition will be helpful. This “counter-actualisation” of the event is “[t]he manner in which events play out not as different ways things could have occurred in the past (such that we are burdened by different possibility of the past and present), but play out in reverse so that a future (which does not yet have a sense) informs the sense of the past event, depersonalizing its sense in the present; the perspective of events taken by an actor where, because events do not happen to an individual [i.e., to the particular body of this actor, but instead to that of the character s/he plays], are ideal (rather than possible) and incessant (without beginning or end)” (Young 2013: s.v.; emphasis original). In other words—though it will be to anticipate ourselves somewhat—and with respect to 4 Macc: our hypothesis will be that the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος offer one such counter-actualising perspective to the events they (and their fellow countrymen and women) submit to under Antiochus by their confident anonymisation, and subsequent relativisation, of “Time,” “Death,” “Life,” and all their collateral concepts.
will give us another facet to the portrait of the “life for life” which we have been painting in this thesis so far. In particular, we will make use of just two of the Deleuzian options in our attempt in these pages to counter-actualize the event of the ἀντίψυχος: in the first place, the idea of the ἀντίψυχος being an “esoteric” portmanteau word—both signifier and signified—that “speaks its own sense” of “what happens” with the martyrs [3.1], and in the second, the notion of the ἀντίψυχος being a re-presentation, in the present, of something which more properly belongs to a past or a future [3.2]. To come around full circle, it is hoped that this attempt at interpreting the martyrs of 4 Macc as (Deleuzian) Stoics will suggest a new way of thinking about, and perhaps reconciling, the competing beliefs around life after death, and life itself, in the work.

1. “Life after death” in 4 Macc

1.1. The “immortality of the soul”

By far the most habitual explanation of what the author of 4 Macc understands by “eternal life” or “life after death” is the immortality of the soul, rather than the resurrection of the body. The conventional argument, as set out by Garcilazo (2007: 214-16 [216]), runs that since the author states explicitly in 18.23 that the martyrs “have received pure and immortal souls [ψυχὰς ἅγνας καὶ ἀθανάτους] from God,” “only the soul [ψυχή] was relevant [for him] in the postmortem life.” Only the soul, apparently an immaterial entity for most commentators on 4 Macc, is capable of living “immortality” (ἀθανασία) because the mortal body (σῶμα) inevitably decomposes and passes away—this sharp dichotomy between body and soul having been drawn from the very beginning of the work (e.g. 1.20, 26-28; van Henten 1997: 129). Ἀθανασία, moreover (4 Macc 7.3; 14.5-6; 16.13)—a Hellenistic literary term usually applied to the gods but when applied to humanity with the sense of participation in the divine nature more than strictly co-presence stretching into eternity (TDNT: s.v. thánatos)—is directly linked to the soul in the Wisdom of Solomon (Wis 3.1-13a [4]; cf. 4.1; 8.13, 17; 15.3; ἀθάνατος, 1.15), the only other

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2 We echo here the warning sounded by Tromp (2007: 64), only to leave it for the moment and take it up further on in this chapter: “…[T]o the minds of people in antiquity, life is practically inconceivable without some kind of material substance…”

place, apart from 4 Macc, in which the term appears in the LXX corpus (Collins 1997: 186; but cf. 1 Cor 15.53-54; 1 Tim 6.16).

Along with this argument from the references to immortality in 4 Macc, though, there are other factors frequently adduced for a soul-centred perspective on the afterlife on the part of its author. The frequent references in his text to “eternal” or “endless life” (15.3; 17.12, 18), “incorruptibility”/“imperishability” (ἀφθαρσία, 9.22; 17.12), winning the “prize of virtue” (9.8; cf. 15.29; 17.12), and “living to God” in the presence of the patriarchs (7.19; 16.25), all form a conceptual group—or so the thinking usually goes—with the author’s allusions to immortality.

Not only are the qualifiers “eternal” and “endless” (αἰωνίαν, 15.3; πολυχρονίῳ, 17.12; αἰῶνα, 17.18) in 4 Macc, with respect to life after death, normally thought (or assumed) to refer to the ongoing existence of the soul only, as opposed to the body, but ἀφθαρσία is a technical philosophical word that, as Feldmeier suggests, acquired a connotation in Diaspora Judaism of precisely everything that was diametrically opposed to the body:

Through the turning toward the bodily—thus Philo understands the “Fall”—this imperishability of the [human] species, namely that furnished by creation [by God, ὁ ἀφθαρτος], was lost (Opif. 152), but it is retained as the destiny of individual people, who should strive “to obtain from the One who has not become and is imperishable…the bodiless and imperishable life.” (Gig. 15; Feldmeier 2008: 73-76 [74])

This use would seemingly accord perfectly with the sense of ἀφθαρσία in 4 Macc, not only because the notion of the first brother-martyr “being transformed” (μετασχηματιζόμενος) into imperishability in 9.22 preserves the sense of human cooperation—through right living—with the creative agency of God, as in Philo

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3 For an alternative reading that exploits the inherent ambiguity of the terms and expressions used in 4 Macc 17.12 and 17.18 see sections [1.3] and [2.1] below.

4 See further Feldmeier’s specific comments on ἀφθαρσία in 4 Macc: “For 4 Maccabees’ legends of the martyrs, holding fast to the Torah and the God of Israel in the midst of a corrupt world ruled by death means indestructible, eternal life; indeed, the one who truly holds firm to God’s commandments is already in death transformed into imperishability” (4 Macc 9.22; Feldmeier 2008: 74-75; 75 n. 47; italics original).
(Feldmeier 2008: 75), but also because of the explicit connection drawn between imperishability, “virtue” (ἀρετή) and “endless life” (ζωῇ πολυχρονίῳ) in 17.12. Simply put, the theology in 4 Macc, as in Philo, seems to be that God’s grace must be met by human effort—as in the pursuit of virtue in following the Torah at all costs—in order for the soul to be raised to the imperishable state (cf. e.g. Philo, *Ebr.* 145).

As Elledge points out, at various points in his text the author of 4 Macc draws a close connection between virtue and “piety” (εὐσέβεια) and that part of the person, he believes, that alone is able to live up to these ideals, namely the “immortal soul” (e.g. 14.5-6; Elledge 2006: 150). The assumption of this expression, as Elledge rightly points out, is that the soul, in achieving virtue and in this way cooperating with God, will be guaranteed endless life even if suffering and ultimately death come to the body (cf. 9.8). This immortality of the soul, as we have already seen, coincides with “living to God” (ζῶσιν τῷ θεῷ; 7.19; 16.25; cf. 17.18), an expression which became something of a commonplace in Jewish (and proto-Christian) literature of the time as a circumlocution for the life of the righteous after death (cf. e.g. Mark 12.26; Luke 20.37-38; Rom 6.10; 14.8; Gal 2.19; etc.). The fact that the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are mentioned here in 4 Macc 7.19 and 16.25 (and in 13.17) is likely a reflection of the fact that Exodus 3.6—the self-revelation of God to Moses during the episode of the burning bush (“I am…the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob”)—was often read in the Second Temple period as being proof that the fathers had not really died, since the “living God” also had to be the “God of the living” (cf. Exod 33.1; Keener 2009: 529). As Beale and McDonough (2007: 1148) correctly observe, the expectation in 4 Macc is that the family of martyrs—Eleazar, the “sons of Abraham” and their “victorious mother”—will join their number of the patriarchs, living the life of the “pure and immortal” soul with God in heaven (18.23).

1.2. *Echoes of the resurrection of the body:*

“Shall these dry bones live?” (4 Macc 18.17)

It has been asserted time and again in the scholarly literature on 4 Macc that the author of this work has left out in his retelling of the tale of the Maccabean martyrs all
the references in 2 Macc—a book he likely used as a source\(^5\)—to the resurrection of the body (e.g. 2 Macc 7.9, 11, 14, 22-23). Nickelsburg (2001: 151-52 [151]), for example, goes so far as to speak of a “uniform transformation of bodily resurrection [in 2 Macc] into immortality” in 4 Macc, and Elledge (2006: 148) of the author having “completely replaced hope in the resurrection with belief in the immortality of the soul.” At issue here is perhaps not the thrust of the argument—for certainly it is clear that the author of 4 Macc attempts some kind of revision of the resurrection theology present in his source—but rather the oversimplifying language of “uniform” and “complete” on the part of commentators in describing his apparent excision of a resurrection hope\(^6\). For as van Henten (1997: 183-84) and others have pointed out, there are in fact other options on the afterlife present in 4 Macc apart from clear-cut bodily “resurrection,” on the one hand, or spiritual “immortality,” on the other\(^7\), and this is a fact which must be given first place in any reconstruction, and explanation, of our author’s thought on the matter.

We propose, then, to stay with the ambiguity around resurrection and immortality in 4 Macc, and not to explain it away too hastily. A good place in which to illustrate the problems we face is in the quotation from Ezekiel 37.3 in 4 Macc 18.17, in which the father of the brother-martyrs is said to have “confirmed,” as part of the teaching he gave his sons on “the law and prophets” (18.10-19 [10]), the “query of Ezekiel”: “Shall these dry bones live?” Elledge dismisses this verse as “merely a passing rhetorical allusion” (2006: 148 n. 5), while van Henten is convinced, at least at one point, that it is proof of a belief in a bodily resurrection (1997: 184). The truth, we suggest, is somewhere in between. The intimation cannot be as fleeting as Elledge thinks—particularly if the quotation is indeed “sandwiched between two other [Old Testament] citations about life after death” (i.e. Prov 3.18 and Deut 30.20/32.39; Manning 2004: 96-97 [97])—but neither can it be as decisive as van Henten makes out. For as Tromp (cf. 2007: 63-66) would remind us: what is the significance of the

\(^5\) See e.g. section [1.9] of the Introduction to this thesis above.

\(^6\) See also Klawans who asserts that “[w]ith perfect consistency, every allusion to bodily resurrection is elided [in 4 Macc]” (2012: 94; my emphasis).

\(^7\) The other afterlife tradition in 4 Macc discussed by van Henten—apart from those of the physical resurrection and those of the immortality of the soul—is the “astral immortality” reflected in 4 Macc 17.5 (1997: 184), in which the Maccabean mother and her sons are said to have been set as lights in the heavens. Klauck (1989: 750 n. 5a) explains this tradition—which space unfortunately prevents us from entering into—as follows: “Die Sterne galten als Lebewesen...oder als Engel, die Seelen von Gerechten oder von Heroen werden nach dem Tod als Sterne an den Himmel versetzt...?”
bones in the quote? Are they thought to be the same bones possessed by the body in earthly life—which will therefore be resurrected—or are they the bones of a “spiritual” body, in which case to be recreated? Tromp comes down firmly for the latter interpretation—suggesting that “[t]he notion that dead bodies would come alive and actually emerge from their graves is perfectly strange to the author of 4 Maccabees” (2007: 66)—but his professed need to avoid contradiction in the text (e.g. 2007: 66 n. 25) and emphasise “empirical truth” (e.g. 2007: 65) betrays him somewhat. Might there be, in fact, another way to explain the Ezekiel reference in 4 Macc that does not foreclose from the outset on perceived textual inconsistencies, which in any case usually reveal more about the commentator and his discomfort than about the author and his beliefs? A rereading of the text in concert with various contemporary parallels—particularly 2 Macc 7.10-11 and 14.46, 2 (Syriac Apocalypse of) Baruch 50.2-4, 1 Enoch 25 and the so-called “Pseudo-Ezekiel” (4Q385, 385b, 386, and 388)—has the potential to shed new light on its interpretation.

In 2 Macc—as the reader will remember, a source for the author of 4 Macc—life after death is explicitly said to involve a bodily existence, and a tongue and hands (7.10-11), “life and breath” (7.23), and even blood and entrails (14.46) in particular. Even though this belief is not stated explicitly in 4 Macc (though note the striking similarities between 2 Macc 7.10-12 and 4 Macc 10.17-21), there is little doubt that the author of the work would have been familiar with it, and perhaps even that he took it for granted. But not only must Tromp downplay the most straightforward meaning of these verses—preferring instead to argue that the placement of the “recreated” bodies in 2 and 4 Macc in heaven (e.g. 4 Macc 5.37; 13.17; 17.12; etc.) means “that the matter from which…[these] bodies are formed must be much less substantial than that from which the bodies they had on earth were made” (2007: 63)—but he also must play down texts such as 2 Bar. 50.2-4 which show that the idea of a resurrection enjoyed a wide currency even before the Jewish-Christian debates of the early second century onwards8. Simply put, Tromp’s reading of these verses as putting “[t]he

8 The text at hand (2 Bar. 50.2-4; c. 100 C.E.): “For the earth will surely give back the dead at that time; it receives them now in order to keep them, not changing anything in their form. But as it has received them so it will give them back. And as I have delivered them to it so it will raise them. For then it will be necessary to show those who live that the dead are living again, and that those who went away have come back. And it will be that when they have recognized each other, those who know each other at this moment, then my judgment will be strong, and those things which have been spoken of before will come” (trans. Klijn 1983: 1.638).
emphasis...upon the idea of retribution” (2007: 65)—rather than the precise mechanism of resurrection—is unconvincing without the corrective of Popović that the correct identification of the bodies, and hence the faithful reconstruction of their individual earthly bodily forms, is a necessary first step (2010: 252; 2 Bar. 50.4).

The point we are attempting to make is that, in the light of 2 Bar. 50.2-4, it is not so far-fetched to read 4 Macc 18.17 as referring, albeit obliquely, to a resurrection of dead bodies from their graves. This impression is strengthened by two other parallels that Popović (2010) analyses in his very helpful study of beliefs about the afterlife reflected in the Dead Sea Scrolls: 1 Enoch 25 and Pseudo-Ezekiel. In the former, the most important observation we could make for our purposes in this chapter is the way in which the fragrance of the “tree of life” in 1 En. 25.6—an image of bodily resurrection—is explicitly said to “penetrate” the “bones” of the righteous, almost as in 4 Macc 18.16-17 (Popović 2010: 253). In the latter parallel, Pseudo-Ezekiel, there also happens to be a reference to “a tree [that] shall bend and shall stand erect” (4Q385 II, 10), but the whole work is, for Popović, evidence that the “valley of the dry bones” tradition in Ezek 37.1-14 was reread as “a description of the future bodily resurrection of the righteous dead,” and not just “a metaphor for national restoration,” long before 4 Macc was even conceived (Popović 2010: 255; cf. Dimant 2001: 30.29). It should therefore be of little surprise that this idea of bodily resurrection should be present in the work—admittedly as a very faint echo—and of little controversy to assert that the only reason to play down the notion that the author of 4 Macc expects the earth to give back the dead “as it has received them” (2 Bar. 50.2) is a scholarly preoccupation to eliminate perceived contradictions and incongruities.

Even though, admittedly, the provenance of 2 Bar is likely Palestinian (rather than in the Diaspora, as for 4 Macc)—given that it was written in Hebrew and includes a letter to the Jews of the Diaspora (78.1-87.1; Klijn 1983: 1.616-17)—it is nonetheless a useful indicator of the kinds of ideas that were being thought through in the same first-century context in which 4 Macc was composed.

Here Rajak (2009: 226) is probably representative of scholars in reading the reference to the “tree of life” in 4 Macc 18.16 as a reference to the Torah, rather than to eternal life—an interpretation which is certainly in accord both with the context of this verse in Proverbs (3.18) and with the content of 4 Macc itself.
1.3. Rethinking “life after death”:
Αἰῶν and αἰώνιος in 4 Macc: the time of the soul

What is the commentator on 4 Macc to do, then, in the face of these several competing traditions of the afterlife present in the work: the persistence of the immaterial soul, the resurrection of the material body, and what van Henten calls the Greek belief in “astral immortality” reflected in 4 Macc 17.5? It is clear, as van Henten quite rightly points out, that “the author of 4 Maccabees has combined different views about the afterlife of the martyrs and has presented them together”—not out of an interest in metaphysical, supernatural or eschatological speculation, however, but simply to show that the martyrs (and Israel) have been vindicated, at last, after having been abandoned by Divine Providence and “mistreated” by Antiochus (17.22; van Henten 1997: 183-4; 186 [184]). This concern on the part of the author to demonstrate the justification of the martyrs and the acquittal of Israel—rather than pinpoint the precise location and condition in which the martyrs live the post-mortem life—results in a series of “conflicting images” (van Henten 1997: 183) of immortality and/or resurrection that no shortage of commentators on 4 Macc have pointed out, but that none, it seems, have yet managed to resolve in a truly satisfying way.

In this chapter—as we have already signalled in the introduction above—we propose to approach the “problem” of the theology of the afterlife in 4 Macc in a slightly different way. Rather than trying to work the type of eternal life in which our author believes, we will look for the time in which he believes this life takes place—taking as our starting point Keizer’s observation that “[i]n 4 Maccabees αἰῶν and αἰώνιος are exclusively used for either the life…or the punishment after death” (2010: 193; cf. 201). The hope is that this change in focus—towards life after death as αἰῶν¹⁰ rather than as some imprecise notion of the “immortality of the soul” or of the “resurrection of the body”—will achieve two things, principally: 1), afford equal weight to all the allusions to the afterlife in the text, no matter how inconvenient for scholars and for

¹⁰ The sense and significance of this word, αἰῶν—both traditionally and in our rereading of 4 Macc—will become apparent in due course. For now, a brief working definition, taken from Plotinus, will suffice: “The life, then, which belongs to that which exists and is in being, all together and full, completely without extension or interval, is that [which] we are looking for, eternity” (Enn. 3.7.3.36-38; quoted in Keizer 2010: 249 n. 3; emphasis mine).
that reason, habitually marginalised; and 2), provide a clear interpretive grid with which to untangle and separate out all the insinuations of immortality/resurrection in the work to see how they function both on their own and as an ensemble. In simple terms, our hypothesis is that the qualifier “eternal” (αἰώνιος) will reveal something new, in terms of scholarship, about the kind of life supposed in the phrase, and notion of, “eternal life” in 4 Macc.

As Keizer helpfully sets out (2010: 264), the words αἰών and αἰώνιος appear some eight times in 4 Macc (9.9; 10.15; 12.12 [bis]; 13.15; 15.3; 17.18; 18.24), and at first glance her observation seems to hold up: “eternity” and the “eternal,” in the context of each of these verses, seem to be coterminous with our author’s understanding of “life after death.” In 4 Macc 9.9, for example, the “eternal torment by fire” (αἰώνιον βάσανον διὰ πυρός) which the seven brother-martyrs promise Antiochus he will undergo “from the divine justice”—as well as their own conviction that they themselves “will be with God” (ἐσόμεθα παρὰ θεῷ, 9.8)—seems to be explicitly opposed to the torture, injuries and suffering associated throughout the work with earthly life (e.g. 9.7). And in 12.12, this impression is reinforced by way of the description attached to the “intense and eternal fire and tortures” (πυκνότερο καὶ αἰόνιῳ πυρὶ καὶ βασάνοις) that the seventh brother again swears await Antiochus: “these throughout all time will never let you go” (αἰ ἐκς ὅλον τὸν αἰῶνα οὐκ ἀνήσουσίν σε).

But are αἰῶν and αἰώνιος in 4 Macc—“eternity” and “eternal life” respectively, according to the working definition we borrowed from Plotinus in n. 10 above—to be associated with the soul or with the body? If the martyrs relativise the life of the now and its physical trials in view of the “eternity” of the “divine justice”—as we saw they do indeed at 9.9—then it certainly seems as if the αἰῶν and the αἰώνιος tend more towards the soul than the body. And indeed, not only does one of the brothers emphatically correlate the “struggle of the soul” (ψυχῆς ἀγῶν) with the “danger of eternal torment” (κίνδυνος ἐν αἰώνιῳ βασάνῳ) in 13.15, but also, as we have already seen, the soul is given the descriptor “immortal” (ἀθανάτους) in 18.23, and is therefore implied to be fit for life with God “forever and ever” (ἐκ τοῦ αἰῶνα τῶν αἰώνων; 18.24). With this observation we come again to the crux of the interpretive problem that we sketched out in [1.1] and [1.2] above surrounding “life after death” in
4 Macc, although this time on new and hopefully more revealing terms. We can see more clearly now why commentators have opted to attribute a belief in the immortality of the soul to the author of 4 Macc: it is because αἰών and the αἰώνιος are always translated in the work as “eternity” and the “eternal”, as per our working definition—so, for example, the NRSV— and are therefore assumed, on the strength of 18.23-24, and perhaps 13.15 as well, to always refer to “life after death” as the time of the soul.

But even without questioning the standard definition of αἰών and the αἰώνιος—which, nonetheless, we will have occasion to attempt below—there is a grave problem with this scholarly assumption: “life after death” is also described in 4 Macc in terms diametrically opposed to αἰών and the αἰώνιος as “eternity” and the “eternal,” as in 17.18—“…[T]hey [the martyrs] now [νῦν] stand before the divine throne and live the life of eternal blessedness [τὸν μακάριον βιούσιν αἰῶνα]…” (my emphasis). But “eternity” and the “eternal” can, by definition, admit of no “now.” The idea of the “now” or the “moment” (ritaglio) is a “cut-out” (ritaglio) incompatible with the “characteristic weave” or “self-regenerating” organism that is the αἰών—who is always depicted in Greek art, in his guise as a god, as a young boy bounded by the circle of the zodiac or of cyclical time (Cacciari 1994: 52; Marramao 2007: 9-10). Instead, the cut-out of the νῦν is proper to a time apparently quite distinct from the αἰών: it is “truly chronos from krinein [“to divide”], tempus from temnein [“to cut”]” (Cacciari 1994: 52; my emphasis). As well as being figured in the time of the αἰών, therefore, “life after death” in 4 Macc is also figured, at least in 17.18, in the time of the χρόνος: a dimension that, as Marramao quite rightly points out, has come to represent the inverse of αἰών in much of the history of Western philosophy (2007: 9-10). What are the implications of this fissure in the text of 4 Macc, then—this veritable black hole in the conceptualisation of “life after death” in the work? What

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11 With the exception of “everlasting” in 10.15 and “forever and ever” in 18.24—minor deviations that matter little for our purposes here.

12 As Cacciari’s English translator Vatter notes, “[t]he Italian word ritaglio is semantically richer than its English equivalent; it means both a cutout and a free moment of time, a moment of time that can be spent freely” (in Cacciari 1994: 115 n. 11).

13 Keizer traces the opposition in Western philosophy between αἰών (“eternity”) and χρόνος (“time”) to a misreading of Plato’s Timaeus, specifically around the oppositions between being/becoming, Creator/creation, model/copy, etc.; αἰών being read as necessarily proper to the first term in each of these binaries (see, for e.g., Tim. 37c6-d7, the “crucial passage” for Keizer in this regard; 2010: 65-79 [68-69]).
are the effects we must take into account as we think through both the question of whether this life is lived in 4 Macc in the “body” or the “soul,” and the question of the identity of the ἀντίψυχος? These issues and other similar ones are those with which we will now occupy ourselves in the remainder of this chapter.

2. “Eternity” and “time”: αἰών “as opposed to” χρόνος

2.1. Χρόνος in 4 Macc: the time of the body

Before we can begin to think about how it might be possible that “life after death” in 4 Macc is revealed to take place both in the “eternity” of the αἰών and the “now” of the χρόνος, we must complete the survey that we began above of how these terms are actually used in the work. In [1.3] above we saw how αἰών functions (or better perhaps, how the exegetes would like it to function): as a kind of shorthand for the “eternal life” of the “soul.” How exactly does χρόνος function then?

A cursory look at the text reveals that χρόνος and its cognates are used some eight times in 4 Macc (5.7; 6.20; 13.20-21 [ter]; 15.27; 17.12; 18.9). And at first it appears as if the corollary of Keizer’s hypothesis (mentioned above in [1.3])—i.e., that χρόνος (“time” in “opposition” to the “eternity” of the αἰών) is used exclusively in the work to for the life before death (in the body, rather than the soul)—might meet a better fate than its original formulation (problematic, as we have seen now, in light of 17.18). Χρόνος—rather than αἰών—is in 4 Macc the time or the life in which the body is “shaped” in the womb and fed by the mother’s blood (and later milk, 13.20-21), in which the body grows old and sprouts grey hairs (5.7), and in which the body dies (18.9). Crucially too, on this argument, in the terms of the decision with which the martyrs are confronted and which forms the backbone of the entire drama of 4 Macc—whether to shamefully try the meat and thereby capitulate to Antiochus or to heroically refuse and keep faith with God (e.g. 8.16-26)—χρόνος is explicitly associated with the former choice, with mere preservation in the short term as against “eternal life according to God’s promise” (15.2-3; 6.20; 15.27). But once again, just as we found in our survey on αἰών and the αἰώνος above, there is a fissure in the text that prevents the easy reading that would see χρόνος neatly correlated with the transient time of the body.
In 17.12 we read: “...[O]n that day virtue gave the awards and tested them [the martyrs] for their endurance. The prize was incorruptibility in “polychronic” life [ἀφθαρσία ἐν ζωῇ πολυχρόνιῳ]...” (my trans. and emphasis). This verse disrupts Keizer’s reading, once again, in the sense that ἀφθαρσία, as we saw above ([1.1]), is proper to the αἰών, not the χρόνος (nor indeed, the πολυχρόνιος). In fact, the only sense she can make of it is to say that “as a qualification”—she translates it “of much time”—“[it] sounds rather dry” (2010: 186 n. 289). To the best of our knowledge no other scholar of 4 Macc has yet ventured a comment on this “aionic” aspect that the dimension of the χρόνος thereby takes on in the work; neither have they commented on the “chronic” aspect of the αἰών, in its “now,” that we discovered above in 17.18. But, on our reading, not only do the “now” of the “eternity” and the “eternity” of the “now” of 4 Macc impact directly on questions around notions of body/soul and earthly/eternal life in the work, but they also go to the heart of the identity of the ἀντίψυχος. How might we then proceed in explaining this cross-contamination of αἰών and χρόνος in the text? One option might be to recover a more primitive, more pagan meaning of αἰὼν—as the “continuity” or “entirety” of time (χρόνος), for example, instead of essentially timeless “eternity” of the Judeo-Christian God (and of αἰώνιος, therefore, as something akin to “continuous,” from Latin continere, “to hang together”). But such a move, we argue, could not then take account of another concept of time in 4 Macc that we will discover more fully in section [3] of this chapter below: that of the struggle and death of the martyrs as καιρός, as timely (1.10; 3.19). It is clear that we need to find a way to refigure these temporal dimensions of 4 Macc—αἰών, χρόνος and καιρός—in a way that discerns the essential differences between them, but that also highlights their essential interconnectedness in the work.

One fruitful, if challenging, way of doing this would be to read Deleuze’s remarks on

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14 In terms of contemporary parallels that might be helpful in elucidating the meaning of the two fissures in 4 Macc around the αἰών and the χρόνος (17.18 and 17.12 respectively), Philo in the De Abrahamo (271) could perhaps supply us with the licence to proceed intuitively and read πολυχρόνιος as equivalent, for all intents and purposes, to αἰών (or more precisely, αἰών πολύν). The point we are attempting to make here, however, is that there are certain “logical” inconsistencies in 4 Macc 17.12, 18 that beg of further exploration, as opposed to simple questions of precedent. For that reason, we will keep the “intuitive” reading as a last resort for now.

15 In the conclusion to her very suggestive study Keizer observes that “‘eternity’ is too much an ‘anachronistic,’ misleading or unclear explanation” of αἰών in all its appearances in ancient literature, having been read back into the word by modern scholars uninterested in distinguishing αἰών from the later Latin aeternitas. Keizer suggests “entirety” as a default “conceptualisation” of αἰών instead, since “[pagan] Greek αἰών and Biblical αἰὼν [the LXX translation for ‘olam’] fit together here, each bringing its own perspective”—i.e., the “entirety” of the time of an individual life, in the first case, and the “entirety” of God’s time—which gives meaning to human life—on the other (Keizer 2010: 251).
each of these terms alongside 4 Macc as an *intertext*—the very task we now set ourselves in the next section.

### 2.2. Aion and Chronos in Deleuze

To be able to understand what Deleuze says about the Aion and Chronos (and Kairos)\(^{16}\)—and hence to be able to profitably use his observations on each of these as *intertext*(s) in 4 Macc—we first must understand the interest in Stoicism that prompts him to reflect on these ideas. Given that many commentators also discern a certain Stoic colouring to 4 Macc, as we have already seen in this thesis\(^{17}\), to return to the Stoic influences on Deleuze will only help to synchronise to an even greater degree the resonances in the thought of the two authors under consideration here.

At the beginning of his *Logic of Sense* (2004) Deleuze, drawing on Émile Bréhier’s reconstruction of Stoic thought, proposes a situation for the reader’s consideration: that of a scalpel cutting through flesh (2004: 8). The scalpel, or the one holding it, is the *agent* of the cutting action; the flesh, or the one to whom it belongs, is the *patient*. But what about the quality, or attribute, of “cutting” and “being cut” here—where do these belong in the relations of cause and effect? The “cutting” is the *result* of the agent wielding the scalpel, and the “being cut” the *result* of the patient submitting. Whereas, therefore, the agent, the patient and the scalpel are all *causes* of the cutting/being cut, the cutting/being cut in the example are both *effects*; that is, results of the action of the agent and the passion of the patient. Not only this, however, but if the agent, patient and scalpel are all bodies, the effects of their actions and passions are of an entirely different order. These effects are *incorporeals* for Deleuze and the Stoics: “[w]e cannot say that they exist”—that a “cutting” or a “being cut” exists *per se*, for example—“but rather that they subsist or inhere” in being as *events* rather

\(^{16}\) “Aion,” “Chronos” and “Kairos” will be transliterated and capitalised when referring to the way these concepts are used in Deleuze’s thought: not only out of convenience and convention—for Deleuze’s editors usually follow this style as well—but also out of a recognition that Deleuze’s philosophical and literary-critical appropriation of these ideas has not gone uncriticised by certain specialists in ancient Greek thought and philology. Bogue, for example, acknowledges that “Deleuze’s schematic opposition of Chronos and Aion somewhat simplifies the thorny issues inherent in this area of Stoic thought” (2003: 195 n. 19), and he is not alone. Nonetheless, we resolve to follow Deleuze (and Alice) here down the rabbit-hole, content to modify our ideas—if we can get our bearings—if the need arise.

\(^{17}\) See, for example, section [2.1] of Chapter 1 of this thesis above.
than “things” or “facts” (Deleuze 2004: 7). But if the time of bodies/things/facts is the present—“the temporal extension…which expresses and measures the action of the agent and the passion of the patient”—what then is the time of the result/effect/incorporeal? Or to put the question another way: why, to describe the event of the scalpel and the flesh mentioned above, did we find ourselves obligated to the verb and not the noun (“to cut”—“to be cut”)? It seems even intuitive that the verb should have some privileged relation to the incorporeal event, and the noun to the bodily present, and that each should bring their temporal perspective to bear on each relation. For the infinitive always sends us to some undefined future (“to cut”) or past (“to be cut”), never to the present (the actual moment of the “cutting”), while the substantive (or the adjective) sends us to the present (the cutter, the one cut), never the future or the past. Or to put all of this in Deleuze’s terms: “[o]n one hand, there are singular proper names, substantives, and general adjectives which indicate limits, pauses, rests, and presences; on the other, there are verbs carrying off with them becoming…and infinitely dividing their present into past and future” (2004: 30).

Now, Aion is the name Deleuze, and the Stoics, give to the “time” of the incorporeal/infinitive, and Chronos that which they assign to the body/substantive. The point is that everything that “happens”—the cut and even “time” itself—“must be grasped twice, in two complementary though mutually exclusive fashions” (Deleuze 2004: 8):

First, [time] must be grasped entirely as the living present in bodies which act and are acted upon [i.e., Chronos]. Second, it must be grasped entirely as an entity infinitely divisible into past and future, and into the incorporeal effects which result from bodies, their actions and their passions [i.e., Aion].

A couple of other concrete examples here will help us to see the differences between these two ways of keeping time: that of the actor, in the first place (section [2.2.1]), and of the sage, in the second (section [2.2.2]).
2.2.1. The Aion of the actor and the Chronos of the character

First of all, then: what “happens” in a play? On one level there is what “happens” to the characters, and on another what “happens” to the actors who play them. The events, or time, of the play must indeed be “grasped twice”—but who inhabits the Aion and who the Chronos? “The actor occupies the instant,” says Deleuze, “while the character portrayed hopes or fears in the future and remembers or repents in the past” (2004: 167). At first glance, therefore, it seems as though the actor occupies Chronos and the character Aion. But Deleuze goes on to say just the opposite: in effect, that “[t]he actor belongs to the Aion” (2004: 171). How can this be so, if the actor embodies the instant and the character devises the future and the past?

Everything turns here on the manner of the actor’s embodiment and the character’s devising, or of the actor’s devising and the character’s embodiment (“devise,” from Latin divis-, “divided,” from dividere). For “[t]he actor…actualizes the event”—lives and embodies it in her person—“in a way which is entirely different from the actualization of the event in the depth of things,” that is, the event as lived and embodied, or at least scripted as lived and embodied, in the person of the character (Deleuze 2004: 171). In other words, where the present of the character is imagined as being determined by certain causes, the re-present-ation of the actor is pure effect. Or again, where the future hopes and fears and past memories and reproaches of the character are determined, or scripted as being determined, sequentially or regularly, the actor “leaps” between all of these scene by scene, act by act (cf. Deleuze 2004: 89).

Let us pull back for a moment now from following the thread of Deleuze’s argument to relate all that we have just seen to 4 Macc. At various points in his work, as we will see in greater detail elsewhere in this thesis\(^\text{18}\), the author of 4 Macc makes effective use of the imagery of the theatre: of the idea of the tragic chorus (8.4; 8.29-9.9; 13.8-18; 14.7-8; 18.23), of the tragic curse (9.24; 11.23; 18.22), of actors, roles, and costumes (e.g. 6.5, 17; 15.15; cf. 7.11-15; 8.16-26; 16.5-11; etc.). It is this last complex of images that is of particular interest here in the light of what Deleuze says.

\(^{18}\) See, for example, section [3] of Chapter 7 below.
about the Aion of the actor. More specifically, it is the mention of the martyrs playing a particularly fitting “role” (δράμα) throughout their respective ordeals that will serve to ground the Deleuzian intertext in the very text of 4 Macc.

“Never may we, the children of Abraham, think so basely that out of cowardice we feign a role so unbecoming to us [ἀπρεπὲς ἦμῖν δράμα ὑποκρίνασθαι],” exclaims Eleazar in the midst of his tortures and temptations (6.17). Instead of acting like “hypocrites,” then, the martyrs play the parts assigned to them in the “script” of the “law-abiding life of reason” (Arneson 2008): the role of philosophers who live “by the whole rule of philosophy”—divine reason—and trust in God, and are thereby able “to endure any suffering for the sake of virtue” and “to overcome the emotions through godliness” (7.21-22). Or, to take other more concrete allusions in 4 Macc to the martyrs performing various roles: “the courageous and noble” old man Eleazar is said to inhabit the character of his Old Testament namesake in 6.5 (cf. Num 20.24-28), and that of “father Aaron” in 7.11-12. And here, precisely, the great utility of reading Deleuze alongside 4 Macc begins to come into view: where Eleazar, Aaron and the other great “characters” in the text inhabit the Chronos, the martyrs, as “actors” playing these parts by devoutly living out their lot in life as faithful Jews, “discover” the Aion (cf. Deleuze 2004: 155). The martyrs’ interpretations of the roles they play—Eleazar remaining “unmoved in his reason” in the midst of his being burned as against Aaron averting the wrath of the Lord (7.11-12; cf. Num 16.46-50; Wis 18.20-25)—are what Deleuze calls “counter-actualizations” of the “actualizations” of the event (“what happens”) by the “original” characters (i.e. “biblical” Eleazar and Aaron; e.g. Deleuze 2004: 171-72). As such their “performances” isolate and re-present the event in all its incorporeal glory—pure effect as opposed to cause, pure past-future (the “essential”) as opposed to present, pure surface as opposed to body. Or better, their role-playing highlights that “what happens” has always two faces: that part of the event which is “realised and accomplished”—related to self, body, and the “incarnation” of the present—and that

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19 DeSilva (2006a: 143) is adamant that the adverbial form ἀληθῶς (“truly”) in 6.5 means “not…that the martyr acts ‘like a true Eleazar,’ but that he experiences ‘truly’ what his name means [‘l’zar, ‘God helps’], God helping him to bear the torments (’like one truly helped by God’).” But this interpretation need not necessarily cancel out the suggestion of Anderson (1984: 2.551) that “[t]here may be an indication here that the name had become proverbial for the typical martyr who endured bravely under torture to the end,” or the suggestion of Arneson (2008) that the idea of “Eleazar” in the story of 4 Macc functions as “an already-fixed [i.e., theatrical] character.”
“part...which cannot realize its accomplishment”—the “incorporeal and infinitive, impersonal, grounded only in itself” (Deleuze 2004: 172). This idea of the “double structure” of the event represents the first stage of our appropriation of Deleuze for the purposes of reading 4 Macc.

2.2.2. “Esoteric words” as “paradoxical element” between Aion and Chronos

Instead of going from “what happens” to the Aion and the Chronos—Eleazar (of the Aion) as “true Eleazar” (of the Chronos)—the problem we have set ourselves in this chapter is to go backwards, so to speak, from the Aion and the Chronos (sections [1.3] and [2.1] above) to “what happens,” precisely, in the person of the ἀντίψυχος.

We have said that the event, this event, must be “grasped twice”—but if we clutch at its temporal dimensions, what are we actually grabbing in the “what happens” itself?

Just as the actor makes use of costumes, make-up, props and so on in her acting-out of a character—compare the “masks” (προσωπεῖα) the martyrs employ in their performance (15.15)—so too the Stoic sage makes use of the surface, of surface effects, in various important ways. As Deleuze points out, for example, the sage was never without his staff: always using it to draw attention to the surface “as opposed to the illusions being sought, erroneously, above or below it” (Plato, on the one hand, and Empedocles and the pre-Socratics on the other; Dosse 2011: 190), to the way a humble egg was like philosophy, for example (D.L. 7.40; Deleuze 2004: 162).

But there was another way in which the Stoics drew attention to the superficial which will be more beneficial to our purposes here: namely, through language.

In essence, a (particular kind of) word, or its use, can also be a “counter-actualization” of the event in a way similar to that of a performance, and the value of the counter-actualization, as we have already seen, “is to give to the truth of the event the only chance of not being confused with its inevitable actualization”

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20 Deleuze's example here is death, which he says is the very model of the event: “Death has an extreme and definite relation to me and my body and is grounded in me [i.e., my death], but it also has no relation to me at all [Death as a biological state, for example]…There are thus two accomplishments [of death and of the event], which are like actualization and counter-actualization…. Every event is like death, double and impersonal in its double....” (2004: 172).
(Deleuze 2004: 182). How can this be so? Here, in fact, we arrive again at the very heart of the deconstructive insight: that a word is a “floating signifier” and the thing, the idea, the concept to which it points a “floated signified” (Deleuze 2004: 59). Derrida’s great insight, of course, was to question the connection between these two terms, but Deleuze here makes a further contribution: the “distance” between signifier and signified is traversed only by a “paradoxical element” brought into their midst, and it is this traversal which results in the production of sense (2004: 78). Although Deleuze gives several examples of this “paradoxical element,” the one that most interests us here is the “esoteric” word, such as the Stoic βλίτυρι or σκανδαψός—a word “that denotes exactly what it expresses and expresses what it denotes,” or, in other words, is both signifier and signified (2004: 78-79 [78]). And just as the performer’s performance—the blurring of the Aion of the actor and the Chronos of the character—“has no more thickness than the mirror,” so the “paradoxical entity,” in this case the esoteric word, is pure surface—a looking glass—which bears “word and thing, name and object, sense and denotatum, expression and designation.” “It [the paradoxical element, the esoteric word] guarantees, therefore, the convergence of the two series which it traverses, but precisely on the condition that it makes them endlessly diverge” (Deleuze 2004: 171, 48).

What, again, does all of this have to do with 4 Macc? In sum, we suggest that ἀντίψυχος functions in the text as a kind of Deleuzian paradoxical entity or esoteric word which blurs the two series of Aion and Chronos therein and in turn gives rise to the kind of confusion around its understanding of the afterlife which we saw a little of above. More specifically, and as commentators on 4 Macc would all agree, ἀντίψυχος is a portmanteau word made up of the morphemes ἀντί- and -ψυχή; but, going further, we suggest that it works in the text, as in its Deleuzian guise, to “initiate an endless branching off of potential meaning, and attempt to entertain all or many of those meanings simultaneously” (Parsons 1994: 32).

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21 For more on this idea—which is the very “methodology” guiding us in the present study—we refer the reader back to section [3] of the Introduction above.
22 Deleuze notes that these words—while referring to “a sound like that of a lyre” and “the machine or instrument”, respectively—are said by Sextus Empiricus to be speech “which has no significance” in which “truth” cannot reside (Math. 8.133; Deleuze 2004: 78; 85 n. 1).
23 Williams (1975: 183), for example: “…the components of antipsychon (i.e., anti and psyche)….."
3. ἀντίψυχος as "counter-actualisation" or pure event

3.1. ἀντίψυχος as esoteric/portmanteau word

For Deleuze, as we have just seen, the function of the paradoxical element in a text is to bring forth its sense by coordinating and bringing together the various series (which we might now call “binary oppositions”24) that make up its conceptual structure (Deleuze 2004: 60). But the paradoxical element as portmanteau word brings about a particular kind of conceptual coordination that goes further than the mere composition or coexistence of different series. Because it belongs to both series at once and, yet, still “says its own sense” (i.e., is both signifier and signified at the same time without being reducible to either), the portmanteau word “perform[s] an infinite ramification of coexisting series and bear[s] at once upon words and sense, or syllabic and semiological elements” (Deleuze 2004: 56, 79). The effect of this “disjunctive synthesis” is the contraction of at least two divergent series “in the successive appearance of a single one”—that is, in a third term which endlessly unites an infinity of divergent meanings, “allowing them to coexist” (Deleuze 2004: 199; Aldea 2011: 30-32 [32])25.

The problem of the afterlife in 4 Macc that we have been examining in these pages can, then, be rephrased much more helpfully in these Deleuzian terms: the portmanteau word ἀντίψυχος circulates endlessly in the two series of Aion and Chronos in the text, causing them to resonate and communicate (Keizer’s eternal life of the soul/earthly life of the body; [1.3], [2.1] above) but also to ramify and diverge (Chronic aspect of the Aion/Aionic aspect of the Chronos; 4 Macc 17.12, 18). The “third term” that is the ἀντίψυχος is, of course, also responsible for the scholarly incapacity to decide for a belief, on the part of the author of the work, in either the

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24 Whereas in [2.2.2] above we used the words “signifier” and “signified” in their strictly semiological sense, now we broaden that use to include the metaphysical, more properly speaking. Deleuze explains in this regard: “In a restrained sense, signified is the concept [i.e. lying “behind” the signifier]; in an extended sense, signified is any thing which may be defined on the basis of the distinction that a certain aspect of sense establishes with this thing [i.e., a “duality”—Deleuze’s word—or a “binary opposition”]” (Deleuze 2004: 45).

25 In this sense, the Deleuzian esoteric/portmanteau word could perhaps be said to be similar to the Derridean undecidable which, as we have seen time and again in this thesis, functions to destabilise the binary oppositions in the text.
“immortality of the soul” [1.1] or the “resurrection of the body” [1.2]. How precisely, though, does this work?

Let us first isolate just one part of the word ἀντιψυχος—ψυχή—to show how this portmanteau produces a series of conjunctions and disjunctions between the series of Aion/Chronos in 4 Macc that lead to the interpretive problems just described. Although ψυχή and its cognates appear over twenty times in the text, a proper translation in each of these cases is far from clear, as even a quick glance of the NRSV, for example, suggests: here it is variously rendered as “life,” “mind,” “soul,” and “spirit.” Exegetes of 4 Macc, when they are not taking these translations absolutely for granted, would perhaps appeal to a Jewish/Greek dichotomy here to explain these translational and conceptual differences (e.g. MacDonald 2003: 2-12; 90-92)—that is, to the tension between ψυχή in the LXX (where it usually renders the Hebrew nephesh, “life,” or leb, “heart,” later “mind”) and ψυχή in Greek medicine and philosophy (where it usually means “soul” or “spirit”)—but whatever the assumptions the effect, for our purposes, is the same: ψυχή in 4 Macc is seen to belong both to the series of the Aion/soul and to the series of the Chronos/body, giving sense to each but also causing a certain amount of confusion between them. This definitional but also infinitively divergent nature of the word can be seen in a passage like 13.13-15:

Each of them [the brothers] and all of them together…said, “Let us with all our hearts [καρδίας] consecrate ourselves to God, who gave us our lives [ψυχὰς], and let us use our bodies [σώματα] as a bulwark for the law. Let us not fear him who thinks he is killing us, for great is the struggle of the soul [ψυχῆς] and the danger of eternal torment [αἰωνίῳ βασάνῳ] lying before those who transgress the commandment of God…”

Here the words “hearts” and “bodies” correspond to the course of action the martyrs take in the time of the now—“Let us not fear him who thinks he is killing us…”—and are to be counted, therefore, in the series of the Chronos. The idea of “eternal torment,” on the other hand, corresponds to the time of eternity, and therefore to the series of the Aion. But what about ψυχή? At the moment in his text in which,

26 Such a manoeuvre, however, is always and inevitably futile, as we explained in Chapter 1 of this thesis above.
arguably, the conceptual differences between the time of the now and the time of eternity are meant to be their sharpest—in which it is understood that the promise of eternal life (or the threat of eternal punishment) is determinant of the martyrs’ behaviour in the present—the author of 4 Macc can rely on nothing apart from ψυχή to draw the key distinction (transient “life” vs. eternal “soul”). But it is a distinction without a difference in that “life” and “soul” are, after all, the same word, and there is, in the end, no good lexical reason why these translations, and others like them, could not be shuffled around from one into another series (the scholarly reluctance to do so having more to do, perhaps, with certain exegetical preferences, as we saw above).

This infinite proliferation or ramification of meaning around the ἀντίψυχος only speeds up even further when return the ἀντί- back to the -ψυχή, as a survey of how this prefix is used in 4 Macc reveals. According to LSJ: s.v., for example, ἀντί- is capable of the senses “over against, opposite,” “against, in opposition to,” “one against another, mutually,” “in return,” “instead of,” “equal to, like,” and “corresponding, counter.” What, then, induces commentators to choose between each one of these alternatives in the instances in which ἀντί- appears in our text?

We might say that in a Chronos/body series ἀντί- seems to behave in one particular way: namely, that of “against, in opposition to.” The Jews of Jerusalem, for example, “speak out”—bodily action—against the words of Simon “that he had come with the king’s authority to seize the private funds in the treasury” (4.6-7 [7]; ἀντιλέγωντος, from ἀντιλέγω). Likewise, the brother-martyrs and their mother “speak out” against Antiochus’ attempts to force them to eat pork, another Chronos/body element (ἀντιλέγομαι, 8.2). But what about David’s antithesis of “reason” to “desire” (ἀντιθέεις, 3.16), Simon’s (and the martyrs’) antipolitics (ἀντιπολιτεύομαι, 4.1) and Eleazar’s antirhetoric (ἀντιρητορεύσαντα, 6.1): do these express a sense of opposition only or do they hint at something more—something “instead of,” something “counter”? Indeed, Antiochus is “antagonist” to the martyrs (e.g. 17.14), and the martyrs to Antiochus, in a different way than that in which the “reason” exercised by the martyrs is “antagonist” to the “emotions” (3.5): while the one

27 See Chapter 7 of this thesis below—and specifically section [3] of the same—for an argument for an antipolitics of the martyrs of 4 Macc: not “anti-” though, in the strictest sense of opposition or antipathy to the political but in the sense of another politics altogether, one that begins from another place: namely, from outside rather than inside the city.
struggle aims at destruction or eradication—a zero-sum game of “against, in opposition to” (e.g. 4.24; 6.14; 8.9; 11.4; 17.9; etc.)—the other aims at control and sublimation—“instead of”, “counter” (e.g. 1.6; 3.2-4). So it is, then, that the martyrs’ antiphilosophy (8.15) both invalidates and validates indiscriminately: “circumscribing” (ἀκυρόω) at the same time both the “frenzy of the passions” (2.3, 18) and the tyranny of Antiochus (17.2) on the one hand, and, on the other, “reinscribing” (κυρόω) the very possibilities of both “law” and “philosophy” itself (e.g. ἐπιστοποίησας, 7.9; cf. 1.1; 5.4, 11, 22, 35; 7.7, 9, 21; 8.1, 15; etc.).

The point we have been trying to make in this section might well be rephrased by means of the following questions: To which series—Aion or Chronos—do the ψυχή and the ἀντί in 4 Macc belong? Are these series really discrete, in fact, in view of the destabilising behaviour of the ἀντίψυχος—ἀντί- and ψυχή—that flows uninterruptedly between them and is therefore responsible for the confluences and convergences we saw in sections [1.3] and [2.1] above (4 Macc 17.12, 18)? In the next section we will see how the ἀντίψυχος actually belongs to a third term of the Aion/Chronos structure of our text—that of the Kairos—and we will do this by returning to Deleuze’s other description of the “counter-actualization” or distillation of the pure event—that of the representation.

3.2. Ἀντίψυχος as Kairos

3.2.1. Stoic προαίρεσις

We are interested, as we have said, in isolating the event of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc—the ἀντίψυχος at its most “distinct, trenchant and pure,” the event in all “its contour and its splendour” (cf. Deleuze 2004: 171). For Deleuze, the Stoic sage is, like the actor, an agent of the counter-actualization of the event that is able to capture “what happens” in all its timeless dimensions and pristine completeness—but how is that so? It all has to do with “the…Stoic will as proairesis”:

The sage waits for the event, that is to say, understands the pure event in its eternal truth... according to the line of the Aion. But, at the same time, the sage also wills the embodiment... of the pure incorporeal event in a state of affairs
and in his or her own body and flesh [i.e., according to the Chronos]…
(Deleuze 2004: 166; emphasis original)

How then does the sage mediate between Aion and Chronos in this way, situating himself on the surface between the two which, as we saw in [2.2.2] above, is precisely what we grab at when we try to understand “what happens” in a given moment? Proairesis is a word Deleuze borrows from the Stoic Epictetus, though it goes back further, to Aristotle, who uses it in the sense of a “deliberative choice”: the choice, in fact, of a particular course of action in a particular situation. In Epictetus, however, it refers more precisely to a more generalised or remote “pre-choice” which predetermines other more immediate, more local choices and therefore, subsequent events in themselves (Dragona-Monachou 2010: 112-13 n. 1). “In Aristotle a prohairesis is an act of choosing, while in Epictetus it is the state of having chosen…” (Rist 1975: 106; my emphasis). The point, for our purposes, is that these two temporalities—the “choosing” and the “having chosen”—represent two different relationships to the event: the deliberative choice as cause of the event, according to the first, and the consequences of the pre-choice as “quasi-causes” (because effects of the pre-choice) according to the second. This is why Deleuze says that the Stoic sage understands the event “as something eternally yet-to-come”—effects of the pre-choice—“and always already passed”—the pre-choice itself (2004: 166).

The προαίρεσις of Epictetus as a “having chosen,” rather than a “choosing,” can be illustrated by means of a closer examination of the example to which Deleuze alludes only briefly here: the event of “going for a walk” (2004: 166). In one of Seneca’s letters (Ep. 113.23), for example, we read that Chrysippus believes that walking is “the mind itself”: i.e., that the event of one’s going for a walk is caused, directly, by one’s προαίρεσις as deliberative choice. But, on the other hand, Cleanthes holds that walking is “the vital breath [pneuma] dispatched from the mind right into the feet”: i.e., that the event of one’s going for a walk is effected by the effects of one’s προαίρεσις as pre-choice. With respect to this example, Long writes that “Epictetus’ detachment of prohairesis from the bodily actions to which volition is directed [i.e., in Diatr. 4.1.72-73] seems to indicate his preference for Cleanthes’ account” (2004: 219 n. 10). And Inwood, in turn, suggests to us a further useful observation: whereas in Chrysippus’ view events are made up of cause and effect—decisions lead directly
to actions (cf. 1985: 51)—in Cleanthes’ (and Epictetus’) view “what happens” is made up of pure effect—actions as the effects of the effects of the pre-choice, effects of one’s decisions in the moment. The Stoic sage, therefore—and as we will argue below, the martyrs of 4 Macc as well28—counter-actualizes or re-presents the causes of events, of “what happens”—Chronos—as pure effects—Aion. The martyr-sage “transforms every event into a favourable event [euchairia] solely by virtue of his own cooperation” (Perniola 2001: 222), by virtue of the pre-choice, and the will, that is endlessly manifested in every situation in which he finds himself.

3.2.2. The προαίρεσις of the Maccabean martyrs

Even though neither προαίρεσις nor its derivatives appear directly in the text of 4 Macc, there are certain elements therein that lead us to suggest that the heroes of the work act at all times with precisely the attitude we have just been considering. Engberg-Pedersen (2006: 119-21), for example, has identified five features of the προαίρεσις that serve as particularly useful points of comparison with the “Stoic” disposition shown by the martyrs:

1. For Epictetus, προαίρεσις is a “critical” faculty very closely connected to understanding (παρακολούθησις, e.g. Diatr. 1.6.15). Just as understanding “follows on” (παρακολούθει) from the information received by the senses, for example, so προαίρεσις may be said to “follow on” from one’s education.

2. Προαίρεσις “is ‘by nature’ free from hindrances (ἀκώλυτον) and constraint (ἀνανάγκαστον)” (Engberg-Pedersen 2006: 120), making it entirely a matter for each individual, like “belief” (δόγμα, cf. Epictetus, Diatr. 1.17.21, 26).

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28 Cf. here, with respect to the example just given of going for a walk, the philosophy reflected in 4 Macc 14.6: “Just as the hands and feet are moved [κινούνται] in harmony [συμφόρον] with the guidance of the mind [τοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀφήγημάσιν], so those holy youths, as though [ὁτὲς ὡς ὀς] moved by [ὑπὸ, lit. "under"] an immortal spirit of devotion [ψυχῆς ἀθανάτου τῆς εἰσέβεβλησ], agreed to go to death for its sake [συνεσθόρησαν θάνατον].” Is this moving of the hands and feet, then, in the estimation of the author of 4 Macc, a relationship of cause and effect—as for Chrysippus—or pure effect only—as for Cleanthes and Epictetus? To our mind everything hinges on the word ἀφήγημάσιν here. This “guidance of the mind,” in our opinion—from ἀφήγημα, “to lead away from” (LSJ: s.v.)—is a mediating element between the ψυχή and the (hands and) feet in a similar way to which pneuma was for Cleanthes; this reading is only strengthened by the addition of συμφόρον here too, whose sense of “harmoniously,” as adverb, would point to nothing other than the effect (motion) of the effect (guidance) of the mind.
3. Προαιρέσις is subject only to itself, giving the individual great freedom and self-mastery. There is nothing more powerful (κυριώτερον) in the individual than προαιρέσις, which keeps everything else in the self in check (ὑποτεταγμένον) while being itself free from slavery (ἀδούλετον) and subjection (ἀνυπότακτον, cf. Diatr. 2.10.1).

4. As we saw above in the example of going for a walk, προαιρέσις rules only over the mind. The physical circumstances in which one finds oneself, and even one’s own body, are outside of one’s control and therefore irrelevant to the moral purpose—even to the extent that Epictetus can say that the rest of the self, apart from the faculty of choice, is “nothing to me” (Diatr. 1.30.3; cf. 3.1.40).

5. Προαιρέσις can refer both, in Engberg-Pedersen’s words, to the “formal capacity” and the “substantive result” (2006: 121): that is, to what we have named above as the “pre-choice” and the “deliberative choice.” What matters, when judging whether a particular προαιρέσις is “good” or “bad,” is the extent to which the individual, in any given situation, identifies him- or herself with all that προαιρέσις signifies, i.e., with its inherent potential for freedom and mastery over the self.

These five elements of the προαιρέσις—“choice” as “critical,” individual, unencumbered, and having to do with the internal, essentially personal orientation of mind, assent, desire and impulse—can be summed up in the idea of philosophy as a calling (Chester 2003: 71-75). For Epictetus, the vicissitudes of life are all chances to bear witness to the power of right προαιρέσις: namely, that the choice to control only that which is in one’s power to control is ultimately what leads to happiness. Every moment, στιγμὴ χρόνου, in the sage’s existence—every juncture, every crisis, every watershed, and above all every hardship—is a “time of calling” (καιρὸς καλοδυτάς, Diatr. 2.1.34): a καιρὸς “to show whether we are educated” (ὁ καιρὸς του ἀποδείξαι, εἰ πεπαιδεύθη; Diatr. 1.29.33). But this word “show” here, ἀποδείξαι, means in fact to show by pointing away from oneself (i.e., ἀπο-), and Deleuze would gloss this as a “pointing away” from the present (Chronos) to the infinite past-future (Aion).

29 See the references collated in Chester 2003: 71 n. 66 in which Epictetus refers to philosophy as a calling: viz., Diatr. 1.29.33; 1.29.46; 1.29.49; 2.1.34; 2.1.39.
In precisely the same way as Epictetus, the martyrs of 4 Macc also consider the hardships of the present moment as a *calling* in which they must “show forth” their education. Antiochus and his guards call Eleazar, the brothers and their mother to live according to their philosophy (4 Macc 8.4, 17; 12.2; cf. 5.6-13; etc.), but the heroes of the work consider this invitation to temporary safety to be beneath them. Instead of the καιρός which true philosophy invites, the tyrant can only offer a πρόσκαιρος: preservation “for a time” (15.2; cf. 15.8, 23), according to the Chronos, instead of the Aión of the “fear of God” (15.8) and “devout reason” (15.23). And rather than heed the tyrant’s call the martyrs are instead obedient to the summons of “religion,” as the sixth brother exclaims: “O contest befitting holiness, in which so many of us brothers have been summoned [κληθέντες] to an arena of sufferings for religion…!” (11.20; cf. 16.16).

It is in this context, we suggest, of the present moment as a καιρός in which to “show forth” one’s right προαίρεσις that the author’s note in 4 Macc 3.19 makes the best sense (author’s translation):

> Already [ἤδη] the time [ὁ καιρός] calls us [ἡµᾶς καλεῖ] to the showing forth [ἐπὶ τὴν ἀπόδειξιν] of the study [τῆς ἱστορίας] of moderate reason [σώφρονος λογισµοῦ].

As we noted in section [1.8] of the introduction to this thesis above, commentators on 4 Macc normally read the τῆς ἱστορίας here in its Aristotelian sense—i.e., as signalling a “narrative demonstration” in 3.20-18.14 of the proposition (ὑπόθεσις, 1.12) that “devout reason is sovereign over the emotions” (1.1; e.g. van Henten 1997: 69). But we suggest that the conjunction of certain key Stoic terms in the verse (καιρός, καλέω, ἀπόδειξις, ἱστορία, etc.) lends a certain plausibility to the explanation we have offered above: i.e., that the author of 4 Macc considers the

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30 Cooper (2010: 12-13) suggests that ἱστορία in Epictetus is capable of the sense of “research”—for example, when the philosopher berates his pupils for studying Chrysippus and the other Stoic authors so intensely without any intention of actually putting their teachings into practice (e.g. *Diatr.* 1.17.13; 3.21.7, 10). This is not necessarily to say that Epictetus had a negative view of this kind of study; on the contrary, as Cooper points out, it is likely that he supposed there was in fact something “to be gained for the improvement of human life in logic, or in detailed knowledge of Stoic ethical or physical theory” (2010: 13). Indeed, Gill (2003: 36), Clarke (2012: 87-88) and Alexander (1990: 245) are all careful to situate Epictetus’ remarks on study in the context of the challenges of being a Stoic teacher (Gill; Clarke) in a culture moving from oral-based to text-based instruction (Alexander).
“present moment” (στιγμή χρόνου) to be a καιρός for his martyrs in which they “point away” to the αἰών. The warrant for our reading is only strengthened when we take into account van Henten’s observation that the phrase κατὰ τοῦτον τὸν καιρὸν in 1.10 “can...be interpreted as a reference to the time of the death of the martyrs” (1997: 62; my emphasis), rather than that of a later anniversary or commemoration (against the NRSV at 1.10; 3.19). The martyrs of 4 Macc act in accordance with the καιρός, and especially the brothers, who remain faithful to their education—their father is also said to live his life by the measure of the καιρός (18.9)—and answer the call of their philosophy in the challenges of the moment. What they accomplish by so doing is, in Deleuzian terms, a counter-actualisation of the other side of “life” (ψυχή): life according to the Aion, life as “floating signified,” impersonal, incorporeal.31 Or better still, as ἄντιψυχος in the Kairos the martyrs play the part of Aaron (see [2.2.1] above) and open up the atonement he made in the present (Chronos) to the past and future (Aion): “between the dead and the living” (cf. Num 16.48), but also “between” every abstract form of death and life imaginable (“life,” “mind,” “soul,” and “spirit,” etc.). And not just “between” but “within”: “over against, opposite,” “against, in opposition to,” “one against another, mutually,” “in return,” “instead of,” “equal to, like,” and “corresponding, counter” to death and life as well, and all at the same time (cf. [3.1] above).

Conclusion

We began in this chapter by asking whether the author of 4 Macc believes in either the immortal life of the soul (section [1.1]) or the bodily life of the resurrection (section [1.2]), and ended up by using the ambiguous answer we received—which we showed to be a problem of the overdetermination of the terms αἰών [1.3] and χρόνος [2.1] in the text (e.g. 17.12, 18)—to interrogate the idea of the ἄντιψυχος. By tracing the Deleuzian series of the Aion and the Chronos in 4 Macc (section [3.1]), we showed that the ἄντιψυχος in the work is an unstable term that unsettles simple conceptualisations of time, life, soul and body on the part of the reader.

31 Cf. Deleuze’s remarks on D/death quoted in n. 20 above.
This instability of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc is, as we have seen in these pages, attributable to two principal causes: 1), its character as a “esoteric” or portmanteau word [3.1]; and 2), its close association in the text with the idea of a καιρός (1.10; 3.19: [3.2.1]-[3.2.2]). In the first place, the ἀντίψυχος as portmanteau word “speaks its own sense”—i.e., is both signifier and signified—because its component parts, ἀντί- and -ψυχή, float freely within the structure, or the dualities or binary oppositions, of the text. This phenomenon, we observed in [3.1], is manifest in the undecidability of the work’s antithesis of “reason” to “desire” (3.16), and, above all, in the martyrs’ antipolitics (4.1), antirhetoric (6.1) and antiphilosophy (8.15). The ἀντί- of the ἀντίψυχος does not merely oppose, as the prefix suggests, but instead points away to an alternative: to all alternatives, in fact. And this “pointing away” led us, in the second place in [3.2.1] and [3.2.2], to consider another aspect of the counter-actualization of the event of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc: namely, its character of προαιρέσις. By acting as good Stoic sages—in responding to the call of the moment (καιρός καλὸντας) to “show forth” or “point away” (ἀποδείξαι) to the pre-choice to which their moral education has led them—the martyrs of the work re-present “what happens” to them in the Chronos according to the time of the Aion.

In other words, not only do the martyrs, as ἀντίψυχος, play the part of Aaron and stand between dead and living bodies (7.11-12; cf. Num 16.46-50; Wis 18.20-25), but they also stand between, and within, death and life as concepts as well. Not only do they “give” their “lives” for the “life” of Israel (4 Macc 6.29; 17.21), but they give, and take (ἀντί-), their “minds,” “souls,” and “spirits” as well (-ψυχή)—in both the now of the eternity (νῦν, 17.18) and the eternity of the now (πολυχρόνιος, 17.12). The “having become” of the ἀντίψυχος (γεγονότας, 17.21) then shifts the focus of this event from a present to a life-giving past and future in which “Death”—with whom the martyrs have “made a bargain” (συνεφώνησαν θάνατον) by letting themselves be affected (or effected) by the “guidance of the mind” (14.6; cf. n. 28 above)—comes to be neutralised and relativised as the horizon, or yardstick, of the meaning of “what happens.”
CHAPTER 4:
BETWEEN MASCULINE AND FEMININE: THE ANDROGYNOUS

Introduction

One of the most intriguing aspects to 4 Macc that catches the reader’s eye even at first glance is the way in which the mother-martyr—a biological woman—is systematically portrayed as a man, and King Antiochus—a biological man—is portrayed as a woman. The mother is lauded at 4 Macc 15.30, for example, as “more noble than males in steadfastness, and more courageous than men in endurance” (cf. 15.23, 28-29; 16.14), while the king—by succumbing to his rage at not being able to break the martyrs’ spirit (8.2; 9.10-11; 10.17)—proves his lack of “manly courage” (ἀνδρεία, 1.4, from ἄνήρ, “man”). What might we say about this dynamic of gender reversal in 4 Macc—that is, about its program of the masculinisation of the mother (and the other martyrs as well, as we shall see) and of the feminisation of Antiochus (and his troops)? In this chapter we will see how this sexual rhetoric in the work is linked to the issue of mastery: to the questions of who is fit to rule politically and of how that rule should be exercised. More importantly for our purposes in this thesis, however, we will also examine how the “masculinisation” of the “feminine” martyrs affects our understanding of the ἀντίψυχος. In short—and to anticipate our conclusion somewhat—we will see, using the theory of communication of Georges Bataille, how the collapse of “male” and “female” in the heroes of 4 Macc leads to the collapse of all distinctions both within the subject (him)self and within the subject-object relation, to the end that the martyrs are able to span not only the masculine-feminine breach but the gap between God and Israel as well.

In the pages to follow we will examine how the author of 4 Macc uses his hyper-masculine martyrs (and their hypo-masculine nemesis) to articulate a response to the two-pronged threat—ever-present in his community—of Jewish apostasy and Greco-Roman cultural hegemony. As we will see, the idea of “masculinity” in his work functions as a kind of synonym for a control over the self, which—over and against

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1 Cf. section [2.4.2] in the Introduction to this thesis above.
2 For more on these twin threats we refer the reader back to section [1.6] in the Introduction to this thesis above.
the control over others represented by Antiochus—he wishes to propose (or retrieve, in fact) as the philosophical basis for model political rule. But we must be wary: not only does “masculinity” function as a kind of figure of speech in his book but it also has connotations in the ancient world very different to those to which we are used today. It is for these reasons that before we move on to the bulk of this chapter—in which we will look at who in 4 Macc is presented as manly or womanly, and why (and how this all relates to the person of the ἀντίψυχος)—it will serve us well to briefly revise the ways in which our modern system of human sexual dimorphism differs from the Greco-Roman “monomorphic” (or androcentric) model of gender construction.

1. “Male” and “female” in antiquity

When we think about men and women and “masculinity” and “femininity” in the ancient world it is vital to remember that Greek and Roman philosophy and medicine were ignorant of the gender dichotomy of “male” and “female” that we know today. Sexuality was, for the ancients, not a difference of kind—male and female as physically and psychologically distinct—but a difference of degree, with male and female bodies each containing a mixture of both typically “male” and “female” characteristics (Martin 1995: 32). Rather than the modern male/female binary, Laqueur (1990: 5-6) and Winkler (1990: 50) both insist on an ancient gender “spectrum” or “continuum”—with masculinity at the privileged end and femininity at the other—along which individual bodies could be situated, and could move according to the proportions of their bodily elements, amongst other things.

According to the philosophical koine in which the author of 4 Macc thinks and writes, the universe is made up of four elements (στοιχεῖα, cf. 4 Macc 12.13): earth, water, fire and air. Each of these macrocosmic principles is also present in the microcosm of the human body, coming and going via the passageways of the body’s pores (πόροι) and thereby influencing the health of the individual’s body and soul. To put it simply, and to take just one example: an excess of water was thought to contribute to the swelling of one body part or another that we would today call an

3 For our argument that Chadwick’s eclectic “philosophical koine” is the principal philosophical influence on the author of 4 Macc, see section [1.10] in the Introduction to this thesis above.
oedema (Martin 1995: 18, 149-50). An excess of fire, to take another instance, was thought to be responsible for the “psychological” condition of madness (a malady afflicting the soul rather than the body; Martin 1995: 19-20, 36). These are very superficial explanations, to be sure, but rather than the intricacies of ancient physiology and disease aetiologies what we are interested in here is grasping the ways in which the elemental composition of a person’s body contributed towards determining their gender status. It is not too much of a stretch from the example of the oedema above to see that water was regarded as a more “material” or “passive” element in the Greco-Roman world, and hence feminine. Fire, on the other hand, was regarded as less material and more “active,” and hence masculine. For the ancients, as Martin (1995: 34) puts it, “the male-female hierarchy reflects the cosmic hierarchy”: those elements understood as “active” and “divine” (in the sense that the soul was thought to be composed of fire or ether, for example) were associated with the masculine, and those understood as “passive” and “material” were linked with the feminine.

Against this brief and necessarily simplified sketch of Greco-Roman physiology it becomes easier to see that human “maleness” and “femaleness” had less to do at this time with anatomy and more to do with the control of the body and soul. Good health in general and masculinity in particular involved the maintenance of a strict equilibrium of hot and cold, dry and moist, hard and soft, active and passive on both the physiological and psychological plane; as we saw above with the connection between the bodily element of fire and the affliction of “madness,” the body’s internal composition was thought to manifest itself also on an emotional and behavioural level. As Galen has it:

The best-blended man [εὐκρατότατος; verum maxime temperatus] is between the extremes of thinness and fatness, softness and hardness, warmth and cold. In soul likewise he is midway between rashness and cowardice, slowness and

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4 Elements other than the balance of earth, water, fire and air came into play, of course, in the questions of the constitution of the body and of the causes of health and sickness. Factors internal to the body such as undigested food, the state of the corporeal fluids and the hardness or softness of the skin were also thought to influence physical wellbeing, as were external factors such as the ambient temperature, air quality, good and bad pneuma and even possession by hostile supernatural forces (Martin 1995: 146-159).
recklessness, pity and envy. He is kind, affectionate, humane, and prudent.

(Περὶ κράσεων [= Temp.] 2.1; quoted in Martin 1995: 36)

Here again we meet evidence of the ancient gender “spectrum” (note the language of “blending”) whose measures are various outward character attributes that reflect the inward balance (or imbalance) of the universal elements. If, then, the Maccabean mother proved she could master the psychological (and hence physical) “extremes” of her inborn womanly nature and so achieve a position of effective masculinity—and Antiochus, by the same token, succumbed to the “disease of femaleness” (θηλεία νόσος) that the ancients thought lay dormant in every biological male (e.g. Philo, Contempl. 60-62; Stowers 1994: 50-51; Osiek and Balch 1997: 56)—who are the models of maleness and femaleness against which they are judged in the work? It is to this question that we now turn.

2. Masculine men in 4 Macc

2.1. King David

As we have already seen at various points in this study, the portrayal of King David in 4 Macc 3.6-16 furnishes an edifying example of the mastery of the physiological and psychological self that is, according to our author, the ultimate proof of masculinity. Even though David exercises control over others, just as Antiochus will—notice, for example, how both leaders are said to have soldiers and other guards at their beck and call (4 Macc 3.12-14; 5.1; etc.)—what matters more for the author of 4 Macc, and what ultimately cements David’s status as a manly man, is that he manages to control himself: to keep his physical “bodily agonies” and psychological “frenzied desires” in check with the help of divine “reason” (3.17-18). Like the πόροι we discussed in [1] above that expose the body to changes in its balance of the cosmic elements, fluids and humours and make it vulnerable to the corresponding mental states, “the passions [τα πάθη, cf. 4 Macc 3.17] are the self’s entryways for being passively acted upon”—“emotions” such as physical pain or emotional anguish, for example (Stowers 1994: 68). But David was able to actively control the bodily and emotional extremes of acute thirst and “irrational desire” (4 Macc 3.10-11) and so maintain the equilibrium in body and soul that corresponds to the active/masculine end of the ancient gender
This presentation of David in 4 Macc as a manly man fully accords with his presentation in the Hebrew Bible, or at least Clines’ reconstruction of it through the prism of modern masculinity studies (1995: 212-41).

2.2. Abraham

In contrast to that of King David, the character of Abraham the patriarch receives no extended treatment in 4 Macc—even if his name and example are repeatedly troped (6.22; 7.14; 16.20; 17.6; 18.11; etc.)—so the reader must read between the lines a little to understand how he functions in the text as a potential model of masculinity. While it is certain that Abraham is held up as an example of (masculine) “fortitude” (15.28) for not yielding to the (feminine) desire to sympathise with one’s children (14.20)—“sympathy” being understood in 4 Macc as the quintessentially material, passive and womanly emotion (e.g. 14.13; 15.4, 23)—there is in fact another, more telling way in which he is depicted as the ideal man. Elsewhere in the Maccabean literature (1 Macc 12.2-23; 14.20-23; 15.23; 2 Macc 5.9; cf. Josephus, A.J. 12.225-27) reference is made to the myth, which gained quite a wide currency at the time, that Jews and Spartans shared a common kinship (Stowers 1994: 63). In the letter supposedly sent from the Spartan king Arius to the high priest Onias, for instance, Jews and Spartans are said to be “brothers” descended from the “family of Abraham” (1 Macc 12.21). Did the author of 4 Macc also believe that Abraham was in some measure responsible for the Spartan constitution (which, although given by Lycurgus, was thought to be “of divine rather than human origin”) and thus more “brave,” “valorous,” and masculine than the citizens it was said to produce (cf. Polybius, Plb. 6.48.2-4)? What is certain is that the martyrs of 4 Macc—“children” of father Abraham (6.17, 22; 14.20; 15.28; etc.)—actually show forth the “endurance”

Additional proof of the exemplarity of David’s masculinity in 4 Macc is supplied by his repeated characterisation as king (3.6, 10, 12, 14; cf. 3.8), a feature that van Henten calls “a striking addition to the underlying text of 2 Sam. 23.13-17” (1997: 267). This title links David to the “one who lives subject to [the law]” and thereby becomes “king” of the self in 4 Macc 2.22-23 [23]; in a similar way to Galen’s “well-tempered man” (see section [1] above), David, as a man ruled by divine reason, is “temperate, just, good, and courageous” (2.23; cf. 3.17).

In 4 Macc 14.13, for example, maternal love and sympathy are said to originate in the “inmost parts” (τα σπλάγχα = “belly”; cf. 15.23, where in the NSRV the word is inadequately translated as “heart”), which, since it was thought to be the well-spring of all the emotions (apart, perhaps, from anger), the ancients regarded as the most important bodily site to master (Stowers 1994: 69). In 15.4 we read that “because of their birth pangs [mothers] have a deeper sympathy toward their offspring than do the fathers”—a sentiment that underscores the connection between the belly, the material, and the feminine.

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(καρτερία; 1.11; 5.23; 6.9, 13; 7.9; 9.8, 30; 11.12; 17.10; etc.) of physical and emotional extremes for which the Spartans had only an undeserved reputation, at least according to Josephus (C. Ap. 2.225, 228, 273; Mason 2008: 86).

2.3. Moses

Despite the fact that Abraham is said to be the progenitor of Jews and Spartans in various Second Temple period texts (e.g. 1 and 2 Macc, Josephus), Stowers suggests that the real comparison to be made in terms of bravery, courage and manliness is between Moses and Lycurgus, the Spartan lawgiver whose name was a veritable byword for self-discipline (1994: 63). Feldman (2006b: 539-47) picks up the texts in Philo and Josephus that provide the grist for this comparison: in Spec. 4.102 (quoted in Feldman 2006b: 539), for example, Philo says that Moses, in giving his law, “opened up a path midway” between the extremes of “rigorous austerity” as represented by Lycurgus, on the one hand, and of “dainty living” and “luxurious and voluptuous practices” as represented by the Ionians and Sybarites, on the other, with the implication that this careful equilibrium makes the Jewish legislator more of a man than any of them. The picture given of Moses by the author of 4 Macc is, we suggest, much the same as Philo’s, and for much the same reasons: for even though Moses is only a peripheral character in the work—after figuring, like David, in the “biblical” examples of masculine self-control in the preface (4 Macc 2.17-18), his name is barely mentioned again (only in 9.2; 17.19; 18.18-19)—he is given the weighty title of σύµβουλος (9.2), a position of political leadership (“advisor” or “counsellor”) that contrasts directly with the “tyrant” and “counsellor of lawlessness” Antiochus (9.3; Whitmarsh 2001: 287; Too 1995: 128-29; 149-50; 206-7).

There is a further way in which Moses was portrayed as the epitome of manliness in Second Temple literature that, we argue, may lie beneath his characterisation in 4 Macc. The portrait drawn of the prophet in Philo’s On the Life of Moses will, at any rate—indeed of any question of its influence on 4 Macc—cause us to rethink slightly the model of masculinity as self-control that we sketched in section [1] above. Specifically, our refinements to the paradigm of manly self-mastery have to do with the tension that Martin observes in the “wider Greco-Roman ideology of moderation and the mean”: in the way that the “perfect” embodied individual is situated both at
the mid-point of the spectrum of essences and emotions and, at the same time, at the masculine extreme of the ancient gender continuum (1995: 35). So it is that Moses, for Philo, excels in manliness not only because he masters the physical and emotional extremes, but also because he excels in the physical beauty of a fully-grown biological male. Not only is he said to have “tamed and assuaged and reduced [the passions] to mildness” (Mos. 1.26; quoted in Conway 2008: 54), but also he had “an appearance of more than ordinary beauty [ἀστειοτέραν]” that only increased as he matured in virtue (Mos. 1.9; quoted in Johnson 1992: 125)\(^7\). Above and beyond manly self-control, then, masculine physical beauty is a quality for which we will have to be on the lookout as we seek to understand the gender rhetoric in 4 Macc\(^8\).

3. Feminine women: Dinah and Eve

It will be clear by now that in the context of the ancient world it makes little sense to speak of “models” or “ideals” of “femininity” at least as that last word is understood today; as we have seen, both biological womanliness and womanly behaviour were generally regarded as an indignity at best and a “disease” at worst. But still we must ask ourselves, for the purposes of our analysis: who occupies the feminine pole of the gender spectrum of 4 Macc, supplying the foil to that woman-turned-man, the mother-martyr, and that man-turned-woman, the king Antiochus?

Close attention to the scriptural references in 4 Macc reveals the presence of a number of women who exemplify the innate feminine passivity that the author calls “weakness” or “timidness” of soul (women are called the “weaker sex” [ἁσθενόψυχοι] in 15.5, and mention is made in 16.5 of the Maccabean mother having risen above the stereotype of the “fainthearted” [δειλόψυχος] mother)\(^9\). The ghost of Dinah, for example, haunts the examples from sacred history in the introductory

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\(^7\) For further examples and analysis see Conway 2008: 53-58.

\(^8\) By mapping masculinity and femininity in 4 Macc on the twin axes of self-control and physical beauty we are departing somewhat from the principal study as yet attempted on the theme, that of Moore and Anderson (2010), who analyse 4 Macc from the perspective of masculinity as self-control only (for more on which study, see section [4] below).

\(^9\) On the difficulties of translating 16.5, and the question of whether or not it is irretrievable from the point of view of a feminist hermeneutic, see Moore and Anderson 2010: 192-93 (esp. 192 n. 38); deSilva 2006c: 261 n. 25.
section to the work (2.19; Gen 34; 49.7)\textsuperscript{10}, and the epithet “mother of the nation” ( BCHP mήτηρ ἔθνους) applied to the mother at 15.29 may recall the figure of Rachel (Jer 31.15)\textsuperscript{11}. But no biblical female, we suggest, so typifies the “mind of woman” (4 Macc 14.11-12) as does Eve, to whose story the mother-martyr alludes in her address of 18.6-16:

“I was a pure virgin and did not go outside my father’s house; but I guarded the rib from which woman was made [ἐφύλασσον δὲ τὴν ϕύσικον ομομένην πλευρὰν]. No seducer corrupted me on a desert plain, nor did the destroyer, the deceitful serpent, defile the purity of my virginity…” (18.7-8)

Juxtaposing these two verses with a similar passage in Philo—also based on the second account of the creation of man and woman in Genesis (2.4b-25)—helps us to see how the author of 4 Macc expected ordinary women to think and behave. As Romney Wegner points out (1991: 45-52 [48]), throughout his midrashim Philo consistently identifies man with the attributes of mind (νοῦς) and reason (λόγος) and woman with those of body (σῶμα) and sense-perception (αἴσθησις). But it is the story of the creation of Eve from Adam’s rib (Gen 2.22-23) that provides him with the cornerstone of his argument:

“He built it up into a woman” (Gen 2.22) proving that the most proper and exact name for sense-perception (αἴσθησις) is “woman.” For just as the man shows himself in activity [i.e., receiving both flesh and the “breath of life,” πνεῦμα, Gen 2.7], and the woman in passivity [i.e., receiving flesh only, 2.22], so the province of the mind (νοῦς) is activity and that of the perceptive sense (αἴσθησις) passivity…. (Leg. 2.38; quoted in Romney Wegner 1991: 48)

As Philo has just explained, the very phenomenon of femininity itself—in the allegory, the particular female Eve—are what happens when the male—in this case, Adam—goes to sleep (cf. Gen 2.21), and masculine mind, reason, pro-activity and self-discipline are inhibited from functioning:

\textsuperscript{10} In the light of what comes below on the essence of femininity (or non-masculinity) in the ancient world consisting in absolute passivity and absolute penetrability, the example of Dinah—said to have been sexually violated by Shechem (Gen 34)—takes on a tragic, if illuminating, poignancy.

\textsuperscript{11} For more on this see Chapter 7, section [2.1.2] of this thesis below.
For it was requisite that the creation of mind [i.e., Adam] should be followed immediately by that of sense-perception [Eve], to be a helper and ally to it [cf. Gen 2.18-20]… How is [sense-perception], then, produced?… [I]t is when the mind has fallen asleep. As a matter of fact it is when the mind has gone to sleep that perception begins, for conversely when the mind wakes up perception is quenched. (Leg. 2.24-25; quoted in Boyarin 2003: 28)

So it is that “Eve”—for both Philo and also, we might say, for the author of 4 Macc—comes to epitomise the body as opposed to soul, the sense faculties as opposed to mind, passivity as opposed to activity, self-indulgence as opposed to self-vigilance, female as opposed to male. She also represents sin as opposed to virtue for, as Romney Wegner observes Philo venturing elsewhere, it was because of feminine bodily passivity that the serpent seduced Eve rather than Adam:

Pleasure [i.e., the serpent] does not venture to bring her wiles and deceptions to bear on the man, but on the woman, and by her means on him…. [F]or in us mind corresponds to man, the sense to woman; and pleasure encounters…the senses first, and through them cheats…the sovereign mind itself… (Opif. 165; quoted in Romney Wegner 1991: 48-49)\(^\text{12}\)

David, Abraham and Moses as “masculine” men, then, and Dinah and Eve as “feminine” women: such are the two extremes of the gender continuum of 4 Macc. How do Antiochus and his men, on the one hand, and the martyr-heroes, on the other, measure up?

4. Feminine men and masculine “women”

4.1. The feminisation of Antiochus and his troops

From the moment of his first appearance in 4 Macc, Antiochus, king of the vast Seleucid empire, is presented not as an enlightened, temperate and beneficent ruler but as an

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\(^\text{12}\) This parallel is of considerable interest with regard to the question of what extent the author of 4 Macc attempts to refeminise his once masculinised mother-martyr in 18.6-19. *Pace* Moore and Anderson (2010: 195-99), the mother—in keeping “the destroyer, the deceitful serpent” from defiling “the purity of [her] virginity” (18.8) and resisting her inherent feminine nature in everything except pain—does not return to the absolute baseline of femininity here, as we will show in more detail below [4.2].
“arrogant and terrible man” (4.15). As we saw with the example of David above [2.1], the ancient Greco-Roman king was expected to have gained control over the interior “kingdom” of the self, having subdued all its passions, before he could effectively govern his exterior realm. The temptations otherwise, as Dio Chrysostom relates, are just too great: if he is not vigilant, because he can have anything, he will crave everything, and because he is subject to no higher authority—as ordinary people are subject to the laws and to their masters—he will, if he is not on his guard, succumb to his pleasure-seeking, sensuous, feminine side (Regn. tyr. 62.2; see [3] above; Ivarsson 2007: 168, 177). But this is the fate that befalls Antiochus just as soon as he steps on stage in 4 Macc: just as Dio’s tyrant, the despot Antiochus is unjust, violent, carnal, ill-tempered, and full of rage, as we are about to see. But right from the beginning of our analysis of our author’s program of the feminisation of Antiochus it is worth bearing in mind two questions that have special relevance for our project here: of how totalising the gender reversal of the Seleucid king is—i.e., whether our author allows any typically “masculine” traits to remain in his finished pen portrait—and of the extent to which his literary castration is attributable to the martyrs in their character as ἀντίψυχος.

Our introduction to the figure of Antiochus in 4 Macc comes in the prefatory episode of the intrigues around the high priesthood on the death of King Seleucus, in which the “conservative” Onias is replaced by the “progressive” brother, Joshua/Jason (4.15-18). Antiochus’ part in the coup (which was a conspiracy largely attributable to underlying tensions in the Jewish community\(^\text{13}\), which the king exploited to his ends) is interpreted as being the fruit of his greed: he appoints Jason “high priest and ruler of the nation” (4.18) because this helleniser had agreed to pay him “three thousand six hundred sixty talents annually” (3.17; cf. the mention of Jason obtaining the office “by corruption” in 2 Macc 4.7). Antiochus therefore, even before the appearance of the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος (Eleazar is rounded up and interrogated from 5.4), is depicted as being incapable of self-control, and therefore tending towards the feminine: he has already fallen prey to the passions of avarice (φιλαργυρία) and miserliness (φειδωλία) which divine reason is meant to keep in check (2.8-9). “Manly” self-rule, epitomised in 4 Macc as a life lived in accordance with the law,

\(^{13}\) For more on this “conspiracy” see section [1.6] in the Introduction to this thesis above.
“subdues” by force (βιάζεται, 2.8) and “rules” over (κρατεῖται, 2.9) feminine natural instincts and above all, self-interest (τρόπος, 2.8)—precisely in the same manner in which law (or social convention, νόμος) “subdues” (βιάζεται) human nature (φύσις), according to Hippias (Plato, Prot. 337c-d), and the king exercises κράτος. But the self- and societal (un)rule practised by Antiochus, far from being a κράτος of men characterised by “legitimate authority, [as in] the influence which a teacher rightfully exerts on his pupil,” is a κράτος of women, characterised by “brute force, the constraint of violence at the furthest remove from law and justice” (Vernant 2007: 275-76 n. 2)\(^{14}\).

His greed and abuses of power apart, Antiochus is also feminised in 4 Macc in the measure in which he is depicted as seducing the Maccabean martyrs away from virtue and into temptation. Moore and Anderson (2010: 184) go so far as to suggest that the king is “temptation incarnate” when he tries to convince Eleazar to eat pork and thereby save himself (5.5-13), when he tries to assure the seven brothers of his admiration and respect for them (and to offer them positions of authority in his government [8.3-14]), and when he offers the last boy his “friendship” (a term for political favour) if only he will yield to persuasion (12.3-5; cf. 8.5). Inspired, masculine self-discipline, however, cannot be tempted: because reason is sovereign over both mental and physical desires, checks bodily appetites and bridles the bodily impulses, it is possible to abstain from the pleasure of eating forbidden foods—seafood and fowl and other non-kosher animals (1.30-35). Moreover, those who practice the self-control mandated by the Torah have no need of the patronage of kings, since God himself is their patron (7.19; 15.24; 16.18-22; 17.2-3; deSilva 1998: 127-31 [128]). A feminine lack of control, on the other hand, both gives birth to and perpetuates this kind of sensual indulgence. Antiochus personifies this in his advice to the brothers that they “ἐντρυφήσατε ταῖς νεότητις ὑμῶν” (8.8): an exhortation (rather blandly, and inaccurately, rendered in the NRSV as “enjoy your youth”) that literally means something like “luxuriate in youth’s delights” (an invitation to which, of course, the brothers will pay no heed: cf. 8.23). For as Stowers reminds us (1994: 50; his emphasis): “Luxury [τρυφή] was a code word for a whole range of such qualities

\(^{14}\) Here Vernant is reading the Suppliant Maidens of Aeschylus, contrasting the κράτος of King Pelasgos—who supports the claim of the sons of Aegyptus to marry their cousins, the daughters of Danaus, being as they are their closest relatives—with the κράτος of the Danaïdes themselves, who take the law into their own hands and murder the men.
as softness, weakness, being subject to emotion, uncontrollable desire, and lack of toughness and discipline that were supposedly characteristic of women.”

The fourth and final way in which the biological man Antiochus becomes a woman in 4 Macc is through the recurring motif of him being unable to control his rage. After having been “conspicuously defeated” by Eleazar because he was unable to compel the old priest to apostatise, the king explodes in a fit of bad temper (σφόδρα περιπαθῶς) and commands that other Jews be brought before him and made to eat pork, under pain of even crueler tortures should they refuse (4 Macc 8.2). His bad humour only deteriorates progressively as the story goes on (cf. his threat in 8.9 to unleash his anger should the martyrs prove disobedient): the speech in which the seven brothers plead their case—“all with one voice together, as from one mind” (8.29-9.9)—is said to so incense him that “[he] was not only indignant [οὐ μόνον… ἐχαλέπαινεν]… but also infuriated [ ἄλλα καὶ… ὀργίσθη]” (9.10), and the insolence of the fourth brother, in particular, turns him “bloodthirsty, murderous, and utterly abominable” (αἱμοβόρος καὶ φονόδης καὶ παμμισθατός; 10.12-17 [17]). This total incapacity of Antiochus to master the “passion” of anger and maintain a masculine emotional equilibrium is driven home in the author’s summary of the martyrs’ achievement, where mention is made of him having acted for the duration of the tortures in a “burning rage” (ζέουσι θημοίς, 18.20). The point is that the tyrant fails to act with the reason—or, for the author of 4 Macc, the “divine” reason inculcated by Torah—that, even if cannot totally eradicate anger from the mind, helps a person to manage it (3.3). Those who live according to reason, such as Moses (2.16-17) and Jacob (2.19-20), prove themselves to be manly men (see section [2.3] above) because “courage” (ἀνδρεία) and rage are inversely related, according to 1.4; here anger, fear and pain are said to all stand in the way of “manliness”15. Those who let their passions run rampant, on the other hand—anger being an “emotion” just like any other (1.24)—prove themselves to be eminently “unmanly” (5.31; 6.21; 8.16).

Not only does King Antiochus prove unable to control his emotions, but as Moore and Anderson point out (2010: 181), the tyrant’s fury also infects his subordinates. After

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15 As we have observed elsewhere in this thesis (see, for e.g., section [2.4.2] in the Introduction above), Moore and Anderson translate ἀνδρεία as “manliness” (from ἄνηρ, “man”)—a deft exegetical manoeuvre that brings into sharp relief the great extent to which “4 Maccabees is about what it means to be a “true man”” (2010: 179).
first having beaten and flogged Eleazar to within an inch of his life, the king’s guards apparently relent and offer him their “pity,” “sympathy,” and “admiration” by counselling him to save himself by pretending to eat pork (4 Macc 6.12-15). As soon as he refuses to take their “compassionate” advice, however, they succumb to their rage and torture him even more ferociously (with more “maliciously contrived instruments,” κακοτέχνων ὀργάνων, 6.24-25). The soldiers’ ire then gradually increases: not only, for example, does the third brother’s retort especially make them “thoroughly infuriated” (πικρῶς ἐνέγκατες, 10.5; Moore and Anderson 2010: 181), but mention is also made of them scalpng the boy “with their fingernails in a Scythian fashion” (10.7). Given that “[g]ender transgression, particularly male effeminacy…is a common characterization for ancient barbarians…in ethnographic literary representation” in antiquity—and that Scythians were the barbarians *par excellence* for both the ancient Greeks and Romans (Lopez 2010: 78, 91-92, 100, 104, 213 n. 83 [104])—it is with this allusion that the author of 4 Macc most potently effects his feminisation of the guards and their king. Lopez (2010: 213 n. 83) mentions the “androgynous shamans” of the Scythians (the so-called *enarees, Ἔναρέες*) who gained a certain fame in the ancient world for their “hermaphroditic” appearance (see e.g. Herodotus, *Hist.* 1.105; 4.67), but there are other texts that attest to the extent to which the labels “Scythian” and “androgynous” were closely related. The Hippocratic treatise Περὶ ἀέρων, ύδατων, τόπων (*On Airs, Waters, Places*), for example, describes Scythians (of both sexes) as “the most effeminate race of all mankind,” owing to their moist, soft, cold, hairless, flabby bodies, their sluggish minds, and their aversion to hard work (*On Airs* 17-22, quoted in Mayhew 2004: 110-11). Due to their (at least rhetorical) association with the “open, leaky, grotesque” Scythian body—as opposed to the (apparently) “closed, finished, classical” bodies of the martyrs—the guards of Antiochus, *as well as Antiochus himself*, become the victims of a feminising strategy that proceeds according to a logic by which “women are the natural grotesques” (Floyd-Wilson 2004: 134-35 [134])16.

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16 With regard to the association between Antiochus’ soldiers, the Scythians, and Antiochus himself: Aristotle in the *Nicomachean Ethics* specifically suggests that softness is hereditary in the Scythian royal family (*Eth. nic.* 1150b14-15), which would provide the connection, perhaps, with the king Antiochus. With respect to the *apparently* “closed, finished, classical” bodies of the martyrs, at least in the rhetoric of the author of 4 Macc: such a portrait would seem to be justified by verses such as 4 Macc 6.2, where Eleazar is described, despite the violence of his torturers, as remaining “adorned with the beauty of his piety” (ἐγκομοσύνην τῇ περὶ τὴν εὐσέβειαν εὐσχημοσύνῃ)—but as we will have occasion to see below in this chapter [4.2] and again elsewhere in this thesis (see, for e.g., Chapter 5 below), the bodies of the martyrs are anything but intact and impenetrable.
The foregoing analysis has confirmed our original hypothesis that King Antiochus and his guards (and retinue) are thoroughly feminised at the hands of the author of 4 Macc, but we are yet to discuss in adequate detail the extent and the timing of this symbolic “castration” (whether before or after the heroics of the martyrs). With regard to the first question: it is clear, from what we have seen here, that 4 Macc consists in large part of a sustained and systematic attempt to portray the tyrant and his henchman as utterly incapable of the rigorous self-control and physical and emotional self-maintenance—that is, of the “masculinity”—that is the prerequisite of effective political control (as well as the fruit of a life lived in accordance with the Torah).

Whatever the historical reasons for such a rhetoric connecting only Judaism and manly self-control may be, what interests us here is that Antiochus and his troops slip a considerable distance down the ancient gender gradient towards what is, for all intents and purposes, an effective “femininity” on their part. What is not as certain is the answer to the second question posed above: to what extent the martyrs (as opposed to the author) are responsible for their lack of self-discipline and manliness. For even if the bravery and effrontery of Eleazar, the seven brothers and their mother provide the immediate provocation at which Antiochus capitulates to his lust for power, sensuality and rage, and his soldiers to their “Scythian” ferocity, we must also take account of the fact that, at various points in the work, the Seleucids are revealed to harbour an admiration for the “manliness” and “endurance” displayed by the martyrs (4 Macc 1.11; 6.11-13; 17.11-17). In 17.23-24 in particular Antiochus proclaims the martyrs (and the “manliness” of their virtue, ἄνδρείαν αὐτῶν τῆς ἁρετῆς) to his soldiers “as an example for their own endurance [ὑπομονή],” and this is said to make the troops “noble and manly” (γενναίους καὶ ἀνδρείους) and to bring them many decisive victories. One thing, though, is clear: even if the Seleucids fall short of the kind of manly “manliness” modelled in 4 Macc by King David, Abraham and Moses—and are to be situated instead closer to the “femininity” of Dinah and Eve (see above)—we have no need to attribute this fact to the martyrs in their capacity as ἀντίψυχος.

On this point, Stowers has an interesting take on Second Temple literature more generally that is persuasive with regard to 4 Maccabees in particular: at the time of the “moral revolution” launched by Augustus following his defeat of Mark Anthony and Cleopatra, and immediately after, “Jews suffered a great disadvantage in comparison to other ethnicities in articulating their relation to Rome…[and in] displaying their loyalty and fitness for local self-rule. If Jews could not promote the imperial cult, they could…present themselves as a uniquely self-mastered people; a people with just the sort of virtue valorized in the Augustan ideology. It comes as no surprise…that Jewish writings from the early empire…place great emphasis on an ethic of self-mastery and present the Jewish law as a means to that goal” (1994: 52-58 [57]).
4.2. The masculinisation of the martyrs

Even if Antiochus and his men are not turned into women by the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος as such, their feminising at the hands of the author of 4 Macc does provide a highly effective counterpoint to the heights of virile “manliness”—ironically and apparently—displayed by the Jewish children, their mother and the elderly priest in the work.

But in what does the masculinity of the Maccabean martyrs apparently consist? In the first place, it involves what Moore and Anderson call “their astonishing imperviousness to physical pain” (2010: 186). Verses that attest to the extent to which the martyrs have conquered the “passions” of the physical suffering and emotional disquiet (4 Macc 1.20-24, 28) abound in the work: apart from the general summaries (such as at 1.9 and 18.3), we could cite the examples of Eleazar’s triumphant assertion that by bearing the “pains” (πόνους), scorning the “punishment” and enduring the “tortures” of the guards (6.1-30 [9]) he has proven that reason “has mastered” (κεκρατήκεναι) bodily “agonies” (ἀλγηδόνων, 6.35); the sixth brother’s declaration that both he and his siblings have not been “defeated” (οὐκ ἐνικήθημεν) in the “exercise of pains” (γυμνασίαν πόνων) in which they have engaged (11.20); and the mother’s conviction, which she imparts successfully to her sons, that “it is unreasonable for people who have religious knowledge not to withstand pain [πόνοις]” (16.23-24 [23]). All of this underscores the thesis, set out explicitly at the very beginning of 4 Macc, that “fear” (φόβος) and “pain” (πόνος)—like anger (see [4.1] above)—are so many obstacles to be overcome on the path towards “manliness” (ἀνδρεία, 1.4)\(^\text{18}\).

But is it really the case that the martyrs conquer their physical sensibility to the same extent as does David, for example, that paragon of the manly man (who is also said to suffer, and overcome, extreme “bodily agonies” [σωμάτων ἀλγηδόνως], 4 Macc 3.18)? The apparent insusceptibility to pain of the nine is summed up, we might say,\(^{18}\)

\(^{18}\) For more on the connection between immunity to pain—physical and emotional—and masculinity see, for example, Glancy’s reading of the Odes of Solomon 19 (in connection, precisely, with this aspect of 4 Macc). With regard to the verses—“...she labourd and bore the Son but without pain, [...] / She bore as a strong man with desire...” Odes Sol. 19.8, 10—Glancy writes, “[t]he painlessness of the birth makes sense within an ancient worldview where endurance of pain correlates...with valorous masculinity” (2010: 98).
in 11.26, where the sixth brother tells Antiochus that “your fire is cold to us, and the catapults painless [ἀπονοί], and your violence powerless.” On this verse, but in the light of verses such as 11.11 and 14.9-10, deSilva comments:

…[T]he narrator asserts that the fifth brother was “in anguish of body” (11.11), affirming that the brothers [and their mother, e.g. 15.7, 16] actually experienced the most intense kinds of sufferings (14.9-10)...The sixth brother’s taunt...therefore must constitute a hyperbolic expression of the tyrant’s impotence to compel them to act against their will [i.e., he is “powerless” [ἀδόνατος] to do so, 11.26].... It is not a report about the martyr’s lack of physical sensation. (2006c: 264 n. 36)

The confusion expressed by Moore and Anderson (2010: 186) in wondering why the author of 4 Macc never uses the technical Stoic terms ἀπάθεια (“freedom from emotion”) and ἀναισθησία (“lack of sensation”) can hereby be resolved. It is the case that the author of 4 Macc never uses these words simply because the martyrs do not reach these states—and, in that sense, we must say that the author’s desire to masculinise his heroes (who, as young boys, a woman, and an elderly person must, to begin with, be situated some way down the gender gradient; see in this section below) remains incomplete, to a certain extent.

In a similar way to that in which the martyrs are presented as manfully controlling their physical and emotional pain, they are also depicted as manfully keeping their other desires, emotions, and appetites in check, if now to a more convincing extent. As Moore and Anderson point out (2010: 181), Eleazar affirms before the king that

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19 Not to mention that the only other use in 4 Macc of the related term ἀπονοία (“freedom from pain”)—or, more precisely, of its derivative ἀνάονον (literally, “senselessness”)—is put in the mouth of Antiochus as an insult to the brothers: to the seventh brother the tyrant says, “You see the result of your brothers’ stupidity [ἀπονοῖα], for they died in torments because of their disobedience” (12.3).

20 In essence, the question here is whether or not the seemingly interminable wounds, bruises, cuts, gashes, tears, contusions, lesions and gougings suffered by the martyrs in 4 Macc should be interpreted as so many honourable, masculine war wounds or as shameful, feminine disfigurements. Even though Moore and Anderson are correct to say that 4 Macc is “saturated” with military imagery (2010: 186), this saturation cannot compare with the absolute drenching of pain, agony, suffering, torment, anguish and bodily trauma the reader finds in the work, even apart from the particular verses they cite (7.4; 9.18, 23-24; 16.14; 17.16-24). The kind of whippings, floggings and beatings the martyrs suffer (6.1-11, 24-30; 9.10-11.27; 15.15-20; 18.20-21; etc.) are to be considered a slave’s fate rather than a hero’s, for as Glancy puts it: “Whippability was a token not of honor, excellence, or virility, but of dishonor, abasement, and servility” (2004: 134; cf. Lopez 2010: 138, 232 n. 67).
the Torah “teaches us self-control, so that we master all pleasures and desires, and it also trains us in manliness [ἀνδρεία]” (5.23). To live by the Torah is to be a manly man, and if the martyrs abstain from those foods forbidden by the law, especially seafood, fowl, and pork (1.33-35)—as indeed they do, despite the best efforts of the self-indulgent Antiochus (5.1-3, 6-9; 8.2, 12; 13.2-3; see [4.1] above)—it follows that they are to be counted with David (who contained his burning desire for water, 3.15-16) as exemplars of the manliest masculinity.

Above and beyond their cravings for delicious yet non-kosher foods (4 Macc 1.34), the principal affections that the martyrs as portrayed as getting the better of are the emotions that arise out of familial love. At first glance, however, it seems as if we are before a contradiction similar to the one we encountered above with respect to the martyrs’ “triumph” over physical and emotional anguish (cf. Tobin 1993: 1819): for despite our author’s outwardly unmistakeable comment that “[the brothers] not only despised their agonies [ἄλγηδόνων], but they also mastered the emotions of brotherly love [τὴν φιλαδελφίας παθῶν]” (14.1), the children, at least, are still depicted as acting out of the ties of “brotherhood” (ἀδελφότης, e.g. 9.23; 10.15; 13.19-27). But this apparent paradox can be explained by recourse to the analysis of deSilva (1998: 69-70) and Klauck (1990: 155). For the fact is that there are two contemporary standards of fraternal affection at play here: one, the Greco-Roman broadly understood, in which the emotions of siblinghood were thought to be due to the fact of children having two parents in common, being nursed by the same mother, and growing up and being educated in the same home (Xenophon, Cyr. 8.7.14; Plutarch, Mor. 478-90; cf. 4 Macc 10.2-3; 13.19-21; 15.4-5; 18.10-19); and the other, the Jewish, in which “discipline in the law of God,” as well as “common nurture” and “daily companionship,” was thought to be responsible for brotherly love (4 Macc 13.22, 24, 26-27). By the logic of the first, according to Klauck, it would have been expected, and permissible, for the brothers “to save their lives for one another’s sake by eating meat offered to idols” (1990: 155), but brotherly love in Judaism—“through its connection to the law…[a] qualitatively more valuable and…more powerful image than is understood and practiced elsewhere” (Klauck 1990: 154)—only leaves room for the death of each of the siblings for the sake of virtue (Lee 2006: 179-81). This means, with respect to the question of whether or not the brothers proved themselves
truly “men” by conquering the emotions of family ties, that they did in fact do so—in philosophical, as opposed to religious, terms.21

Not only do the brothers master the passions of fraternal love but the mother, too, conquers the emotions of maternal affection. Despite the fact that a mother’s love is described by our author as a highly complex, deep-seated and intensely felt sentiment (4 Macc 14.13)—more powerful, more profound and more passionate, it seems, than any other physical or emotional sensation (15.4-9, etc.)—the Maccabean mother is said to have “despised the fiercest tortures” and “quenched so many and such great emotions” (κατέσβεσεν τὰ τοσάδα καὶ τηλικαῖα πάθη) as the burning flames of her “innate parental love” (τῆς φιλοτεκνίας περιέκαι ἐκείνην φύσις, 16.1-4; cf. 15.23). In acting in this way the mother is following the law that prevails over even conjugal, familial and friendly love (2.9b-13). And it is the law, in fact—the supreme trainer of “manliness,” as we saw with Eleazar above (5.23)—that through “devout reason” is said explicitly to “fill” the mother’s heart “with [a man’s] courage” (ἀνδρεῖοω, 15.23).

Now that we have considered the ways in which the martyrs apparently control their physical and psychological “passions” we may now consider the other way in which the author of 4 Macc seeks to “masculinise” them: that is, by depicting them as transcending their elderly, juvenile and feminine minds and bodies. Because manliness in the ancient world was not just a matter of disciplined self-control, as we have already seen in this chapter—but encompassed also the attainment of a masculine physique (see section [2.3] above, pace Moore and Anderson 2010: 182)—the degree to which the elderly priest, the children and their mother manage to transform their naturally cold, soft, moist and passive bodies will determine the extent to which they really become true “men.”

In the first place, then, with respect to Eleazar: our author’s desire to turn him into a manly man is well encapsulated in 4 Macc 7.13-14a: “...though he was an old man, his body no longer tense and firm, his muscles flabby, his sinews feeble, he became

21 Adapting deSilva’s argument here, we could say that, in this sense, fraternal love in Judaism—rather than being a simple adaptation of brotherly affection as understood by Greeks and Romans—approximates much more closely the Aristotelian ideal of “virtuous friendship” (1998: 69-70; Eth. nic. 1159b3-7—and hence is not a “passion” to be conquered by manly men.
young again in spirit through reason….” As we have already seen in these pages (see section [1] above), this kind of physical slackness and flaccidity, characteristic of old age, was associated with femininity; in “becoming young again” (.Receiveworth) however, Eleazar becomes again the “young man” (Receiveworth) who is not a “boy” (Receiveworth), a “youth” (Receiveworth) or an old man (Receiveworth) but a real “man” (Receiveworth) in the prime of his manhood (Diogenes Laertius, Life of Pythagoras 10 [= D.L. 8.10, quoted in Cobb 2008: 77). Thus it is the case that Eleazar is able to demonstrate his properly masculine self-discipline, resistance and firmness after all, for as our author observes: even when the Seleucid soldiers stripped him naked, “he remained adorned with the gracefulness [Receiveworth] of his piety” (6.2), and even though he fell to the ground for all the beatings “he kept his reason upright [Receiveworth] and unswerving [Receiveworth]” (6.7).

Like the old priest, the seven brothers in 4 Macc are also portrayed as overcoming the limitations of their innately less-than-virile bodies. Even though some of the brothers are said to have been married (16.9), they are still described collectively as “boys” (Receiveworth) by the sixth brother, himself only a “mere boy” (11.13, 24; cf. 8.1, 14). At various points in the work they are also described as νεανίσκοι (“youths,” 13.7; 14.12, 20; 16.17), i.e., not quite full-grown men in the prime of life (which, according to Diogenes, Pythagoras believed corresponded to an age of between about forty to sixty; Cobb 2008: 77). Their adolescent lack of physical development apart, though, Antiochus is said to be impressed by the “dignity” (Receiveworth) and “integrity” (Receiveworth) of the brothers, and admiring of their “beauty” (Receiveworth), from the moment they first appear before him (8.4-5). And here we have the first evidence of the brothers’ effective launching into fully-fledged manhood, independent of their actual age, as a striking similar passage in Nicolaus of Damascus’ Life of Augustus (Receiveworth) suggests:

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22 According to LSJ: s.v., the word also has the connotation of “proper treatment” or “adequate maintenance”—suggesting a parallel with the whole idea of vigilance and maintenance of the (masculine) self.

23 Cobb (2008: 77-78 [77]) suggests that “[y]oung men were sometimes associated with women because they lacked secondary masculine attributes such as beards, body hair and deep voices.” She cites Aristotle here in support: “A boy is like a woman in form and a woman is like an infertile male” (Gen. an. 728a).
He [Octavian] came down into the Forum…so that he might lay aside at that time the purple-edged toga [i.e., *toga praetexta*] and assume the pure white toga [*toga virilis*], which is the symbol of enrolment in manhood. He was gazed upon by all the people because of his fine appearance [*εὐπρεπεία*] and the brilliance of his high birth [*εὐγενεία*]… (*Bios* 9, quoted in Dolansky 2008: 52-53)

The seven brothers, therefore—though their bodies, by their very nature, tend more towards the undeveloped, soft, and womanish—can be counted as “men” (*ἀνδρῶν*) in which masculine reason had full command all throughout their tortures (14.11; cf. 1.10-11; 8.19; 12.13).

To an even greater extent than the old priest and the young boys, however, it is the mother who is most masculinised in the course of the work, even despite all the limitations that her anatomically feminine mind and body entail. We have already seen in this chapter that, for the Greeks and Romans, women were thought to be timid, weak, passive, soft, and faint-hearted, above all because of their association with materiality and the senses, as opposed to (masculine) mind and reason. Apart from those verses we studied in [3] above, such a biology is reflected in 4 Macc 15.23, where the Maccabean mother is depicted as suffering, in her “inmost parts” (τα σπλάγχα, cf. 14.13), the strong feminine emotions of a parent’s (= mother’s) love (φιλοτεκνίαν; cf. 14.13; 15.4-9). But if the “belly” was theorised in antiquity as the very foundation of the passions—and therefore of feminine gender as opposed to feminine sexual identity (see n. 6 above)—then the mother becomes an effective man as she receives a shot of “courage” (*ἀνδρειώσας*) directly to the “feminine” parts. Exactly what the neologism *ἀνδρειόω* might imply here is suggested by a comparison with 2 Macc 7.21b, considered by Moore and Anderson (2010: 192) to be a possible source for those verses in 4 Macc in which the mother becomes a metaphorical man (e.g. 15.23, 28-30; 16.14): “…she [the mother] roused [διεγείρασα] her female reasoning [θῆλυν λογισμὸν] with male courage [ἀρσενὶ θυμῷ].” Perhaps it is sheer coincidence, but this word διεγείρω—with its connotations of “wake up,” “stir up,” “arouse,” “excite,” “raise up” (LSJ: s.v.)—recalls precisely Philo’s reading of the creation of Eve while Adam was sleeping (see [3] above). But here the Maccabean mother manages to stir her female body and consciousness into a wakeful, masculine
state, and indeed is described as “more noble than males in steadfastness, and more courageous [ἀνδρειοτέρα] than men in endurance” (15.30; my emphasis).

If our analysis above of the Maccabean martyrs’ responses to physical and emotional pain, brotherly and maternal affection and their elderly, juvenile and womanly bodies has shown anything, then, it is the following: in everything except for their pain threshold, the less than naturally virile Eleazar, the seven boys and their mother can be said to have been effectively masculinised by the author of 4 Macc. But another, in fact more suggestive, way of putting this would be to say that the masculine self-control displayed by the nine, coupled with their feminine suffering and passivity, makes them effectively androgynous. That is, on the gender spectrum in 4 Macc that we have been using throughout this chapter, the martyrs are not to be located either at the masculine extreme (with King David, Abraham and Moses) nor at the feminine one (with Dinah and Eve) but rather somewhere in the middle, displaying, as they do, both “masculine” and “feminine” attributes. What implications does their androgyny have then for their role as ἀντίψυχος? It is to this very question that we now turn in the last section of this chapter.

5. Implications of the “androgyny” of the martyrs for our understanding of the ἀντίψυχος

What if, instead of attributing the masculinisation of the martyrs in 4 Macc—incomplete though it is—to their exemplary self-control, we read it as a consequence of the sufferings, physical and emotional, that they undergo? We have just seen in the previous section that the martyrs’ responses to pain are precisely the points where their “androgyny” is most evident—that is, where our author’s attempts to turn the inherently “feminine” old priest, young boys and mother into manly men are at their most intense (and concomitantly, their most transparent)24. Our author’s description of Eleazar’s death as ἀντίψυχος is couched precisely in these “androgynous” terms:

24 To further highlight the extent to which our author’s program of masculinising the martyrs of 4 Macc is dependent on his setting them in the context of tortures we might cite Moore and Anderson’s helpful summary of the action of the work: “…[I]f the torture of the seven youths is an expression of rage on the part of the tyrant, and as such a failure of andreia (“manliness”), it is also the occasion for a stunning exhibition of andreia on the part of the youths themselves, and even their elderly mother” (2010: 181).
After he said this [i.e., his ἀντίψυχος prayer], the holy man died nobly in his tortures; even in the tortures of death he resisted, by virtue of reason, for the sake of the law. (4 Macc 6.30)

Here our reading hinges on the observation that, if Eleazar and the six brothers suffered pain during their tortures, like effeminate cowards or slaves—and we have attempted to show above that they did (see esp. n. 20 above)—then there is a tension here in the description of Eleazar’s death between “tortures,” which take on a feminine connotation by a kind of metonymy, and “nobly,” “resisted,” “reason,” and “law” which, as we have seen throughout this chapter, are all words charged with masculine overtones. And if Eleazar dies as ἀντίψυχος, as do the other martyrs (17.17-22), this masculine-feminine tension lies right at the heart of this idea of the “life for a life.” But how might we explain all of this?

One of our author’s “many and various examples that reason is dominant over the emotions” (4 Macc 1.7) that sets the tone for the whole work is that of Joseph, who by prudent reason nullified the passion of sexual desire and refused the advances of Potiphar’s wife (2.1-6; cf. Gen 39.7-12). The placement of this particular example at the head of the series of precedents from sacred history (4 Macc 2.1-3.18) suggests that it is meant to be used as a kind of rubric by which to interpret all that will follow: the stories of Moses (2.17-18), Jacob (2.19-20), King David (3.6-18), and, most importantly, that of Eleazar, the seven brothers, and their mother (3.19-18.24). It does not seem that far-fetched, by this logic, to read the language of “passions” and “desires” that permeate the work from the tale of Joseph onwards as essentially sexual in nature, as they were literally in his case. Indeed, as our author ventures right from the outset of his work:

The two most comprehensive types of the emotions are pleasure and pain; and each of these is by nature concerned with both body and soul....

25 Commenting on what he sees as the importance of passive endurance in 4 Macc and its legitimacy as a masculine response to pain and suffering, Shaw also notes this sense of tension or paradox in the work: “Silence, passivity, submissiveness, openness, suffering—the shame of allowing oneself to be wounded, to be penetrated, and of simply enduring all of that—were castigated as weak, womanish, slavish, and therefore morally bad. The equation of these two virtues—nobility (gennaia) and passive endurance (hypomonē)—would have struck the classic male ideologue of the city state as contradictory, a moral oxymoron” (1996: 279).
[ἐπιθυμία] precedes pleasure and delight follows it. Fear precedes pain and sorrow comes after…. In pleasure there exists even a malevolent tendency, which is the most complex of all the emotions…. [I]n the body, [it is] indiscriminate eating [παντοφαγία], gluttony, and solitary gormandising…. (1.20, 22-23, 25, 27)

So it is then that underneath the urge to “indiscriminate eating,” for example—which in 4 Macc will take the form of eating pork (e.g. Anderson 1983: 2.545)—there is a layer of desire. This observation in turn gives us the licence to read those instances in 4 Macc in which the martyrs are tempted to eat pork (4.26; 5.2-3, 6, 14, 19, 25-27; 6.15; 8.2, 12, 29; 9.16, 27; 11.13, 25; etc.) as them being tempted by sexual desire. Or, to put the point another way, we are given to imagine that the martyrs are of the same mind as the author, who “crave[s]” (ἐπιθυμοῦντες) “forbidden foods” himself and extols the attractions and pleasures of eating them, immediately before retelling the story of Joseph (1.33-35). But not only in being tempted to try the pork are the martyrs exposed to desire, we must quickly add: if there is a “malevolent tendency” to pleasure perhaps there is also a “benevolent” tendency to pain, which would then imply that pain encompasses “desire” and “delight” as pleasure encompasses “fear” and “sorrow” (1.22-25).26

But the most important conclusion to be drawn from the Maccabean martyrs’ proximity to desire is that all of their wounds are thereby revealed to be manifestations of what Bataille calls the “wound of incompleteness” (2011: 22). If the martyrs had eaten the pork they would not have been tortured (5.2-3, 6; 6.15; 8.2; 9.16; 11.13; etc.); instead they refused, and were tortured by (and for) their desire, physically and emotionally, just as Joseph and David were. But just as the sexual organs (explicitly named by Bataille as déchirures, “lacerations”, and blessures, “wounds”; see Sweedler 2009: 149) facilitate the possibility of acting out sexual desire in sexual intercourse, so the lesions, contusions and other bodily injuries suffered by the Maccabean martyrs facilitate an intercourse more broadly understood, that of the ἀντιψυχος-exchange (English intercourse from Old French entrecours, “exchange,” “commerce”). Notice how the genitals are described by Bataille here in

26 In this connection, consider the frequent recourse to be had in the scholarly literature to the language of sadism in describing 4 Macc; for example, Kraemer 2004: 332; Holsinger 2001: 58.
non-gender specific terms; desire, at least in the way the philosopher is using the
term, knows no distinction of sexes (Burton 2004: 203). But there is another way in
which desire, pain and bodily trauma might be said to produce androgynous,
expiatory subjects: via what Bataille calls “communication” or “community.”

We propose that a Bataillean reading of 4 Macc would proceed along the following
lines. In the first place, for Bataille, religion excites in the subject the simultaneous
experience of fear and devotion (see, for example, the Latin word sacer, denoting at
the same time “sacred, holy” and “accursed, infamous”). This ambivalence between
fear and devotion, horror and fascination, repulsion and attraction gives rise to the
religious phenomena of interdiction and transgression, or the attempted separation of
the sacred and the profane (Bataille 1986: 69 and passim; Guerlac 1997: 29-30). This
conflict manifests itself in 4 Macc when our author expresses his craving for
forbidden foods (1.33-34); for perhaps, both for himself personally and for the
martyrs, the attractions and pleasures of seafood, fowl and assorted other animals (not
to mention pig) resides not in their taste but in the very fact of them being forbidden.
But as we have already tried to establish, the question of eating pork in 4 Macc is not
just a religious or physical one tied to the level of dietary restrictions: it is also
psychological, being, as it is, intimately related to the question of desire. And it is this
double layer of desire—of the other general passions/emotions in 4 Macc—that
enables us to make a leap and read interdiction and transgression, sacred and profane
in the text in a “psychoanalytic” register, which would amount to drawing a certain
equivalence between the religious in the work and the erotic27.

The religio-erotic subject then, for Bataille, lives in a dialectic of interdiction and
transgression, but unlike the Hegelian one this Bataillean dialectic does not resolve in
completeness (“the “self-centred solitude” of the Subject of Absolute Knowledge”
[Geist]28) but in incompleteness (Sweedler 2009: 148-49; Cobley 2002: 87). This

27 Here I have in mind what Guerlac calls the “poststructuralist appropriation of Bataille…[in which]
the dimension of the sacred is evacuated…[and] displaced by the psychoanalytic register and the
difference conscious/unconscious” (1997: 22). In other words, in a way that invites precisely the kind
of comparison with 4 Macc that we are attempting here, in the poststructuralist studies of Bataille
“[i]nterdiction and transgression are interpreted in relation to desire”—though here we will maintain a
(tenuous) link with religion so as to make our point clearer.
28 Cf. our examination of the Geist in Hegel as the synthesis of the “phoenix” in section [3.1.2] of
Chapter 1 of this thesis above—and, ultimately, our rejection of the same as a model by which to
incompleteness is the result of the temporality of the erotic dialectic collapsing in upon itself: interdiction and transgression are at the same time “successive,” in the way that culture (interdiction) imposes limits on the “givens” of nature (transgression) only to return as a set of givens itself which are, in turn, susceptible to being transgressed themselves, and “simultaneous,” insofar as transgression cannot logically precede interdiction just as saying “yes” cannot logically precede saying “no” (Guerlac 1997: 30-31). This double temporality, then, points not to the “end of history” synonymous with Being in Hegel but to the radical uncertainty of Becoming: what Nietzsche called “die Unwissenheit um de Zukunft” (“the ignorance of the future”) instead of Wissenschaft (Notebook 5.14 [= Bittner 2003: 108]; cf. Nietzsche 2001: 162; Shaviro 1990: 106). Or, to put all of that in the language of 4 Macc—the “emotions and inclinations” are just as much a part of the person as the mind who, through the law, rules as a “sacred governor” over them all (2.21-23); although the “senses” are to be subdued, without them the human would be incomplete. Or again, notice how the now of the martyrs continually irrupts into the now of the text (1.10, 12, 30; 3.19; 6.33; 8.16; 14.9; 17.18; 18.5; etc.), suggesting a denial of the permanence of linear, progressive, closed, cyclical and/or mythic conceptions of time and the affirmation of time’s radical immediacy and fleetingness (cf. Shaviro 1990: 105-6).

But in order for the religio-erotic dialectic of interdiction and transgression to function the subject needs an object by which to come to self-consciousness and self-recognition. In Bataille, this object of desire to the male subject is the female prostitute—female because she must be an object, a thing (and Bataille sees that men have a history of trading/exchanging women; 1993: 2.139), and a prostitute because she cannot be a freely available, consenting, autonomous sexual subject to the male subject (a subject/subject situation which, for Bataille, reeks of the master/slave dialectic in Hegel; Bataille 1993: 2.143). The scene of recognition for the male subject then comes when he is confronted with the shame of the female-prostitute-object, in which he recognises himself between interdiction and transgression:

understand the incompleteness of the new political beginning inaugurated by the ἄντισυνος of 4 Macc as “bird of ashes”/“bird of sand” (e.g. 18.20).
29 Cf. our treatment of the “subject” of 4 Macc as either, or both, “mind” and “passions” in Chapter 5 of this thesis below, and especially section [1.3] of the same.
30 Cf. our destabilisation of the temporal dimensions to Aion, Chronos and Kairos in 4 Macc in Chapter 3 of this thesis above.
Ordinarily a man cannot have the feeling that a law is violated in his own person, which is why he awaits the confusion of a woman, even if it is feigned, without which he would not have the consciousness of a violation…. It is a question of marking, through shame, that the interdiction has not been forgotten, that the dépassement [in the sense—very loosely—of a Hegelian “synthesis”] has taken place in spite of the interdiction, in consciousness of the interdiction. (quoted in Guerlac 1997: 24)

Something similar happens in 4 Macc, we might say, if we take a leap and think of God as erotic object to the “male” subject(s) of the martyrs. As we have seen here, as creator of both mind/law and the senses/emotions/passions God is the locus of both interdiction and transgression in the work; moreover, God appears as both infinitely available and infinitely distant in 4 Macc, in the manner of the “frozen figure,” “work of art,” and “still life” of the prostitute (cf. Guerlac 1997: 25). Above all, however, God is the “mirror” (cf. Bataille 1993: 2.116) that reflects the subject of desire back to himself in the way that God acts through the “female” Antiochus: who becomes the passive, soft, infinitely acted-upon object to the subject-passions and whose person might be said to shame the martyrs into action, both personally and as representatives of their nation (4 Macc 4.21; 5.9, 25; 6.20; 9.2; 12.11, 13; 13.18; 16.17; etc.).

If, then, the Maccabean martyrs’ transformation into ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc can be figured as an essentially erotic experience—at least in the Bataillean sense—according to the reading we have just proposed, it becomes easier to see how, at least in this sense, they become both androgynous and the ransom which delivers Israel. The “incompleteness” (see above) that the male religio-erotic subject suffers in the vertiginously immediate interdiction-transgression dialectic, confronted with the “shame” of the object of desire, manifests itself in the wound, primarily the genitals

31 We assert here the essentially erotic nature of 4 Macc pace Boyarin, who writes that “[Rabbi Akiva] and some of his Christian brothers and sisters, in direct opposition to both Maccabean works [2 and 4 Macc], are said to suffer torture and death because they are passionately in love with God, not because they fear his punishment or to demonstrate their Stoic fortitude or apathy” (1999: 95-96 [96]; emphasis mine). But being in love, with God or with anyone else, does not necessarily equate to an erotic experience, as the very next sentence that Boyarin writes makes clear: “These eroticized elements [i.e., what Boyarin restricts to the sensation of “being in love’] produced effects that have to do with sex and gender systems, as well.” Needless to say, the erotic from the point of view of “sex and gender systems,” rather than love, forms precisely the prism through which we have attempted to read 4 Macc in this chapter.
(for Bataille, déchirures/blessures) but also in the “wound” more generally. “Lack or incompletion,” as MacKendrick puts it, “[is] implied by the opening in a space that seems to demand closure” (2009: 139)—but this “closure,” like the “recognition” granted by the prostitute, can only come from looking in the “mirror” of the object. But again, just as Antiochus becomes the proxy of God as ultimate erotic object in the movement of shame, closure for the male religio-erotic subject in 4 Macc comes in the way the other martyrs stand in for God. Bataille’s “mirror” (miroir) takes on its etymological sense of (Latin) mirare, “to look at,” and the “frozen figure” or “still life” of the female object becomes a nature morte, a “dead object,” a “dead point” (Bataille 1993: 2.143; emphasis original). Look, for example, at the way the mother-martyr is said to regard her dead sons at 15.18-19:

> When the firstborn breathed his last, it did not turn you aside, nor when the second in torments looked at you piteously nor when the third expired; nor did you weep when you looked at the eyes of each one in his tortures gazing boldly at the same agonies, and saw in their nostrils the signs of the approach of death…

Here all the wounds the martyrs have suffered, on account of their desire, have become channels between self and other, subject and object that cause a certain confusion in their individual identities (though they suffer different tortures they are all said to stare down (with the same eyes?) the “same agonies,” τὸν αὐτὸν αἰκισμὸν; cf. their total depersonalisation in 15.20). This fusing of identities parallels the curious clause in Eleazar’s ἀντίψυχος prayer—i.e., before the seven brothers have even been brought before Antiochus—to “let our punishment [τῇ ἡμετέρᾳ δίκῃ] suffice for them” (6.28; emphasis mine). To whom does this “our” refer, then, if not the brothers and their mother? One answer might be that it points to the now-expanded self of the religio-erotic subject: he who is incomplete, rent, ripped open, shattered, gashed, slashed and split, out of the agony of his desire, in order to communicate, to be completed by the erotic object. Bataille describes this phenomenon of “communication” in the following manner:

> There is no longer subject-object, but a “yawning gap” [brèche béante] between the one and the other and, in the gap, the subject, the object are dissolved; there
is passage, communication, but not from one to the other: the one and the other have lost their separate existence. (1988: 59; emphasis original)

Brintnall’s gloss on this passage is especially telling with regard to 4 Macc: “[h]ere, subject and object are not gendered, nor linked to activity and passivity; moreover, they both come undone—become indistinguishable…” (2011: 181; my emphasis). And from this spanning of the gap between “male” and “female”—this androgyny—it is not hard to imagine how the Maccabean martyrs also span the gap from subject to object, from their persons to all of Israel. All it takes is a “chink in the armour” (Bataille 2011: 26)—in 4 Macc, the “full armour of self-control, which is divine reason” (13.16)—and “communication,” like death, enters in. The Maccabean martyrs become “a ransom for the sin of our nation” (ἀντίψυχον…τῆς τοῦ ἐθνοῦς ἁμαρτίας; 17.21).

Conclusion

In this chapter our work has been one of situating the principal protagonists of 4 Macc—Antiochus, the Seleucid troops and the nine martyrs—along the ancient gender spectrum, with the aim of being able, in turn, to venture a few comments on how the question of sexuality factors into the work of the ἁμαρτίας. First we saw that “male” and “female” in the ancient world was not the matter of biology that it largely is today but rather a question of behaviour, with one’s status as active/dominant man or passive/dominated woman being dependent on one’s ability to maintain a “natural” physical and psychological equilibrium ([1] above). This in turn led us in search of the masculine and feminine referents in 4 Macc, against whom we could situate the “feminised” Seleucids and the “masculinised” Maccabean in the work to whom the gender studies commentators (in particular, Moore and Anderson) have drawn our attention (sections [2] and [3]). Far from being the thoroughgoing gender reversal that these exegetes have given us to understand, however, we discovered that the feminisation of Antiochus and his soldiers [4.1]—along with the masculinisation of the martyrs [4.2]—actually gives rise to a certain androgyny on the part of the latter, particularly in the way that, despite them proving themselves “manly” in their mastery of emotional pain (what the author of 4 Macc calls “family ties”), they cannot fully master their responses to physical pain, and so return to the equivalent of soft,
passive, penetrable women. Taking this literary androgyny of the martyrs as our cue we then read their fate as what Bataille calls the religious/erotic experience of communication (section [5]), according to which theory the open wounds of the body become passageways between subject and object, male and female, martyrs and Israel. Through their beaten, battered, broken, whipped, dismembered, disjointed, mutilated and mangled bodies, the martyrs come to represent their nation vicariously and to assuage its guilt before God.
CHAPTER 5:
BETWEEN SUBJECT AND OBJECT: THE ABJECT

Introduction

One of the most intriguing proposals for interpreting 4 Macc that has been slowly taking shape in recent years but has not yet been taken up in the depth of detail it deserves is that of reading the work as a tale of abjection. Liew (2003: 113 n. 40, 129 n. 75), for example, makes the suggestion that the “other selves” or “unmen” presupposed by ancient models of masculinity in the ancient world—those “women, “foreigners,” and social inferiors” that she discovers in Mark’s Gospel and that we have discovered in 4 Macc in the person of the martyrs elsewhere in this thesis1—“may well represent what Kristeva calls the “abject”: “what disturbs identity, system, order…[and] does not respect borders, positions, rules” (quoting Kristeva 1982: 4)2.

This chapter represents an attempt to follow this inkling, this hypothesis, through to a logical conclusion: to consider whether or not the martyrs of 4 Macc really do channel the “abject” or “abjection” as exemplary male subjects in process and/or as ἀντίψυχος. As Liew’s appeal to Kristeva makes clear, here we will not be concerned with the dictionary definition of “abject” as an end in itself—as something bad “experienced or present to the maximum degree,” as an “extremely unpleasant and degrading” situation, as a “self-abasing” person or behaviour “completely without pride or dignity” (OED)—but rather with “abject” and “abjection” as psychoanalytical categories.

To begin with, then, we will work to differentiate the proper subject of the “abject” and “abjection”—the Kristevan “speaking” or “linguistic subject”—from other models of the “person,” “self,” “identity,” and “subjectivity” often used in historical studies in general and studies of 4 Macc in particular (section [1] below). We will then move on to see how Kristeva understands this speaking subject constitutes its self-identity in relation to the Other—that is, to an object or, in the precise terms

1 See Chapter 4 of this thesis above.
2 For another invitation to read 4 Macc in terms of “abjection” and the “abject,” see Burrus 2008: 19, 160 n. 28.
Kristeva uses, the (maternal) abject (section [2]). Finally, in section [3] below, we will use Kristeva’s concept of the “borderline subject”—because situated on the border between its subjectivity and the abject—as a wedge with which to open up the identity of the author and martyrs of 4 Macc. The hypothesis with which we will be working is that the ἀντίψυχος—which, as we have already seen in this thesis, is intimately related, at least at face value, with the question of personal, or psychic, singularities (“life for a life”)—will be caught up somewhere along that border between “subject” and “object”; and indeed, here in this chapter we will get a glimpse of where, and how, she occupies that fringe.

1. Towards a definition of the “subject” of 4 Macc

To consider the presence (or absence) of the psychoanalytical concept that is “abjection” or the “abject” in 4 Macc—later to ascertain the relationship it shares with the ἀντίψυχος of the text—we need to make use of some of the insights of psychoanalytical criticism. Indeed, to ask the kind of questions of 4 Macc that Kristeva has asked of Leviticus (1982: 90-112), for example, would be a worthwhile undertaking in itself, given that Kristeva, in doing this work, has drawn attention to a notable blind spot in the study of the Bible as conventionally practised: that is, that “no attention is paid to the linguistic subject of the biblical utterance, nor by way of consequence, to its addressee” (Kristeva 1995: 117). As Kristeva goes on to explain here (emphasis original):

The question is especially relevant…because it seems to suggest a subject who is not at all neutral and indifferent like the subject described by modern theories of interpretation, but who maintains a specific relationship of crisis, trial, or process with his God…

To borrow the words of the analyst-critic, then: Who, or what self, is speaking in 4 Macc? For whom, or what selves?

1.1. The anthropological “person”: product of the static semiotic system

In going in search of the “I” of 4 Macc along the lines that Kristeva sets out we are embarking on a very particular quest whose objectives must be fixed as soon and as
clearly as possible. In contrast to structuralist analyses that ask after the “profound” or “universal” logic or rhetoric embedded in a text—the “system” of this text “as a network or encodement of differences” (Beal 1997: 3)—Kristeva interests herself in its “sacred” logic: that is, that within that gives meaning to the “fragile status of subjectivity” experienced by both biblical author and reader (1995: 119). As her inclusion here of the reader of the sacred text suggests, Kristeva means subjectivity on a highly personal level; in fact, on the most highly personal and intimate level, as attuned to “the preoedipal dynamic of the subject’s separation.” What this means, precisely, will be explained in due course; for now it will suffice to say what it does not involve, or only involves secondarily, for the purposes of properly orienting us to the task at hand.

Aune’s study of the theme of the “mastery of the passions” in Philo, 4 Macc and earliest Christianity (1994) and Thompson’s remarks on the ethical dimensions of our work (2011: 23-30) stand almost alone in the commentaries in their sustained analyses of what we might call the anthropology of 4 Macc—that is, of its “subject” understood in its biological or physiological aspects. According to these two authors—and in fact to the overwhelming majority of scholars on 4 Macc—the model of the “person” assumed by the author of the work consists of a body, soul, and mind. The respective natures of these three elements can be glimpsed by paying attention to the key inner dynamic to which the text points: that of the conflict between the “passions” and “divine reason.” The “passions” (πάθη) are defined by Aune as those “diseased, irrational impulses”—or for deSilva, those disordered “emotions,’ ‘desires’ and ‘sensory experiences’” (1998: 53)—that wage a relentless battle on both the body and the soul but which must be excised, or rather controlled and mastered, in order to attain moral virtue (Aune 1994: 125, 136, etc.). In 4 Macc, these immoderate and excessive impulses, or “passions,” that afflict the body and soul are divided up into “pleasure” (ἡδονή) and “pain” (πόνος), which two are then divided again into their “many consequences” (4 Macc 1.20-21): in the case of pleasure, “desire” (ἐπιθυμία), “delight” (χαρά) and all those emotions that spring from a “malevolent

3 Perhaps the only point of contention that threatens the scholarly consensus here is whether or not the author of 4 Macc believes that the soul is divided up into irrational or appetitive (ἐπιθυμητικός), rational (λογικός) and high-spirited or irascible (θυμικός) parts (the “tripartite” model of the soul), or into irrational and rational parts only (the “bipartite” model). Aune (1994: 136) argues for the latter, while Heckel (2002: 127), for example, argues for the former. For more on this point, see, for e.g., section [2.1.5] of Chapter 1 of this thesis above.
tendency” (κακοθητις διάθεσις); in the case of pain, “fear” (φόβος) and “sorrow” (λύπη; 4 Macc 1.22-28). “Anger” (θυμός), moreover, is a passion “embracing pleasure and pain”, according to our author (1.24).

Confronted with the turmoil of the inner physical and emotional landscape, it is the task of the mind to moderate and temper the passions and their “many offshoots” (4 Macc 1.28). The mind, by means of “sound logic” (ὁρθός λόγος), must choose “reason” (λογισμός)—or “devout reason” (εὐσεβής λογισμός)—so as to direct both body and soul in the life of wisdom sustained by education in the Torah (1.15-17, etc.). Such wisdom—that is, “the knowledge of divine and human matters and the causes of these” (1.16)—works to control the passions, or the vices to which they lead, by training the soul in the countervailing virtues: “rational judgment [φρονήσεις], justice [δικαιοσύνη], courage [ἀνδρεία], and self-control [σωφροσύνη]” (1.18). Thus with regard to the passions of “indiscriminate eating, gluttony, and solitary gormandizing” (1.27), for example: the wisdom of the law is not that it eradicates these tendencies (cf. e.g. 3.2-4)—after all, it recognises that human nature is much too complex for such a procedure (1.24-25; cf. 5.25-26)—but rather that it gradually works contrary to one’s immoral habits (cf. 2.8), prohibiting one from gleaning the harvest or gathering the last grapes from the vineyard (2.9), according to our author’s argument, and thereby bringing about justice for the poor (2.6-7). This, then, is the sense of the observation that “reason does not uproot the passions but is their antagonist” (3.5). The mind may not be able to bring body and soul fully into submission, except in extraordinary cases, but it is still able to engender virtue and “goodness” (καλοκαγαθία, 1.10, etc.)—key counterweights that serve to neutralise the effects of the passions—even in the ordinary person (e.g. 2.18), to the extent to which his or her reason advances in knowledge and love of the law (e.g. 7.17-18).

As indispensable as this “anthropological” portrait of the person presupposed by 4 Macc is and will be for us throughout this thesis—and we will have occasion to refer to it time and again—the broad brushstrokes painted by Aune, Thompson and various other commentators do not overlap precisely with Kristeva’s figure of the “linguistic

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4 For this logic applied to the example of the love of money in 4 Macc (2.8-9)—i.e., the legal precepts to lend without interest to the needy and to cancel debts every seven years as counterbalances to the passion of greed that serve the purposes of the virtue of justice—see Thompson 2011: 26.
subject.” At issue is the way that body, soul and mind—in 4 Macc, in our example—are presumed to hang together. In contrast to the *semiological* analysis of texts/language that cannot help but posit the mind (at least in this case) as the principle which *homogenises* and unifies the various parts of the self (independent, even, of the “original” beliefs or intentions of its authors/speakers), Kristeva pits a “*semanalytical*” approach that seeks to recover the essential *heterogeneity* of these utterances: products of something more, or at least other, than a “transcendental ego” (Kristeva 1986). For if, in our case, the struggle between body, soul and mind, vices and virtues, is understood in 4 Macc to be a *life-long process*—if Eleazar, for example, must still contend with the passions even after a long life lived in accordance with the law (7.1-3, 5, etc.)—any language used to express this struggle must also proceed by way of a signifying *process*, not by means of a static *system* (as if the mind had in fact succeeded in subduing both body and soul). In other words, Kristeva seeks to undercut both the author and the interpreter of 4 Macc who would take its claim that the mind is “enthroned…among the senses as a sacred governor over them all” (2.22) at face value: for, as in any kingdom, the rebellion of the unconscious is never firmly put down.

1.2. The Kristevan “speaking subject”: product of a signifying process

Newsom (2004: 191-92) is right that terminology matters in the study of ancient selves. But here in this chapter we part company with her and her language of “identity,” the “person,” the “self,” and “subjectivity”—the vocabulary of social psychologists, anthropologists, culturalists and constructivists—to take up instead Kristeva’s perspective of the analyst-critic, along with her language of the “subject.”

In her study on constructions of the “self” in the Qumran literature—one of a very small number of studies on “subjectivity” in and around the Bible that have yet been attempted by scholars in the guild—Newsom works with a variety of assumptions

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5 The senses Kristeva gives to these two terms, “semiological” and “semanalytical,” will be explained more fully in [1.2] below.

6 For other studies on ideas of the “self” in Second Temple Judaism and the Pauline letters, see Burkes (2003) and Engberg-Pedersen (2010) respectively. With regard to Burkes’ study of Job, Ecclesiastes, Sirach, Daniel, Wisdom and 4 Ezra through this perspective, it is worth noting here its most restrictive limitation: that it can only conceive of the Jewish personalities reflected in these writings as “individualist,” “collectivist” or as some combination of these two (e.g. 2003: 21): the strictures, once
that again provide a useful contrast to the work we are attempting here. To begin with, she notes that “[s]ubjectivity is…formed in crucial ways through the act of speaking. Very little is more closely identified with one’s own self than speech” (2004: 14)—an observation with which, having seen what we saw above with regard to language, we can largely agree. But with what words does one speak? Following Althusser, Newsom holds that coming to selfhood is primarily a matter of the self’s appropriation, in the act of speaking, of one or another of the “numerous discourses,” or ideologies, available in society “that offer different subject positions, and thus different models of what it means to be a person” (2004: 13). In other words, “subjectivity…is not natural but rather belongs to the sphere of the symbolic”; that is, to the order of discourse or ideology. “A person’s sense of self is not just given as a part of physical existence but is constructed through the symbolic practices of a person’s culture” (2004: 192; emphasis mine). But even if Newsom recognises that “[t]he identities of a person are never singular but multiple, never unified but in some sense fragmented, never static but always in process” (2004: 13)—a point extremely difficult to assimilate to her overarching discursive or ideological (i.e., structuralist) approach to selfhood(s) at Qumran—Kristeva goes yet further. Selfhood, for her, is both “natural” (to use Newsom’s term) and symbolic, but because the former as “multiple,” “fragmented,” and “always in process” (Newsom) always eludes the “metalanguage” of interpretation by definition, it is forever marginalised in structuralist (or even poststructuralist) analysis (Kristeva 1986: 30).

For Kristeva, the speaking subject, both symbolic and “natural,” is first and foremost a divided subject, constituted by both “social constraints”—“family structures, modes of production, etc.”—and “bio-physiological processes”—“what Freud labelled ‘drives’” (1986: 28). Here we are not far from the recognition in 4 Macc that the subject is made up of body, soul and mind, of passions and virtues, especially when we consider that our author also couches the movement of the πάθη precisely in the language of “drive”: “For the temperate mind can conquer the drives [ἀνάγκας] of the

again, of what we are here calling (after Kristeva) the “structuralist” approach. Engberg-Pedersen’s study is more successful as an attempt to fill the gap in modern studies of the self that stretches “from Plato to Augustine” (2010: 180), but since it is important as a matter of principle to keep a prudent distance between Paul and 4 Macc so as not to read one into the other, we will keep Engberg-Pedersen’s study at arm’s length for the moment.
emotions…” (3.17)\(^7\). But whereas *semiological* analysis of the self (as represented by Aune, Thompson, Newsom, et al.) can only take account of the self’s “social constraints”—the mind, in our case, breaking free of the body in order to achieve the supreme act of meaning-making (its appropriation of discourse or *ideology*)—Kristeva’s *semanalytical* method aims to return the “bio-physical processes” to the study of subjectivity as these are felt in language. The goal, as Mooney puts it, is to go in search of the way the *body* with its passions/drives speaks for the self, rather than the mind. That is, instead of analysing writing or speech as disembodied—“delivered *from* nowhere in particular, *to* no one in particular, the impersonal tightly secured at each pole of a communication”—it is to seek to find a place for *embodied* speech and the insights it affords into the subject: “the voice of *this* person, speaking in *this* tone of voice—in *this* physical posture, with *this* gesture, among *these* attentive *particular* (embodied) listeners” (2011: 182; emphasis original). To “seek” this goal only, it should be noted, because even if “anthropological” models of the self are incapable of accounting for what might be called the *personal* as well as *social* self—for how could they generalise the unique and unrepeatable?—Kristeva herself points out that the semanalytical is itself a “metalanguage” just like anthropology or ideology. It can, in that respect, do no more than simply “postulate the *heterogeneity* of biological operations in respect of signifying operations”—in other words, the fact that the body with its passions/drives can betray the mind in speaking a different “language”—“and to study the dialectics of the former”—that is, the way in which this “natural” language *exceeds*, *transgresses*, or *infringes* the socio-“symbolic” (1986: 30; emphasis original)\(^8\). Even when the semanalytical can only point to the heterogeneous (rather than homogeneous/transcendent) subject, however, it will recover the fact that that which is always left outside of the anthropological/structuralist analysis of that subject’s language is actually *integral* to

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\(^7\) For the use Kristeva and Freud make of ἀνάγκη with respect to drive, see Berry 1998: 172, 176 nn. 19-20. For Kristeva on the relationship between the “passions” and drive (and the emotions) more generally, see Kristeva 2010: 79-94.

\(^8\) Again, perhaps a comparison here with Newsom will serve to clarify this point. Even if Newsom recognises that “[t]he development of new forms of subjectivity, or the self-conscious cultivation of distinctive discourses of the self, may also be a form of resistance to a dominant culture,” this recognition comes immediately after the observation that “[t]he specific utterances and symbolic performances through which one makes an expression of selfhood are *meaningful* by reference to [the] language of possible selves that is part of the habitus of the culture” (2004: 14; my emphasis). Here again the “natural” is sidelined in her study precisely because the infinity of possible selves it expresses is not assimilable to the semiotic system (“meaningful by reference to…language”) and therefore not a suitable object of scientific study.
its very constitution. As Kristeva explains in an observation that will be crucial for us further on in this chapter (1986: 30-31)⁹:

[W]hat lies outside [the] metalinguistic mode of operation [of semiotics]—the ‘remainder’, the ‘waste’—is what, in the process of the speaking subject, represents the moment in which it is set in action, put on trial, put to death.

1.3. **Shades of the “speaking subject” of 4 Macc in recent studies**

1.3.1. **Watson: the subject in 4 Macc is founded by the law**

Though there have not yet been any self-consciously “Kristevan” readings of 4 Macc¹⁰, two recent studies of the work in particular have very suggestively begun to sketch out the figure(s) of the psychoanalytical subject embedded in the work, and hence are of use for us here in this chapter.

The first of these studies is Watson’s paper on the interplay between divine and human agency in Paul, 4 Macc and 4QMMT (2006). This work is of interest for us because in looking for the *relationship* in 4 Macc between “law” and “nature” in the subject—these terms broadly understood—Watson succeeds at least in small measure in going beyond the “simply descriptive framework” that Kristeva believes characterises the structuralist study of subjectivity (1995: 118). But what does Watson discover in his search? Without affording the insight much importance, since it is not his principal purpose, Watson shows that the “law” in 4 Macc, as well as being an imposition on the subject from the outside—God—is also the foundation of the subject from the inside, to the extent that the subject cannot even be thought without the law. As Watson explains:

[T]he law…[is] the divine voice that addresses itself to a human ‘reason’ defined by its capacity to understand and to implement its demands, giving them priority over the contrary demands of desire. The reason that is sovereign

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¹⁰ For “Kristevan” readings of other biblical/extrabiblical texts, see, for example, Washington (2003; on Ezra-Nehemiah), Beal (1994; on Micah), Raphael (2011; on the Apocalypse of Abraham and 4 Ezra), etc.
over the passions is the human capacity presupposed and constituted by the law’s address. It is the law’s anthropological correlate, just as the law is reason’s theological correlate. (2006: 113; emphasis mine)\textsuperscript{11}

Without the “law,” in other words, a person’s reason, and therefore the person herself, is unable to distinguish “desire” in itself either as “passion” (i.e., that which is prohibited by the law) or even as a more primitive “drive” (ἀνάγκη). With the necessary advent of the “law,” the subject is forever and indelibly marked, in its very constitution, not only by the law but also by “desire” as its “remainder” and “waste” (see [1.2] above). But is this still the law as Torah if it precedes, logically and chronologically, the capacity of the subject to appropriate/interiorise its precepts? Watson is right to identify two distinct forms of “reason” in 4 Macc (“reason” [λογισμός] and “devout reason” [εὐσεβής λογισμός]), even if he conflates them in the end and cannot escape the circular reasoning that he perceives to plague the operation of each\textsuperscript{12}; could there not therefore in the same way be two, or more, distinct forms of law in the work as well? This suggestion, inspired by Watson, is one we will take up and consider in section [2] of this chapter below.

1.3.2. Weigold: the subject in 4 Macc as “flood of emotions”

The second study of 4 Macc that goes some way towards drawing out its psychoanalytical subject is Weigold’s intertextual reading of the flood imagery in the book (2007). In a way somewhat similar to Kristeva\textsuperscript{13}, Weigold begins with that part of the text that reveals that part of the self excluded rather than included by the law as an entrée into the text’s understanding of subjectivity.

\textsuperscript{11} For Watson the key text in 4 Macc in which to observe this correlation between law and reason is 2.5-6 (my emphasis): “Thus the law says, “You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife or anything that is your neighbor’s.” In fact, since the law has told us not to covet, I could prove to you all the more that reason is able to control desires. Just so it is with the emotions that hinder one from justice…” Cf. n. 12 below.

\textsuperscript{12} “Devout reason” is nothing other than the capacity that enables one to ‘obey this law’ [cf. 4 Macc 18.1-2]. There is, indeed, an element of circularity in this claim, for it can also be said that it is the law which itself enable the ‘devout reason’ by which it is observed” (Watson 2006: 111). But this “element of circularity” can be excised, or at least reduced, by giving full weight (as Watson does not do) to the fact that it is reason (λογισμός) in 1.15-17, not divine reason, which chooses the wisdom which in turn is “education in the law” (1.17).

\textsuperscript{13} Weigold even begins his paper with an experiment in the analysis of “intertextuality” originally proposed by Kristeva (e.g. id. 1980)—searching for inspiration for reading 4 Macc in a modern Jewish pop song (2007: 197-8)—but unfortunately this very promising beginning does not seem to carry over into the strictly philological work that follows in his essay.
As we have already seen, the “remainder” or “waste” of the self subject to the law in 4 Macc is the passions, but in focusing in on the comparison of the mother-martyr in the work with the ark of Noah (4 Macc 15.31-32) Weigold, perhaps unwittingly, actually succeeds in displacing the law and returning the passions back to the centre of the self. For if he finds that the ark is representative of the human body in 4 Macc, as in Philo (e.g. QG 2.1-49, esp. 2.1), so the heavens and the earth which burst forth with water at the moment of the flood (cf. Gen 7.11) are also, “symbolically,” the “human mind” and “sense-perception and body” respectively: when the mind cannot “stand[] firm in indifference” to the passions, “[then] we are flooded” (Philo, QG 2.18; trans. Marcus 1953: 98-9). The point to be made here is that in the same way in which “the mother[-martyr] corresponds to the ark withstand ing the waves of the deluge” (Weigold 2007: 210), she also, and just as importantly, corresponds to this flood as well. In other words, if the mother can be understood to be the “vindicator of the law” as “ark” (ἐκδικεῖ τοῦ νόμου, 4 Macc 15.29; cf. “guardian of the law,” νομοφύλαξ, 15.32), she is also to be considered, at the same time and paradoxically, as the essentially “lawless” one as “deluge” or “flood”—the one, precisely, who leads away from the law (ἐκ-δικος). Not only the mother, in fact, but Eleazar and the seven brothers should also be understood as maintaining this double relationship with the law; all are said to be pilots of the “ship of religion” (a synonym for the ark?) over “the sea of the emotions” that is just as much the foundation of their very selves (7.1-3, 5 [1]; 13.6-7). To be sure, this is quite a different reading of the “waves,” “violent winds,” and “wintry storms” that the martyrs of 4 Macc are said to overcome (e.g. 15.31-32) in comparison to the interpretation of these usually offered by scholars—typical of whom is deSilva, who speaks, at least at one point, of “the fierce onslaughts of the tyrant’s threats and the waves of the tortures” (1998: 87; emphasis mine). But the two different readings—of the flood either from without or from within—need not cancel out the other. It all depends on the model of the subject with which the commentator works—whether closed and finished or open and unfinished—and here, as we have said, we have set ourselves in search of the latter.

2. The feminine-maternal as the “object” of 4 Macc

In Chapter 4 of this thesis above we saw how the author of 4 Macc tries relentlessly to obliterate all traces of the “feminine” from his portraits of the martyrs of the work,
playing up their “manly” self-control over the passions and playing down any suggestion of “womanly” penetrability in their bodies and souls. Although our author may be less than successful in this task—as we also suggested above—we found, along with the overwhelmingly majority of commentators on 4 Macc, that his program of the “masculinisation” of the martyrs (along with the corresponding “feminisation” of Antiochus and his troops) is an integral part of his plan in writing the work. At least in the version of highly hellenised Diaspora Judaism that the author of 4 Macc seeks to promote among his community, so that their honour as Jews may remain intact and their heritage preserved in the face of the temptations of the surround Greco-Roman culture, anything even remotely suggestive of femininity—such as incontinence of the passions, lack of resolution, volatility of one’s temper, and above all, pain and suffering—must be banished from the self without remainder. As we saw most poignantly with the mother-martyr, even if the Jew presupposed by 4 Macc happens to be a biological woman, the demands of “divine reason” dictate that she must—literally—become a man: in fact, the “subject” subjected to the law in the work is a priori male, not female.

What could explain this morbid phobia of the feminine on the part of the author of 4 Macc and his circle? Following Stowers (1994: 52-58), in section [4.1] of Chapter 4 above we suggested that the marginalisation of the womanly in the text was a matter of our author claiming honour for his Judaism at a moment in time—around the Augustan revolution—when manly self-mastery was a virtue highly prized by Greco-Roman society and a particularly useful means for paying both allegiance and homage to Rome. Now, however, we are in a position in this chapter—reading 4 Macc side-by-side with Kristeva—to nuance this explanation slightly, even while affirming its basic validity.

The appeal to Augustan values and politics as a way to account for the fear of the feminine in 4 Macc works, as an explanation, on the level of what we have here, with Kristeva, called the semiotical “descriptive framework” as opposed to that of the semanalytical “speaking subject.” Here again the idea of the “self” has been reified, generalised, homogenised: Stowers’ repeated gestures toward Augustan moral

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14 See, in particular, section [4.2] of this same chapter.
15 Or more specifically, n. 17 of the same.
ideology (1994: 53, 56, 57, 58, 60; see on “ideology” above), as well as his model’s inability to account for the in-between (what we called in Chapter 4 above the androgyny of the martyrs) are proof enough of that. But rather than leave the matter at that, as if this kind of interpretation of the social aspects of the text exhausted all its meaning-making possibilities for the individual, unique “subject” (as opposed to the transcendental ego of social discourse or ideology), Kristeva seeks to go further. As the analyst herself remarks at the outset of her study of ritual impurity in the Hebrew Bible (1982: 90-112), comparing her work to that of the historian of religions or the anthropologist who would be content to stop at the level of the formalist social explanation (and in that sense to the conventional interpreter of 4 Macc too, we might say):

[A]s far as I am concerned, I keep asking questions. Why that system of classification [in this case, of the cultically impure] and not another? What social, subjective, and socio-subjectively interacting needs does it fulfil? Are there no subjective structurations that, within the organization of each speaking being, correspond to this or that symbolic-social system and represent, if not stages, at least types of subjectivity and society? (1982: 92; emphasis original)

Why, then—we might ask with Kristeva now with respect to 4 Macc—did the Augustan classifications of manly self-mastery hold such appeal for the author and his audience? If, in its Jewish guise, the model served the purpose of securing honour and privilege for the community behind the work in Roman society, did it also meet any of the more subjective needs of that community’s members? Do any of the elements of the system of masculine self-control under the influence of “divine reason” “correspond” to “structurations” of the subject presupposed by the (divine) law? It is to questions such as these that we turn our attention now in the second section of this chapter.

2.1. The law/nature dichotomy in 4 Macc

From the very beginning of 4 Macc, (devout) reason, logic, wisdom, knowledge and law are opposed to the passions, attraction, compulsion, desire and human (and animal) nature. The dichotomy law/nature, hinted at as early as 1.6 (reason does not
“destroy” the emotions that are planted in the human being by God; cf. 1.20; 2.21; 3.2-5), already receives detailed treatment at the hands of our author in 1.28-30:

Just as pleasure and pain are two plants [φυτῶν] growing from the body and the soul, so there are many offshoots [παραφυτῶν] of these plants, each of which the master cultivator [παγγέωργος], reason, weeds [περικαθαίρων] and prunes [ἀποκνίζων] and ties up [περιπλέκων] and waters [ἐπάρδων] and thoroughly irrigates [πάντα τρόπον μεταχέων], and so tames [ἐξημεροῖ] the jungle[s] [ὕλας] of habits and emotions. (1.28-29)

Here the horticultural imagery is no accident: from here on in throughout the whole of the work it will be the task of divine reason, through the law, to effect in both the exemplars from sacred history and the martyrs themselves—through a complicated series of some six different metaphorical operations—this extraordinary repression of the subject’s “natural” instincts. So it is, for example, that Eleazar, holding to the law, is forced to spurn Antiochus’ offer of the “very excellent meat” of the pig, even when, as the king says, “nature has granted it to us” (τῆς φύσεως κεχαρισμένης…τοῦ ζῴου) as one of its most delicious “gifts” (χάριτας; 5.8-9; cf. 1.33-35).

But what about the argument commonly offered by scholars of 4 Macc (e.g. Winston 1997: 36) that law and nature, in the worldview of our author, cannot contradict each other since they derive from the same source (i.e., God)? This reading is based on Eleazar’s rejoinder to the king at 5.25-26:

Therefore we do not eat defiling food; for since we believe that the law was established by God, we know that in the nature of things [or “according to our nature”; κατὰ φύσιν ἡμῶν] the Creator of the world in giving us the law has shown sympathy toward us. (5.25)

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16 DeSilva remarks with regard to this passage in context: “This diversity of cultivating techniques is, in effect, the subject of 1.30b-2.23, in which the different commands of the Torah are shown to effect the pruning of excess and cultivation of virtue according to the different requirements of each passion” (1998: 58; see here too the parallels he draws between 4 Macc 1.28-29 and Philo, Det. 105 and Leg. 1.47). But not only is this the subject of 4 Macc 1.30b-2.23: in a sense it is the subject of the entire work, as we will see.

17 Other commentators who hold to this point include Westerholm 2005: 213; van Henten and Avemarie 2002: 74; Cummins 2001: 80-81; etc.
“Thus it follows that Antiochus is wrong,” as C. A. Anderson forcefully puts it, “and pork,” even if he considers it one of nature’s gifts, “is actually harmful” (2011: 105-106 [106]). But in fact, when Eleazar and Antiochus talk about “nature” (φύσις), they each mean different things, or at least different aspects of the one concept. Antiochus means nature as “creative, sovereign power”—that is, a potent force in itself—while Eleazar speaks about nature already conformed and subsumed to the law (C. A. Anderson 2011: 105-106). That the old priest speaks as a subject whose only foundation and referent is the law—or who cannot recognise and name nature as “nature” (or the passions as “passions”) apart from his capacity for reason, whose existence is “presupposed and constituted by the law’s address” (Watson; see [1.3.1] above)—is clear from his words at 4 Macc 5.18: “Even if, as you [Antiochus] suppose, our law were not truly divine and we had wrongly held it to be divine, not even so would it be right for us to invalidate our reputation for piety.” In other words, and to put it in Kristevan terms: even if the law were not to serve its social function—i.e., to form devout Jews renowned in Greco-Roman society for their exemplary masculinity—there would still be some subjective sense in following it: that is, to subdue nature. But what is so threatening about φύσις (as Antiochus means it) that it must be so violently repressed right from the moment when the Jewish subject first knows herself as “subject” through the advent of the law? In fact, we mean that the taming of nature must occur so that the subject can know herself as “subject,” if the passions are the “remainder” of the law that actually sets the subject in motion (Kristeva). A return to the metaphor of reason as the master gardener in 4 Macc 1.28-29 can help us clarify a possible response to the query.

2.2. “Nature” in 4 Macc as feminine nature

2.2.1. "Ὑλη (4 Macc 1.29): “excrement” in the garden of the soul"

The word in 4 Macc 1.29 that we (following the NRSV) translated above as “jungle[s]”—ὕλας—is one that reveals a great deal more about the thought and

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18 Is this what Eleazar means when he explains to Antiochus that “there is no compulsion [ἀνάγκην] more powerful than our obedience to the law” (5.16)? Here the obligation to follow the law seems to have become the very thing that the law seeks to banish—i.e., a drive, a “passion,” a desire (see [1.2] above). This hint that the dichotomy law/nature in 4 Macc is inherently unstable and doomed to collapse is one we will take up and develop in section [3] below.
character of our author than is immediately apparent from the context in which the "master gardener," reason, apparently controls and represses the "passions," narrowly understood. In its technical philosophical sense—which Aristotle first leant it over and above its literal meaning of "wood," "timber," and, by synecdoche, a "forest"—ὀλη refers to the "matter" of some object, as opposed to its "form" (εἰδός), with ὀλη and εἰδός together forming the "whole" (σύνολον) of that object (e.g. Metaph. 1037a). In later Stoicism, however—which, as we have already argued, is likely the principal philosophical influence on 4 Macc—ὀλη comes, as the "passive" principle of the universe, to be associated more and more with the "passive" elements (στοιχεῖα) of earth and water, as the following quote from Galen, paraphrasing the Stoics of his day, makes clear: “[T]he breathing substance is what sustains, and the material substance [ὁλικήν] what is sustained. And so they say that air and fire sustain, and earth and water are sustained” (Plen. 7.525.9-14; quoted in Martin 1995: 10). From the Stoic conception in Galen of ὀλη as “the compact, dense and heavy stuff that we call matter”—and in Plutarch, too, of ὀλη as “inert and motionless” (Stoic. rep. 1053f-1054b; Martin 1995: 10)—it is only a small step to what is perhaps the most interesting ancient use of this word for our purposes in this chapter: that of “matter excreted from the human body.” This is the sense that the first- and second-century C.E. physician Soranus of Ephesus gives to ὀλη in his treatise Gynaecology, as LSJ: s.v. reports. More concretely, ὀλη refers here primarily to women’s menstrual material (e.g. Gyn. 1.22, 23, 25, etc.), but certainly the general sense of excretion and excrement is implied: as King (2010: 416) has it, in fact, menstruation was seen by ancient Greco-Roman physicians as nothing more than a “useful excrement.” What would happen then if we read Soranus back into 4 Macc 1.29—a legitimate enterprise, we suggest here, given their chronological and conceptual proximity—and had reason taming the excrement “of habits and emotions”? Such a reading could find additional warrant in the fact that the word ἐξημερώω—translated “tame[sl]” in 1.29—can also mean “to civilise” or “to humanise” (LSJ: s.v.). Furthermore, and

19 For more on the Stoic "elements," particularly as they are conceptualised in 4 Macc, see section [1] of Chapter 4 of this thesis above. For more of an in-depth discussion of ancient ὀλη and the perils of translating it simply as "matter" with no further comment, see Martin 1995: 7-15 and passim.
20 LSJ: s.v. also notes, among various other meanings, that ὀλη is also capable of the senses of “sediment,” “mud,” “slime,” “phlegm,” “catarrh,” etc.—all of which uses fit in extremely well with the argument to follow here.
revealingly, the words behind the curious sequence of “gardening” metaphors in 1.29 nearly all encompass other, non-horticultural meanings (with the exception, perhaps, of ἐπάρδο, “to water”): περικαθαίρω can also mean “to purge/purify” as well as “to weed,” ἀποκνίζω “to nip off/snip off/wring off” as well as “to prune,” περιπλέκω “to fold/intertwine” as well as “to tie up”, etc. (Taylor 2009: ss.vv.). In any case, the original idea would remain intact: the call of law, along with the response of reason, work to constitute the subject in 4 Macc by cutting off and “taming” her “nature”—her ὕλη—here understood as dark, wet, cold matter such as blood, excrement, phlegm, catarrh, tears, milk, etc. that give rise to the “feminine passions” (cf. section [1] of Chapter 4 above). And indeed, if the subject in 4 Macc is always effectively male, as we saw above, we could say that these passive, heavy, immobile, “natural” elements constitute the feminine “object” to this masculine subject: “feminine” in the sense of “material”, from mater (Butler 2011: 6-8 [6]); “object” in the sense of that which is “thrown” (jacet) “in the way of” (ob-) the subject as she moves towards realising her subjectivity. But Kristeva has an even more suggestive name for this material “object” to the Jewish “subject” of 4 Macc: that of the abject, as we shall see now in the next section.

2.2.2. "Ὑλη and the maternal as types of the Kristevan “abject”

To everything from which an individual must extricate herself so as to become a speaking “subject”—to the dark, moist, cold, weak matter in 4 Macc (ὕλη) which the Jew must rise above in order to respond to her God—Kristeva gives the name of the abject. “The abject is that pseudo-object that is made up before but appears only within the gaps of secondary repression. The abject would thus be the “object” of primal repression” (Kristeva 1982: 12; emphasis original). In a way that is highly suggestive for our work on 4 Macc, then, Kristeva thus shifts the focus of the repression the speaking subject in the text must undertake from the “feminine” in general (as in Chapter 4 and section [2.1] of this chapter above) to the maternal in particular ("primal repression"): the “mother” now becomes the locus of everything “natural” (or “material”)—sovereign in itself—that holds back or threatens the subject subject to the law.
We read much in 4 Macc about the maternal mind/nature—distinguished for the moment, as much as it can be, from the feminine mind/nature we discussed above. In 14.13, our author enjoins his listeners to “[o]bserve how complex [πολύπλοκος] is a mother’s love for her children [ἡ τῆς φιλοτεκνίας στοργή], which draws everything [ἔλκουσα πάντα] toward an emotion [συμπάθειαν] felt in her inmost parts [τὴν τῶν σπλάγχνων].” It is no accident that here the word for “complex,” πολύπλοκος—literally “many braided” (cf. H. Anderson 1983: 2.559, “tangled”)—is the very antithesis of the operation of the tying-off of the passions envisioned in 1.29 (περιπλέκω). But there is yet more to point out with regard to this verse: to what, for example, does the phrase “draws everything,” ἔλκουσα πάντα, refer? H. Anderson (1983: 2.559) paraphrases here and has a mother’s love for her children become the centre of her “whole feeling,” to the exclusion of all her other concerns (cf. Townshend 1913: 2.680: “the centre of her whole world”). But inherent in the verb ἔλκω (or in the verbs ἔλκεω or ἔλκόω: each fit the conjugation here) is a sense of exertion or force: “draw,” “drag,” or “wrench”; “attract” as with a magnet or a spell; “suck up” as a person drinking or the roots of a plant taking up nourishment, etc.21 Could our author in fact be imagining the maternal as some animate, malevolent, uncontrollable force that threatens to swallow up “everything” as a kind of “black hole”? This reading could be supported by the fact that it is the mother’s “inmost parts,” her σπλάγχνων, into which “everything” disappears (cf. 15.23, 29). Not only were “[s]planchna in general…the seat of emotions and of overall character” for the ancients, as Strathern (1996: 51), for example, puts it—i.e., were the very source and embodiment of the emotional states so abhorrent to the author of 4 Macc—but they were also always, invariably, gendered as female, as Padel reports: “By itself, splanchna can mean “womb”” (1992: 99; see 99-113 for discussion and examples). Our author would then be expressing, however obliquely, his profound horror at the prospect of falling back into the maternal clutches—“dark earth and underworld” (Padel 1992: 102)—a possibility that the law would then be supposed to stave off.

21 Not to mention the violence implied in these terms in the various uses given in LSJ: s.v., which include “tear in pieces” in the case of ἔλκω; “tear asunder” for ἔλκεω; “wound,” “lacerate,” “ulcerate,” “suppurate” for ἔλκόω, etc.

22 We can imagine Kristeva answering in the affirmative here: see, for example, her use of the image of the “black hole” to figure the maternal abject in Kristeva 2012: 29; id. 2001: 200-201; etc.
What happens, according to the author of 4 Macc, if the individual is unable to escape the bonds of the maternal netherworld: to respond to the law with reason and become a speaking subject? One answer comes in the material that follows on immediately from the verse we have just discussed, 14.13: the individual becomes an “unreasoning animal” (ἄλογος ζωός) totally dominated by “sympathy and parental love for their offspring” (14.14-20 [14, 18-19]). Scholars have struggled with the identity of the “tame” birds (πετεινόν…ήμερα) in 14.15 that “protect their young on housetops” (κατὰ τὰς οἰκίας…προσπιζέται τὸν νεοτόν) but then are said, paradoxically, to “roam the mountains” (ὁροφοτοῦντα); various textual amendments have been proposed here, including the apparently more logical ὀροφοκοιτοῦντα, “build a nest in the roof,” or ὀροφοφοιτοῦντα, “roam the roof” (see the various proposals and a discussion on their merits in Hiebert 2012: 139-42). But on our Kristevan reading, the majority manuscript evidence for “roam the mountains” might come to make more sense: the tame birds that stray in 14.15—like the wild birds in 14.16 that nest “in the peaks of mountains [κορυφὰς ὀρέων; missing in the NRSV], in precipitous chasms [φαράγγις ἀπορρόγας] and in holes and tops of trees [δένδρων ὁπᾶς καὶ τὰς τοῦτον ἁκρας],” and the bees in 14.19—are not to be imitated because they constitute a grave threat to the carefully controlled ecosystem of “nature” as it is circumscribed by the law (as in the tidy, enclosed garden of the soul in 1.28-29; see above)23.

But according to our author there is a fate that awaits the person unable to break free from the stifling influence of the maternal that is even worse than to become like an “unreasoning animal”, a fate that we have already alluded to in passing in Chapter 4 above: to remain as “soft” and infinitely pliable as a woman. “We impress [ἐναποσφραγίζομεν] upon the character [χαρακτῆρα] of a small child a wondrous likeness [ὁµοιότητα] both of mind [ψυχῆς] and form [μορφῆς],” says our author in 15.4: “especially is this true of mothers….” Ἐναποσφραγίζω, “to emboss as with a signet ring,” expresses what is envisioned to be at stake here in the formation of the child, for as Goldhill (2001: 175-77 [177]) observes, this word takes on in the Stoics and in Philo the burden of the seductive dangers of the senses:

23 Kristeva’s observations on the impurity of overly mobile animals in Leviticus and Deuteronomy will perhaps serve to corroborate and clarify this point: “The pure will be that which conforms to an established taxonomy; the impure, that which unsettles it, establishes intermixture and disorder. The example of fish, birds, and insects, normally linked to one of three elements (sea, heaven, earth), is very significant from that point of view; the impure [here in 4 Macc, the birds and the bees] will be those that do not confine themselves to one element but point to admixture and confusion” (1982: 98).
The senses carry, announce, and display what appears outside us inside, impressing the imprints of each thing [τοῦς τύπους ἐκάστων ἔναπσοφραγιζόμενα] and producing [τὸ δόμον ἐναποσφραγιζόμεναι πάθος]. For like wax, it [the mind] receives the impressions of the senses, by which it apprehends material substance... (Philo, Opif. 166)

The greater the influence of the mother over the child, then, the more his mind, and his very character—as nothing more than soft pools of sealing wax—will remain susceptible to the pattern-forming, virtue-hindering, femininity-inducing passions.

3. The martyrs of 4 Macc as “abject”

Where are we to situate the martyrs of 4 Macc in relation to the masculine-law/maternal-nature dichotomies we have sketched out in [1] and [2] above? At first glance, the answer seems obvious: the martyrs have clearly broken with maternal “matter” and turned towards the law, as speaking subjects, through their use of devout reason. Each of them, in turn, refuses to eat the pork (4 Macc 5.14-38; 6.16-22; 9.16-18, 27; 10.1-3, 13-16; 11.13-16; etc.)—a symbol, as we saw in [2.1] above, of nature as the creative, sovereign, feminine power that the law, and hence the masculine subject constituted by the law, cannot incorporate within its purview. Only “women” in thrall to the passions—such as Antiochus and his troops (5.8-9)24—fall prey to the “pleasure” (1.33) and the other gratifying sensations that accompany the eating of foods forbidden by the law, whereas Jewish “men” resist: as Eleazar says, it would be “irrational” for him to even simulate eating the meat (6.15-18). And in fact, here we have the guiding principle that seems to determine all the martyrs’ behaviour: as proof that the law serves a subjective function—to subdue nature—as well as a social one—to form virtuous men—what matter to the martyrs is that they follow the logic of the law at all times, and not simply its letter. God created all foods (e.g. 1.34), but the martyrs will live by the clean/unclean distinction of the law (e.g. 5.25-27). God planted in the human being the “emotions and inclinations” (2.21-23 [21]), but the martyrs, following their reason, will choose to subdue them (3.1-5). The “divine and all-wise Providence” has bequeathed to the human race the “affection of family ties”

24 See section [4.1] of Chapter 4 above.
(13.19), but the brothers will master “the emotions of brotherly love” (14.1; cf. 2.9b-13, 19-20). As we hinted in [2] above, unclean foods, the emotions, and bonds of affection—that is, nature, in essence—all must be repressed from the outset by reason and the law because they point to a “complex,” many-sided, chaotic “maternal” logic (cf. 1.21, 28; 14.13; etc.) that threatens the one, simple logic of the masculine God: as Eleazar puts it, “…with proper reverence we worship the only living God…” (5.24).

On the other hand, though, it could also be said that the martyrs of 4 Macc maintain a very intimate relationship with the feminine-maternal at all times: for “the mother of the seven encouraged and persuaded each of her sons to die rather than violate God’s commandment” (16.24), and “…they obeyed her even to death in keeping the ordinances” (15.10; etc.). Above in section [4.2] of Chapter 4, too, we saw that the author of 4 Macc is not entirely successful in “masculinising” the inherently “feminine” bodies and souls of the naturally “weak” and “soft” old man, young children and biological woman. Which is it to be, then—are the martyrs of 4 Macc finally on the side of manly law or womanly nature? Once again, Kristeva offers us a way out of this seeming dilemma, through her discussion of the “borderline” case.

3.1. The “borderline” subject

“If, on account of [the] Other, a space becomes demarcated, separating the abject from what will be a subject and its objects, it is because a repression that one might call “primal” has been effected…” (Kristeva 1982: 10-11). But what happens if this “primal repression” (see [2.2.2] above) is, for whatever reason, not effected in the individual, or is only partially successful? To this person unable to tell the difference between the “I” and the “Other,” Kristeva, and psychological theory more generally, give the name of the “borderline” subject. He lives on the “border” above all because what should have been consigned to the unconscious in the process of his coming to subjectivity remains only half-repressed, and “in strange fashion”: “not radically enough to allow for a secure differentiation between subject and object, and yet clearly enough for a defensive position to be established” (Kristeva 1982: 7; emphasis original). On the border between “subject” and “object,” therefore, the borderline subject, in his “defensive position,” finds himself deep within the territory of the abject: abjection being itself “a composite of,” or a borderland between, “judgment
and affect…condemnation and yearning…signs and drives” (Kristeva 1982: 9-10)—in short, between law and nature.

Having made of the “object” only an “abject,” then, the borderline subject continues to be ruled by the logic of this first (unsuccessful) exclusion and exchanges desire, which is always for objects, for the jouissance of the abject. Put another way, instead of desiring the “good” mother—“prototype of the object” in the Oedipian triangle (father-law, mother-object, ego)—the borderline subject, in a strange twist of fate, desires the “bad” maternal abject. But how else could it play out, asks Kristeva: how else to recognise oneself in the Other, “for want of having been able to introject her and joy in what manifests her, for want of being able to signify her”? (1982: 32, 53-4). This fascination for the abject then ensures that the borderline subject founds his identity not in terms of the pleasure principle and desire but in terms of the death drive and jouissance: “[the abject] takes the ego back to its source on the abominable limits from which, in order to be, the ego has broken away—it assigns it a source in the non-ego, drive, and death” (Kristeva 1982: 15).

This difficult psychoanalytical concept of the borderline subject can be explained more clearly with reference to 4 Macc, as we suggest it underlines the extraordinarily graphic depictions of the violence done to the martyrs’ bodies in the work by Antiochus’ henchmen. The conventional view on the reason for the lurid brutality in the text, summed up pithily by Collins (2012: 234), holds that:

…[T]he measure of violence sustained by the Maccabees correlates, in the stoical work [i.e., in 4 Macc], with the power of religious reason: the more violence the Maccabees could sustain without submitting, the greater the proof their example provided for religious reason.

The thesis that we are sustaining here, however, is quite different. The greater the violence the martyrs suffer, the more their bodies and souls are, quite literally, turned inside out, and the more nature, rather than the law, comes into focus as the foundation of the speaking subject. The upshot of this reversal will be a glimpse of a certain crisis, or apocalypse, of the law itself, as we will see now in the next section.
3.2. The martyrs (and author) of 4 Macc as “borderline” subjects

3.2.1. The crisis or “apocalypse” of the law in 4 Macc

As we saw above in sections [1] and [2] above, the law in 4 Macc is supposed to separate the “masculine” subject from the “feminine” body and its dark, soft, wet and weak organs, fluids and humours—or, more specifically, from the maternal abject. As Kristeva puts it, under the law “[t]he body must bear no trace of its debt to nature”: “[a]ny other mark,” apart from that left by circumcision, in the Jewish case, “would be the sign of belonging to the impure, the non-separate, the non-symbolic, the non-holy”—in short, a sign of the return of the abject (1982: 102). And yet the bodies of the martyrs of 4 Macc are anything but the “clean and proper” that they should be by the law: beginning with Eleazar, and continuing on for six of the seven children, their flesh is torn to shreds, their bones broken, their limbs dismembered, and so on. What, then, is going on here?

In the case of Eleazar, first of all: in 4 Macc 6.6 we read that, in the midst of his tortures, “his flesh was being torn by scourges [ἀπεξαίνετο ταῖς μάστιξιν], his blood flowing [καταρρέετο], and his ribs [τὰ πλευρὰ] were being cut to pieces [κατετιτρώσκετο].” Later one of Antiochus’ guards kicks him “in the flank [τοὺς κενεδόνας] to make him get up again after he fell” (6.8). Throughout his ordeal, however—“with his face bathed in sweat [ιδρῶν], and gasping heavily for breath [ἐπασθὰνων σφόδρως]”—the author of 4 Macc takes pains to tell us that “he amazed [ἐθαυμάζετο] even his torturers by his courageous spirit [εὐψυχίᾳ]” (6.11). But not even his noble disposition can save him from a final, cruel ignominy, as it turns out: the guards pour “stinking liquids” (δυσώδεις χυλοὺς) into his nostrils and burn him “to his very bones” (τῶν ὀστέων ἢδη κατακεκαυμένος, 6.25-26). What is

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25 In what way, and to what extent, could the hermeneutical leap supposed by this hypothesis for reading 4 Macc be justified? It should be understood as no more than an analogy, as Kristeva herself explains: “The shift taking place between chapters 12 and 13 [of Leviticus] seems significant to me; it goes from within the maternal body (childbirth, menses) to the decaying body. By means of what turnabout is the mother’s interior associated with decay? I have already noted that turning among split [or borderline] subjects…. It is reasonable to assume that the biblical text, in its own way, accurately follows the path of an analogous fantasy…” (1982: 101; my emphasis).

26 Kristeva’s notion of the “clean and proper body” (corps propre), which returns again and again in her work on abjection (e.g. 1982: 8, 20, 71-78, 85, 100-102, 107-108, etc.), has many affinities with the notion of the self-controlled body in 4 Macc, as will already be clear from the insinuations we have made to this effect in this chapter. For more on this idea in 4 Macc, see Chapter 4 of this thesis above.
perhaps most interesting for our purposes in this chapter in all of this gruesome vignette, however, is the way in which the law as institution—as well as its observance and defence—actually seems to require this kind of contact with blood, sweat, marrow, tissue, organs, etc.: i.e., the very things it would seek to banish. “Such should be those who are administrators of the law [τοὺς δημιουργοῦντας τὸν νόμον],” says our author in his encomium on Eleazar, “shielding [ὑπερασπίζοντας] it with their own blood and noble sweat in sufferings even to death” (7.8). This connection becomes even more intriguing when we realise that the word translated as “administrators” in the NRSV, δημιουργοῦντας, can also mean, as a singular noun, “maker,” “creator,” “producer” as well as “magistrate”—a master artisan who works (ἐργὸν) for the people (δῆμος; LSJ: s.v.)27. Kagis McEwen (1993: 46) observes with regard to this peculiar word:

The city was an artifact, and the δημιουργός, at least in the early stages of emerging Greek consciousness28, was as much the legislator who made public order as the craftsman who made the kosmos29 of things. Indeed…craftsman and legislator were generically the same…

Could the martyrs of 4 Macc, then, be so many “artisans” of the law who are responsible for remaking it, in their singular time and place, and rediscovering its kosmos? Could the law be so weak as to constantly be in need of this rediscovery and remaking, which in fact reveals it to operate under the aegis of the very thing which it seeks to ban?

This impression that the law in 4 Macc is so vulnerable as to constantly be in need of defence and subsequent reinscription is only strengthened in our author’s retelling of

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27 Hadas (1953: 183) here has “functionaries” instead of “administrators”: “[a] straddle between the here awkward demiouergountas…and the conjectural hierergountas [an alternative reading promoted by Grimm and DuPont-Sommer, among others] which is appropriate to a hieres or priest.” H. Anderson (1983: 2.552) opts for the long-winded “those…who are skilled in the craft of keeping the Law.”

28 Kagis McEwen writes that “[t]he political status of the δημιουργοί declined in the classical era, and with it the whole notion of allowing kosmos to emerge through making” (1993: 75). But this fact need not cause us undue confusion: the atticising tendencies of the author of 4 Macc could very well lead him to use such an old-fashioned word in the second half of the first century C.E.

29 Kagis McEwen traces the etymological significance of this word back to the concept of “a mutable rhythm governing a pattern of movement, like the figure of a dance: a rhythm or order…that is rediscovered with each new tracing of the figure” (1993: 42). She goes on to explain that “the city was made, and continually remade, in a making that was itself a discovery of kosmos” (1993: 46).
the torture and death of the first brother who, despite being scourged and having his limbs dislocated (ἐξαρθροσ), his members disjoined (κλωμενος) and his ligaments severed (περιτετμημένον… ἔχων τὸ τῶν ὀστέων πήγμα; 9.12-14, 21)—before finally being burned alive (9.19-22)—defends himself by declaring that “I protect the divine law” (θείου νόμου προστήκοντα, 9.15) 30. We could also cite here the words of the sixth brother to the effect that the law needs henchmen to do its bidding in the same manner as does Antiochus: “For it is not the guards of the tyrant but those of the divine law that are set over us… [οὐ…τυράννων ἀλλὰ θείοι νόμου προεστῆκασιν ἠμῶν οἱ δορυφόροι]” (11.27). But the point is that the law in itself, far from being robust, logical and self-evident—or as the martyrs put it, “divine” (5.16, 18, 25; 6.21; 9.15; 11.27; etc.), “virtuous” (11.5), “invincible” (cf. 9.18), etc.—is inherently fragile and needful of constant reinvention. Not only that, but indeed worse: the most menacing aspect of this crisis of the law is that it is revealed—apocalypse—to be completely arbitrary, as our author lets slip at 8.25: “Not even the law itself would arbitrarily [ἐκουσιος] 31 put us to death for fearing the instruments of torture.” Despite these words coming in the middle of one of our author’s imagined speeches for his principal protagonists (that of the brothers, “if some of them had been cowardly and unmanly”, in 8.16-26 [16]; cf. the speech our author imagines the mother would have given if she “had been fainthearted,” in 16.5-11 [5]), commentators habitually take the sentiments expressed at face value, arguing along the lines of H. Anderson (1983: 2.554 n. d): “Though it most surely condemned idolatry in any form, the Law did not condemn “fear” in such circumstances as these.” But our author is very careful to state after this hypothetical “speech in character” (deSilva 2006c: 261) that “the youths…neither said any of these things” he attributes to them “nor even seriously considered them” (τούτων οὐδὲν ἔπον… οὐδὲ ἐνεθυμήθησαν, 8.27): the implication being, then—at least for the pedantic reader—that they do consider the law to be capable of “arbitrarily” putting a person to death. Here again we are reminded of some words of Kristeva’s which would sum up the pathetic state of the law under the martyrs of 4 Macc: “Religion, Morality, Law. Obviously always arbitrary, more or

30 Cf. also the brothers’ mutual admonition to “use our bodies as a bulwark for the law” (χρήσωμεν τῇ περὶ τὸν νόμου φυλάξῃ τῇ σώματι, 4 Macc 13.13), the portrayal of the mother as “vindicator of the law” (ἐκδόκει τοῦ νόμου) and “guardian of the law” (νομοφύλαξ) in 15.29, 32, etc.

31 Better perhaps than “arbitrarily” here (so the NRSV) might be “willingly” (so Hadas 1953: 193; H. Anderson 1983: 2.554; etc.) or “voluntarily” (cf. LSJ: s.v.)—but in any case, the point we are making would still stand.
less; unfailingly oppressive, rather more than less; laboriously prevailing, more and more so…” (1982: 16)\(^\text{32}\).

3.2.2. The “reinvention” of the law in 4 Macc and the question of the ἀντίφυσος

In the concluding section to 4 Macc we read that “…by reviving [ἀνανεωσάμενοι] observance of the law in the homeland they [the martyrs of the work] ravaged the enemy” (18.4). The martyrs, then, have succeeded in literally *reanimating* (ἀνανεόοµαι)—renewing, reviving—a code that had succumbed to its essential *arbitrariness*. But how did they do so—and does the law, in fact, remain as it was before its passing?

As we noted above in section [3.2.1], the martyrs, as δηµιουργοί, are responsible for retracing the *kosmos* of the law to thereby remake, or re-realise, the city. As well as underlying 4 Macc 7.8, as we saw, this idea also lies behind Eleazar’s defence of God’s “sympathy” for the human race at 5.25\(^\text{33}\)—the Founder (κτίστης) of the *kosmos* has also founded (καθεστάναµι) the law—and the mother-martyr’s advice to her children at 16.18: “Remember that it is through God that you have had a share in the world [τοῦ κόσµου µετελάβετε] and have enjoyed life [τοῦ βίου ἀπελαύσατε].” Μεταλαµβάνο, as well as “have/get a share of,” “partake of,” “have a part in,” and so on, is also capable of the sense of “succeed,” as in, to the government; ἀπολαύω, as well as “have enjoyment” of a thing, can also mean “have the benefit” of it in a bad sense—i.e., to “take advantage” of it, to “come off it well”—precisely as a corrupt politician might\(^\text{34}\). The martyrs would then have “succeeded” to the government of the city and assumed the task of reinscribing its laws—and this they achieve, as “borderline” rulers, *by redrawing completely the boundaries that mark off the inside—the law—from the outside—nature.*

\(^{32}\) In an observation that has resonances for our work in this chapter Kristeva goes on to note here the contemporary literature which, under the sign of the abject, “acknowledge the impossibility of Religion, Morality and Law [capitals original]—their power play, their necessary and absurd seeming” (1982: 16). For this movement as *apocalypse* for Kristeva, see, for e.g., 1982: 138, 141, 151-54, 204-209, etc.

\(^{33}\) Cf. our treatment of this verse in [2.1] above.

\(^{34}\) See the definitions and uses of each word collected in LSJ: s.v.
Above in [2.1] and [2.2.1] we noted that the concept of “nature” (φύσις) appears in 4 Macc, in the minds of the martyrs of the work, as already conformed and subsumed to the law: for example, as the ὤλη—maternal abject—which reason “purges” or “purifies” (περικαθαρίσων), “cuts off” (ἀποκνίζων), “ties up” (περιπλέκων), etc. (1.28-29; cf. 5.25). In the eyes of Antiochus and his troops, however, nature is in itself a “creative, sovereign power” (C. A. Anderson) —a potent, independent force—capable of granting humankind “very excellent” and “delicious” things which, far from spurning, it is to recognise as “gifts of nature” (τὰς τῆς φύσεως χάριτας, 5.8-9 [9]).

Now, although this construct of the two views of “nature” in 4 Macc was useful to us above—as we attempted to see how “masculine” law, through reason, eclipses “feminine” nature in its totality in the advent of the speaking subject—to be able to see how the martyrs reconstruct this law in the wake of its “apocalypse” we need to nuance the construct somewhat.

Closer inspection of our text reveals that there are uses of “nature” therein that do not conform either to the perspective on it expressed by the martyrs or to that expressed by Antiochus. In 4 Macc 15.13, for example, nature is given the epithet “sacred” (φύσις ἱερὰ), which is employed elsewhere in the text only for the mind which rules, through the law, “as a sacred governor” (ἱερὸν ἠγεμόνα) over the senses (αἰσθητηρίων, 2.22); for the “sacred oaths of my ancestors” (ἱεροὺς τῶν προγόνων…ὄρκους) which Eleazar says prevents him from transgressing the law (5.29); for Eleazar’s “sacred life” (ἱερὰν ψυχήν, 7.4) and “sacred teeth” (ἱεροὺς ὀδόντας, 7.6) for the fact of him not having eaten defiling foods (“gifts of nature”) but abided by the law; etc.35—in short, for things which are directly opposed to “nature.”

What is more, “sacred nature” in 15.13 is directly linked to the feminine and maternal, coming as it does right in the middle of a paean to the mother-martyr and to maternal (and paternal) love in general (14.11-17.6; esp. 15.13-15): “O sacred nature and affection of parental love [φιλία γονέων], yearning of parents toward offspring [γένεσι φιλόστοργη], nurture [τροφεία] and indomitable suffering by mothers [μητέρων ἀδάμαστα πάθη]]”

35 The descriptor “sacred” is also applied in 4 Macc to the “sacred treasury” (ἱερῶθησαυρὸς) in Jerusalem (4.7); to the “sacred and noble battle for religion” (ἱερῶν καὶ ἐγκυρῶν στρατεύματος…παρὰ τῆς εὐσεβείας) which the first brother says the martyrs fight (9.24); and to the “sacred and harmonious concord” (ἱερὰς καὶ εὐδημίουσας…συμφωνίας) of the brothers (14.3).
These verses, along with other similar ones in which “nature” is portrayed as neither the abject of the Jewish law or the seductive object of a “Greek” one (e.g. 13.27; 15.25; etc.), are best explained, we suggest, if the martyrs have reinscribed the law from the inside by rewriting its essential relationship with nature. Such an operation is also in evidence in a passage such as 13.19ff., in which milk—symbol of maternal love and prototype of the (biblical) maternal abject par excellence for Kristeva (e.g. 1982: 105-6)36—is said to be just as responsible for the heroic achievement of the brothers as their “education in the law” (cf. 1.15-17), if not more:

You [i.e., the brothers] are not ignorant of the affection of family ties [τὰ τῆς ἀδελφότητος φιλέτρα]…which was implanted [φυτεύσασα] in the mother’s womb [τῆς μητρήφας…γαστρός]. There each of the brothers spent the same length of time and was shaped [πλασθέντες] during the same period of time; and growing from the same blood [αὐτοῦ ἀματος] and through the same life [αὐτής ψυχῆς], they were brought to the light of day [τελεσφορηθέντες]. When they were born after an equal time of gestation, they drank milk from the same fountains [αὐτῶν γαλακτοποτῶν πηγῶν]. From such embraces [أنظمة…ἐναγκαλισμάτων] brotherly-loving souls [φιλάδελφοι ψυχαί] are nourished [συντρέφονται], and they grow stronger from this common nurture [συντροφίας] and daily companionship [συνηθείας], and from both general education [τῆς ἀλλῆς παιδείας] and our discipline in the law of God [καὶ τῆς ἡμετέρας ἐν νόμῳ θεοῦ ἀσκήσεως]… (13.19-22)

Feminine “nature” and masculine “law,” therefore, are brought into a new symbiosis through the maternal-abject element of milk. And the place in which this uneasy rapprochement is effected is none other than the arena (cf. 11.20), the “mass grave” (πολυανθρείον; deSilva 2006d: 54-5)37, in which the martyrs die as ἀντίψυχος:

36 See also Kristeva’s vivid description of the abject in 1982: 2-3—“Food loathing is perhaps the most elementary and most archaic form of abjection. When the eyes see or the lips touch that skin on the surface of milk…I experience a gagging sensation and, still farther down, spasms in the stomach, the belly; and all the organs shrivel up the body, provoke tears and bile, increase heartbeat, cause forehead and hands to perspire…. I abject myself within the same motion through which “I” claim to establish myself…” (emphasis original; cf. also 1982: 69).

37 DeSilva here suggests πολυανθρείον in place of the πολυάνδριον of the eclectic text (Rahlfs 2006) followed by the translators of the NRSV—a reading we will here adopt (although cf. the use of πολυάνδριον in 2 Macc, our author’s source, at 9.4).
When you saw the flesh of children burned upon the flesh of other children, severed hands upon hands, scalped heads upon heads, and corpses fallen on other corpses, and when you saw the mass grave, the \( \chiωριον/\chiοριον/\chiορειον \) of the children on account of the tortures [τῶν τέκνων…διὰ τῶν βασάνων], you [i.e., the mother] did not shed tears… (15.20)

The text has given way at this point to such an extent that, weighed down by all the blood, gore, heads and corpses—and, more importantly for us, by the possibility of a new alliance in the \( \\alphaντίψυχος \) between nature and law—that an accurate translation is no longer possible. We have kept three readings discussed by deSilva (2006d: 54-5)—\( \chiωριον \), “place” (adopted by the eclectic text; Rahlfs 2006); \( \chiοριον \), “afterbirth”\(^{38} \) (the reading in S and deSilva’s own preference at this point); and \( \chiορειον \), “dancing place” (adopted by Townshend 1913: 2.681, among others)—for each alternative is highly eloquent, in its own way, and should be read as being present here simultaneously.

But the last word we owe to Kristeva, who describes the \( \chiώρα \)—and therefore, the “little” \( \chiώρα \) in 4 Macc 15.20, \( \chiωριον \)—as the privileged “place” of the maternal abject:

The \emph{chora} is not yet a position that represents something [i.e., a \emph{subject}]; nor is it a \emph{position} that represents someone for another position [i.e., an \emph{object}]…. The mother’s body [i.e., the \emph{abject}] is…what mediates the symbolic law organizing social relations and becomes the ordering principle of the semiotic \emph{chora}… [which] is no more than the place where the subject is both generated and negated, the place where his unity succumbs before the process of charges [i.e., \emph{drives}] and stases that produce him…. (1984: 26-28; emphasis original)

\textbf{Conclusion}

Who, or what self, is speaking in 4 Macc? For whom, or what selves? Here in these pages, answering these questions to which Kristeva prompted us, we have seen that matters of the “subject” presupposed by 4 Macc—such as the \emph{psychological} (as

\(^{38}\) I.e., “the placenta and fetal membranes discharged from the womb after the birth of offspring” (OED).
opposed to cultural) identities and self-maintenance of its author and his martyrs—are by no means as transparent as they may appear at first glance.

Rather than the “person” simply assumed by historicist or social-scientific studies of the text—which can, by their very nature, only take account of the undeviating metalanguage of subjectivity as revealed, for example, in anthropology, discourse or ideology ([1.1] above)—here we have gone in search of the Kristevan “speaking subject” of 4 Macc who, as the text reveals, “maintains a specific relationship of crisis, trial, or process with his God” (Kristeva 1995: 117; [1.2]). Via a brief analysis of two recent studies of the work, this linguistic (as opposed to anthropological) subject was first revealed to be founded by a law that, by necessity, excludes everything in the individual’s “nature”—his “passions,” for example—which is incompatible with his reason (Watson, [1.3.1]). At the same time, however—and rather unexpectedly—we saw that the subject of 4 Macc is forever pounded by a “flood of emotions” (15.31-32; Weigold, [1.3.2]): like the subject of the mother in the work in particular, the speaking subject in 4 Macc in general is ἐκδίκος both as “vindicator of the law” (15.29) and as always already assailed by his passions, i.e., as essentially lawless (ἐκ-δίκος).

This apparent contradiction of the subject of 4 Macc as ἐκδίκος then provided us with the impetus to re-examine the law/nature dichotomy in the text which, building on our work in Chapter 4 of this thesis above, we saw to be yet another dimension of the masculine/feminine opposition our author tries so hard to set up ([2.1]). The law is coded as masculine because it trains its subjects in “manliness” (ἀνδρεία, see Chapter 4 above), but “nature”—above all in its appearance as the “ὕλη of the habits and emotions” (1.29)—is feminine ([2.2.1]): that dark, wet, weak, and soft matter which Kristeva names the maternal abject because, as “waste” or “remainder,” it must be thrust aside by the individual in order to come successfully to subjectivity under the law ([2.2.2]). But then, in a final twist, we saw that, in the measure in which the author of 4 Macc allows his martyrs to be manipulated by their nature—while still upholding the law—they present as “borderline subjects” on the frontier between both nature and law. And it is this status that allows them, in the midst of the crisis or apocalypse of the law revealed at 8.25—i.e., its essential arbitrariness ([3.2.1])—to rewrite the relationship between nature and law, or between subject and object,
according to the logic of the abject (the milk of brotherly love in 13.19-27, [3.2.2]). The fact that the place in which they undertake this legislating function is none other than the χωρίον/χώριον/χορεῖον of their tortures (15.20) means, as we saw, that the law, or nature, now “contains” within it the possibility of both the generation and negation of the unity of the “subject” according to the logic of the χώρα (Kristeva): or, in other words, the possibility of the ἀντίψυχος, vicarious substitute.

The psyche signifies the claiming of the same by the other, or inspiration, beyond the logic of the same and the other, of their insurmountable adversity.

(Levinas 1998b: 141)

But this subjectivity, his very psyche, is for the other, his very bearing independence consists in supporting the other, expiating for him.

(ibid.: 136)

Introduction

Some of the most poignant words yet written on the dream of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement belong to the Franco-Lithuanian philosopher Emmanuel Levinas. In his Otherwise than Being, or, Beyond Essence, for example, we read:

[…] Vulnerability, exposure to outrage, to wounding, passivity more passive than all patience, passivity of the accusative form, trauma of accusation suffered by a hostage to the point of persecution, implicating the identity of the hostage who substitutes himself for the others: all this is the self, a defecting or defeat of the ego’s identity. And this, pushed to the limit, is sensibility, sensibility as the subjectivity of the subject. It is a substitution for another, one in the place of another, expiation… (Levinas 1998b: 15)

What relation, if any, do the concepts expressed here in this passage and in the rest of Levinas’s oeuvre—substitution, sensibility, subjectivity, expiation, etc.—bear with the idea of the ἀντίψυχος, the vicarious substitute and sacrifice of 4 Macc? On the

1 Or in another formulation of Levinasian “substitution” that will be particularly helpful for us here in this chapter: “[T]he passivity undergone in proximity by the force of an alterity in me is the passivity of a recurrence to oneself which is not the alienation of an identity betrayed. What can it be but a substitution of me for the others?… [T]he other in the same is my substitution for the other through responsibility, for which, I am summoned as someone irreplaceable….” (Levinas 1998b: 114-5).
face of it, it would seem that these texts share a certain overlap in their anthropological, psychological and ethical imagery: both appear to agree, for instance, that it is possible, somehow, for one to “substitute[] himself for the others,” to stand “in the place of another,” that this substitution has to do, in some way, with vulnerability, exposure, wounding, trauma, etc. But it will be the burden of this our final chapter in this thesis to consider the extent to which any prima facie correspondence between Levinas and 4 Macc can be maintained, later to press the particular parallels we hope to discover into the service of our inquiry into the mechanisms of vicarious substitution and atonement in the latter work.

1. The Other in Levinas

To begin with, then: in a formulation of “the hostage who substitutes himself for the others” such as we have cited at the beginning of this chapter, what does Levinas mean by the “other”?

1.1. The Good before Being

In Chapter 1 of this thesis above, in connection with the allegedly “Jewish” and “Greek” aspects of 4 Macc—that is, reductively speaking, the “ethical” and the “ontological”—we noted very briefly that Levinas’s philosophical project is characterised by an attempt to recover the Good before Being in Plato’s metaphysics, and, consequently, the Western philosophical tradition. In the Republic (509b), for example, we hear on Socrates’ lips the teaching that the things which are known receive their being and existence from the good—“though the good is not being [οὐκ οὐσίας], but something far surpassing [ἐπέκεινα] being in rank and power” (trans. Griffith 2000: 216). But exactly what this “good” entails, over and above the role its plays as “overseer” of the other realities and its clearly “different and superior nature” (ἄλλο καὶ κάλλιον, e.g. Resp. 509a), is left largely unthought in Plato, as Narbonne (2002: 186) observes: apart, that is, from a certain connection with dialectical thinking, or transcendence, that Levinas will take up in his work². And if Being is

² Here Narbonne looks to Glaucon’s question in Resp. 532e—“Tell us, how does it operate, this power of dialectic?”—and Socrates’ reply in 533a that although it might be “an image or model of what we
inaugurated in an ἀρχή which is consciousness and will, the otherwise than Being for Levinas—the Good—opens in an an-ἀρχή, a non-beginning, which is characterised by a radical passivity, prior to activity, on the part of the ego: “Goodness is always older than choice; the Good has always already chosen and required the unique one” (Levinas 1998b: 57).

1.2. Creation and creature

One of Levinas’s preferred images for this radical passivity of the ego marked indelibly by the diachrony of the “anarchy” of the Good—the “Other” of Being—and the arche of Being itself is that of creation. This is not to say that Levinas is interested, necessarily, in the theological sense of this term; rather, what he seeks to stress is that there is, on this thinking, a certain awareness with respect to the Good on the part of the ego that predates the consciousness synonymous with Being. “…[I]n creation, what is called to being answers to a call that could not have reached it since, brought out of nothingness, it obeyed before hearing the order,” Levinas writes (1998b: 113). The Other, in other words—the Good—makes itself felt in the creature, before that creature takes up its being, by means of a call which the creature has no choice but to obey. But again, we must emphasise that this call to the Good should not be understood as issuing forth from God, at least as far as the idea of “God” is usually understood in Western theology (and philosophy). Levinas’s emphasis, rather, is on the call-ing to ethical awareness rather than the call of ontological causality—God causing matter to be—as a way to safeguard against the solidification of the diachrony of the Good, which we discovered above, into the synchrony of Being in representation or dogma (Kosky 2001: 149-52)³.

1.3. Heteronomy and the law

This call to the Good that sounds in the ego, in Levinas, before the call to Being can also be illustrated, apart from an appeal to the thought of creation, by the idea of the giving

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³ The way in which Levinas usually expresses this thought – here the difference between a “call-ing” and a “call”—is via his particular use of the ideas of the “saying” and the “said.” Dire – the infinitive, or timeless, form of the verb “to say”—represents the way in which an-archical Good still exercises its claim on the subject after the arche of Being inaugurates the synthesis or synchrony of understanding: objects and concepts brought together in the past participle, dit (Chalier 2002: 183 n. 44; Critchley 1999: 165-6).
and receiving of the law. For just as the creature is passive from the moment of her birth, already in her skin, so she is helpless with regard to her will and her freedom. Before the possibility of any act of autonomy, in the Kantian sense—the subject giving the law, the categorical imperative, to herself—there is a heteronomy of the Good; prior to being or the self or subjectivity, in other words, there is subjection to the Other. And even if this subjection will bring pain to the subject as she seeks to set aside her “desires, emotions, and self-interest” and bend to the universal law, as even in Kant (Chalier 2002: 63-4; Lingis 1998: xxv), this heteronomy of the Good is, for Levinas, the only guarantee of avoiding tyranny and securing freedom. Whereas the other for the autonomous subject is Other only as an “alter ego”—“a finite and reasonable being similar to itself” of which it becomes aware only in solitary self-reflection (Chalier 2002: 68)—the subject in the thrall of the Good before Being sees the other in its absolute alterity: as an other that threatens this exercise of the consciousness and reasoning of the self because of its pre-existent claim on the ego.

1.4. The neighbour and the stranger

How does the Good as other than Being—felt, at least in the Judeo-Christian tradition, in the notions of “God”, creation, and the law—then press its claim over the ego in the more immediate context of that ego’s moral conduct? The other with whom I am most closely concerned is my neighbour, mon prochain: “the neighbor is “near” (proche) but never present”—since presence is always the presence of self, being, to self (e.g. Levinas 1998b: 52)—“[he] draws nigh without ever arriving” (Taylor 1987: 210). As well as being the one nearest to me in proximity, the neighbour, for Levinas, is also the re’ah (“neighbour”) of Judeo-Christianity—or even, as Newton (2001: 195 n. 31) points out, the k’rov, the “stranger.” But is there not a certain conflict in these terms, neighbour and stranger? Does not the one signify a more “personal” relation and the other, one more “impersonal”? Smith (2005: 69) considers this question answered in these words of the philosopher:

4 “…[N]eighbor (prochain in French and closer to k’rov than re’ah in Hebrew in the multiple sense of “drawn near, attracted, offered”), more exactly captures the determinate sense of alterity as a constant approaching. The neighbor is a provocation—always “on the way toward” the self, but never commensurate with it” (emphasis original).
Absolving himself from all essence, all genus, all resemblance, the neighbor, the first one on the scene, concerns me for the first time (even if he is an old acquaintance, an old friend, an old lover, long caught up in the fabric of my social relations) in a contingency that excludes the a priori. Not coming to confirm any signaling [signalement] made in advance, outside of everything…the neighbor concerns me with his exclusive singularity without appearing… (Levinas 1998b: 86; emphasis original)

The neighbour is a stranger, then, according to Levinas, and the stranger a neighbour—thanks, at least in part, to the call of the law to not only love the neighbour but to “love the stranger as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt” (Lev 19.34)⁵.

1.5. The face

But how does the neighbour, the stranger, make himself known to the self before being “without appearing”—since “appearing,” like presence, would be conterminous with that being? Levinas suggests that he comes as a face—but again, like “God,” this is an idea that is not to be understood solely in its obvious, literal sense. “[The] way of the neighbour is a face”—but more than a physiognomy, beyond a countenance, it is the “nudity, non-form, abandon of self, ageing, dying, more naked than nudity…poverty, skin with wrinkles” by which the stranger communicates the call to the Good more ancient than Being (Levinas 1998b: 88). Beholding the face of an other does not leave me indifferent: it touches me, haunts me, obsesses me, persecutes me⁶, says something to me other than what words could; its grooves and furrows—reminders of the long-gone past (in this case a youth) to which I am always captive (absolute passivity in relation to the Good, creation, law, etc.)—bind me to him, to an obligation to him to do him good which I can never live up to. “It is though I were

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⁵ As Levinas writes in his Humanism of the Other (2003: 66), commenting on Lev 25.23 (“No land will be alienated irrevocably, because the land is mine, because you are but strangers, housed in my land”): “Echo of the permanent saying [dire] of the Bible: the condition—or incondition—of strangers and slaves in the land of Egypt brings man closer to his [neighbour]. Men seek one another in their incondition of strangers.…”

⁶ Such “persecution” is not only to be understood in its present hostile sense (persecut-) but also in its more ancient, literal sense: persequi, from per-, “through, utterly” and sequi, “follow,” “pursue” (OED).
responsible for his mortality, and guilty for surviving” (Levinas 1998b: 91). This regarding his countenance, then, is not a matter of seeing with plain sight: to hear the call of the Other in the stranger’s face I do not use the eye which sees by the light of Being, as in Plato, but rather the “eye that listens”, attuned to the Good.

1.6. Touch

In order to stress, once again, that the Other makes itself felt, in the beginning, other than by sight or any other faculty of the knowing, reasoning, autonomous subject Levinas affords a privileged place in his ethics to the notion of touch. A caress, in particular, is not a relationship between the “subject” and “object” that are founded in being: instead of returning me to myself, a self-reflexive movement by which I recognise myself as my self, as being, touch as caress makes me vulnerable, “takes me out of myself toward the other” (Oliver 2001: 205), exposes me to him. And just as the face of the stranger, in all its flickering, expressive nakedness, evokes a past that I am always seeking to make up for, so his caress—which, as it turns out, I actually feel in looking on and hearing him—incites in me a sensation I am not myself aware of and could not describe. “In a caress, what is there is sought as though it were not there, as though the skin were the trace of its own withdrawal…like an absence which, however, could not be more there” (Levinas 1998b: 90). What is not “there” but at the same time more “there” than ever is nothing but a trace of alterity “itself”: the appeal of the face of the stranger to the eye that listens and feels—heteronomous call of the Other, to the creature, to the Good the creature cannot remember and cannot conjure up, or reconcile, because embedded in an irretrievable, an-archical past.

2. The Other in 4 Macc: interpretation as interruption

If the “Other”, for Levinas, is felt above all in the call of the Good that is Other than Being—a plea, an accusation, that seizes the creature “before” she comes to

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7 Vasseleu (1998: 88-97) explains the difference between the eye that sees and the “eye that listens” in terms of the difference between looking and regarding: “[l]ooking is the condition of sight, a violation which incorporates an object into the field of one’s gaze. Regard is a generosity towards the face in its material particularity”—a gesture that is attentive to the other’s singular history and needs (88).

8 “The visible caresses the eye. One sees and one hears like one touches” (Levinas 1987a: 118).
consciousness, already in the radical passivity of her birth, and rings in her ears in her helplessness before the law and the caress of the face of the stranger—which trace is there of this “Other” in 4 Macc?

Before we can attempt to answer this question we must acknowledge the shadow on the horizon of this chapter that has been gathering, in fact, at least since we attempted, with Levinas’s help, to analyse 4 Macc as “Jew”/“Greek” in Chapter 1 above: that is, that “[a]ny approach to the question of the relationship of Levinas’s philosophy to literature has…to deal with the incommensurability between Levinas’s ethics and the discourse of literary criticism” (Robbins 1999: xx). The problem could be stated in other words as follows: because ethics precedes ontology in Levinas, there is no way for interpretation—what a text “means” or is—to step outside, or even comprehend, this insistent infinity of the Good. Criticism itself must be ethical, even if the ethical demand—the demand of the Other that we began to consider above—is unfathomable, unforgettable, unfulfillable. How then to proceed? Picking up on the Levinasian distinction between the Saying and the Said which we have already looked at briefly⁹, Eaglestone (1997) suggests the way forward for us here in this chapter. Commenting on some pertinent reflections of Levinas’s on the nature of texts and textuality (Levinas 1998b: 170-1), Eaglestone writes:

Any book, literary, philosophical or otherwise, is ‘pure said,’ but at the same time the result of ‘interrupted discourse.’ A book is the moment of encryptment of the saying in the said, and bears the signs of this encryptment. Books reveal the ferment of the saying and the said, constantly interrupting themselves and each other…. Through writing [however]…a book becomes only said, which calls out for interpretation as interruption. This interpretation as interruption is a saying, ‘distinct from the said’…. It is this process of interruption and interpretation…which underlies [ethical] critical practice. (Eaglestone 1997: 165; emphasis mine)

The goal, that is, as we seek to uncover the trace of the Levinasian Other (and later, the Same or the “self”) in 4 Macc, searching after the trace of the ἄντιψυχος, will be

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⁹ See n. 3 above.
to try to “interrupt” the said in the name of the saying”—“in the name of the other”—in the text and its commentaries (Eaglestone 1997: 176, 166): above all by reading skeptically and reading inwardly\(^\text{10}\), in the second person (cf. Derrida 1991), around all the ideas in the work related to the headings we have flagged above (and will flag below). Will this suffice as an ethical interpretive gesture? Only in future interpretations, interruptions, of 4 Macc and this very study of that text, and others, could we hope—against hope—to find our anxiety (somewhat) lulled\(^\text{11}\).

2.1. The Good in 4 Macc

What trace is there, then, of the Levinasian Other beyond Being in 4 Macc? With two exceptions (1.8 and 4.1)\(^\text{12}\), perhaps, the term used in our work to express the ideal of the Good is καλοκαγαθία (e.g. 1.10; 3.18; 11.22; 13.25; 15.9; etc.), a term which deSilva (1998: 80-1) and other commentators have rendered “nobility.” Following Danker (1982: 319), deSilva understands that the martyrs of 4 Macc are considered καλοκαγαθοί by the author of the work because “[they] act out of a commitment to aretē, “excellence” or “virtue” (cf. 1.8; 7.21-22; 9.8; 10.10; 11.2). This interpretation fits with the opinion of Weaver (2008: 162-3), who likewise puts an accent on the role of human moral initiative in the attainment of the Good in 4 Macc, though now with the martyrs’ “endurance” (ὑπομονή) in particular filling in for their “virtue” in general. But another possibility for reading the Good in 4 Macc—more approximate to Levinas’ vision in the end, perhaps—is through the lens of the famous Stoic maxim μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἄγαθον: “only the noble [is] good.” This formulation—which does not depend, crucially, on the verb “to be” (εἰμί, εἶναι)—was taken by the Stoic-Cynic philosopher Aristo of Chios (fl. c. 260 B.C.E.) to mean that nothing apart from the moral—“concern for one’s health, care of one’s household, public service, the

\(^{10}\) Cf., for e.g., Levinas 1998b: 170-1: “And I still interrupt the ultimate discourse in which all the discourses are stated, in saying it to one that listens to it, and who is situated outside the said that the discourse says, outside all it includes…. This reference to an interlocutor permanently breaks through the text that the discourse claims to weave in thematizing and enveloping all things…. Every discourse, even when said inwardly, is in proximity and does not include the totality. The permanent return of skepticism does not so much signify the possible breakup of structures as the fact that they are not the ultimate framework of meaning…."

\(^{11}\) “Any reading which interrupts the said and proposes that the art work is a site of fracture makes us aware of the constant force of our responsibilities. In contrast, any critical method…which claims to offer the last word, the last interpretation, is open to question. To finish interpreting is to finish interrupting, to stop trying to expose the saying in an art work” (Eaglestone 1997: 166).

\(^{12}\) Viz., 1.8: ἀνδραγαθία; 4.1: καλὸς καὶ ἄγαθος.
conduct of business and the duties of life” (Cicero, *Fin.* 4.68; trans. Woolf 2001: 112)—“has any positive value whatsoever” (Bett 2010: 134). Aristo’s, in the words of Porter (1996: 156-89 [157]), was “a rigorously literal and unambiguous construction” that exploited the inherent Stoic contradiction between virtue and indifference (and “things indifferent”), carrying off the Good into an forever receding distance (because ultimately indistinguishable from the ἀδιάφορα) along a vanishing point akin to the thin veneer of a theatrical performance (cf. 4 Macc 6.17; etc.)\(^\text{13}\) or the infinite regress of dialectical logic. Are the martyrs of 4 Macc truly καλοκάγαθοι, then, or do they only seem to be in playing the part of the “good man” (cf. e.g. 7.18-23)?

**2.2. Creation in 4 Macc**

“Remember that it is through God that you have had a share in the world and have enjoyed life,” says the Maccabean mother to her sons at 4 Macc 16.18-19, “and therefore [διὰ τοῦτο] you ought [ὀφείλετε] to endure any suffering for the sake of [διὰ] God.” The adverbs διὰ τοῦτο (and διὰ) in her injunction carry the weight of a debt the martyrs have contracted even before being born and “enjoy[ing] life”—that is, to endure suffering—as the addition of the the modal verb ὀφείλετε makes clear: ὀφείλω or ὀφειλέω, as well as “ought,” can mean “owe, have to pay or account for,” “to be in debt,” “to be due or liable to,” etc. (LSJ: s.v.). Moreover, however, ὀφέλλω (“increase,” “enlarge”)—which shares exactly the same conjunction as ὀφείλω and ὀφειλέω—would suggest that the liability of the martyrs before the God who created them, and the Good (καλοκάγαθία) which forever accuses them—never ceases to augment and compound. Just as, then, the tyrant Antiochus incurs ever-increasing punishments from the “heavenly justice” (οὐρανίῳ δίκῃ) according to the number of brothers he slays, according to the fifth brother (πλείονον ἀδικημάτων ὀφειλήσεως...τιμωρίαν; 4 Macc 11.3), so the martyrs incur—for having been born—the obligation to die for the sake of God: “Since to this end we were born [εἰς ταύτα γὰρ γεννηθέντες],” the fifth brother continues, “…we ought...to die [ὑποθνῄσκειν ὀφείλομεν] for the same principles” (11.15).

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\(^\text{13}\) Cf. our comments on the “performances” of the martyrs of 4 Macc in sections [2.2.1] and [2.2.2] of Chapter 3 above.
2.3. The law in 4 Macc

Up until this point in this thesis we have had the opportunity to consider the idea of the “law” in 4 Macc from a variety of perspectives: as the measuring-stick for the “manliness” and hence honour of the two groups of contenders (Antiochus and the Jews) in the “contest befitting holiness” (11.20; 17.11-16; etc.), as a foundation of the Kristevan subject and yet completely arbitrary, etc.14. But now, reading 4 Macc with Levinas in mind, another of the slippery facets of this “law” is revealed: that of its absolute primevality and, concomitantly, its absolute unassimilability on the part of the individual subject to it. If the “subject” in 4 Macc, at least according to Watson (2006)15, is called into being by being called by the law (cf. e.g. 2.5-6, 8-9a), that would mean that the law predates all existence, even all thought, of this “subject”; and indeed, in the conceptual universe of our author, the law is proper to a nebulous past, to an in illo tempore prior to the creation of humankind (i.e., it antedates the ὁ πηνίκαι, lit. “whenever,” when God is said by our author to have “fashioned human beings,” 2.21-23 [21]). The law in 4 Macc—whether of “nature”, of the Torah, or of whatever other precept (cf. 5.8-13, 25)16—is therefore a primordial absolute (cf. 2.10-13) to which the only possible response on the part of the individual is the uneasy and life-long attempt at accommodation, rather than domination, modelled by Eleazar, for example: “O man in harmony [σύμφωνε] with the law!… O man…of law-abiding life [βίου νομίμου], whom the faithful seal of death has perfected [ἐτελείωσεν]!” (7.7, 15).

2.4. The neighbour in 4 Macc

Who is the neighbour, or the stranger, in 4 Macc? The word πλησίον (“neighbour”) occurs only once in the text—in the context of a reiteration of the tenth commandment (4 Macc 2.5)—within the section dedicated to the exposition of evidence from sacred history in truth of the proposition “that devout reason is sovereign over the emotions” (1.1; 1.30b-3.18). Also to be found within this subdivision of the text, though, is the figure of the “enemy” (πολέμιος or ἐχθρός), to

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14 See above in this thesis in Chapter 4, section [4] and Chapter 5, sections [1.3.1] and [3.2] respectively. Cf. also our remarks on the “law” as an unstable basis of the new order of the antipolitical inaugurated by the martyrs in Chapter 7 below, sections [3.2.3] and [3.2.4].
15 Cf. our treatment of this paper and the ideas discussed therein in section [1.3.1] of Chapter 5 above.
16 Cf. our discussion of the interrelationship between the “law of nature” and the law of the Torah in 4 Macc in section [2.1] of Chapter 5 above.
whom our author believes faithful Jews have an obligation not to cut down (μήτε δενδροτομῆν) his cultivated plants (φυτά) and to save (διασώζον) and restore (συνεγείρων) the property that is his (ήμερα, πεπτωκότα) from damage done by marauders (ἀπολέσαντα, 2.14). Hadas (1953: 154-5) notes that the Greek of this verse “is so elliptical as to be unintelligible,” but nonetheless sees allusions here to both Deut 20.19 and Exod 23.4-5. This latter parallel—in which τῶν ἐχθρῶν…τὰ πεπτωκότα συνεγείρων in 4 Macc would echo (τὸ ὑποζύγιον) τοῦ ἐχθροῦ…πεπτωκός…συνεγερεῖς in Exod 23.5 (LXX)—is particularly interesting to us in this chapter given that, as we have already seen (in section [1.4] above), Levinas conflates the “neighbour” and the “stranger” in his ethics precisely on the basis (amongst other things) of biblical verses such as Exod 23.9: “You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt” (cf. Exod 22.21; Lev 19.34; Stone 1998: 116). The devout Jew in 4 Macc, then, has a certain duty to the “enemy” that is at least analogous to that which he has to a “neighbour,” and it is only in the fulfilling of both that the surpassing power of reason, through the law, is manifested (4 Macc 2.14).

2.5. The face in 4 Macc

“…[W]ith his face [τὸ πρόσωπον] bathed in sweat [ιδρόν], and gasping heavily [ἐπασθαμάινον] for breath, [Eleazar] amazed even his torturers by his courageous spirit” (6.11): such is the only mention of the face in 4 Macc. A word very similar to πρόσωπον, however—προσωπεῖον, “mask”—occurs in 15.15 as part of our author’s description of the horrendous aftermath of the tortures of the child martyrs:


Heath (2013: 139) and Glancy (2010: 101) are certainly correct to perceive in this verse a further unfolding of our author’s strategy of unforgettable “visual display” so as “to vindicate God and his divine legislation” (Heath), but the more pressing
question for our purposes is this: what does the skin of the children’s faces—
“masks”—expose when peeled away? We have had occasion in this thesis to examine
several of the parallels scholars have adduced between 4 Macc and Euripides’ Trojan
Women, and here we might cite another one, again from Hecuba’s lament for
Astyanax (Tro. 1174-79, trans. Coleridge 1891; my emphasis)¹⁷:

Ah, poor child!
How sadly have your own father’s walls…
shorn from your head the locks your mother fondled,
and so often caressed, from which

through fractured bones the face of murder grins

[ἐνθὲν ἐκγέλα, ὑστόων ῥαγέντων φόνος, ἵν’ αἰσχρὰ μὴ λέγω].

O hands, how sweet the likeness you retain of his father,
and yet you lie limp in your sockets before me

[ἐν ἄρθροις δ’ ἐκλυτοι πρόκεισθέ μοι]!

The point of this comparison, as we conceive it, is to highlight the sense in which the
“face of murder” (in Coleridge’s apt phrase) lurks behind the anatomical visage in 4
Macc, haunting those who would behold it with its ghastly aspect (αἰσχρὰ) and its
demented gurgling (ἐκγελά)—a truth unveiled by the martyrs’ scalping at the hands of
the Seleucids.

2.6. Touch in 4 Macc

Despite the haphephobia evidenced by the actions of the mother of 4 Macc at 17.1—
“some of the guards said that…she threw herself into the flames so that no one might
touch her body [ἳνα μὴ ψαόσει ἡ τοῦ σώματος αὐτῆς]” (emphasis mine)—it could
be said that the shock of touch is highly valued by the author of 4 Macc, as for
example in the importance he affords the “brotherly-loving embraces”
(ἐναγκαλισμάτων φιλάδελφοι) in 13.19-22 [21] that we have already looked at in

¹⁷ See, for example, the parallels offered by deSilva in id. 2006c. Of particular note here is his
comparison between the “fainthearted” speech of the mother of 4 Macc in 16.5-11 and Tro. 1180-84
(2006c: 263)—an assertion which, if true, would show that our author was familiar with the portion of
the dramatic work which follows on immediately from the passage under discussion.
section [3.2.2] in Chapter 5 above\(^\text{18}\). The habitual explanation for 17.1 runs that “[i]n her death, the mother preserves her chastity” (cf. 18.6-19; deSilva 1998: 94; cf. Frilingos 2004: 101), and we have already seen that the brother’s caresses at their mother’s breast serve to inculcate in them the law, the virtues and “right living” (e.g. 13.23). In both cases the horror of touch seems to be serve as a kind of symbol for something more—purity, accommodation of divine reason, etc.—as a textual variant in A at 15.24 makes clear:

Although she witnessed the destruction of seven children and the ingenious and various rackings, this noble mother disregarded [ἐξελυσεν] all these [ἀπάσας] because of faith in God. (NRSV; following an emendation in Rahlfs 2006)

And though she saw the destruction of seven sons and the manifold variety of their tortures, the noble mother bad them farewell [ἀσράσασα, from ἀσπάζομαι: “kiss, embrace, cling fondly to,” etc.] and sent them forth in faith in God. (e.g. Emmet 1918: 66, following A)

A moving, very tactile piétà—the Maccabean mother cradling her dead children—thus forms the climax to the whole of the action recounted in the book, or at least on the testimony of A.

3. The Same in Levinas

3.1. Sensation and savouring

The audible, tactile and visual caress I feel regarding the face of the neighbour, or stranger, excites in me a particular sensation: such is the first move of the incipient ego approached by the Other, the “beginning” of a Same. Or better yet, perhaps, his caress induces me to savour that trace of the Other about it, for savouring, and not sighting or handling or feeding, etc. is the very stuff of nourishment and life, of the

\(^{18}\) To counter any imputation of a touch-phobic attitude to the author of 4 Macc—on the basis of verses such as 17.1—we might quote a verse such as 10.4 (which, to be sure, is only present in a minority of manuscripts as Klauck [1989: 730 n. 4a] reports, and hence relegated to the apparatus in Rahlfs 2006): “So, if you have any instrument of torture, apply it to my body [προσαγάγετε τὸ σῶμαι μου]; for you cannot touch [ἀγαθαι] my soul, even if you wish.”
life of the subject (Lingis 1998: xxxii). For Levinas, sensing as savouring, or enjoying—far from being the sensing as “perceiving,” “knowing,” “consuming,” etc. which proceeds from the gaze and objectification—is in fact an assimilation of the Other into the Same: “[a] sinking in that never goes far enough,” a quenching, “an ego assimilating the other in its identity” (1998b: 72-3). And because matter (ὕλη)\(^{19}\)—the matter of the face, for example—is not something static, impersonal or transcendent, not something which comes from wholly outside the ego, but is instead lived only in the closeness of an approach—there is again a trace of diachrony rather than synchrony at the heart of sensation. The impressing of the sense and the sense of the impression exist already and always apart from one another, on Levinas’ reading: the presence of the sensation to me, in other words, is not the atemporal recognition proper to essence, or being and consciousness, but a temporal remembering (or what Levinas calls a retention) of something that now pulls further and further apart, exists in a distension, from the actual lived experience, now past, without finally breaking free.

3.2. Sensibility

As the very word suggests, the physical sensation, or sensitivity, that lies at the very base of Levinas’ subjectivity is also a profound sensibility to the Other. For if I sense or savour the face of the other—receive, and enjoy, the sense impressions it effects—I am also, in that sense, affected by or susceptible to it. But how, and to what end? As we saw just above, sensing or savouring seems to hint at, or point to, something more: nourishment, meaning, life itself. It is for this reason that Levinas says that sensation is the very foundation of “signifyingness” for the subject—in the French, of significance (Meir 1997: 261)\(^{20}\). And if sensation is signifyingness for the ego, then sensibility is its possibility of signification: in my attentiveness or captivity or passivity to the other, he communicates something to me before all thought of thoughts and the said. “Communication is not reducible to the phenomenon of truth and the manifestation of truth conceived as a combination of psychological

\(^{19}\) Cf. our account of ὕλη in 4 Macc—in a Kristevan perspective—in Chapter 5 of this thesis above.

\(^{20}\) Cf., for example, Levinas 1998b: 85—“...[T]he dehiscence of proximity, older than the theme in which it shows itself, is then not the immediacy called abstract and natural.... Signifyingness, the-one-for-the-other, exposedness of self to another, it is immediacy in caresses and in the contact of saying...."
elements”—that is, cannot be broken down and separated into thoughts, words, signs, perception and the will to give out or receive a message (Levinas 1998b: 48). Instead, the nearness and vulnerability presupposed by sense and sensibility can make me aware, without me knowing it, through savouring and suffering: “[t]he signification proper to the sensible has to be described in terms of enjoyment and wounding, which are…the terms of proximity” (Levinas 1998b: 64-5; Sandford 2000: 120).

3.3. Saying

What, then, does my sense of and sensibility to the other signify, or communicate? As it turns out, I only hear this communication of the Other when I begin to speak myself: “Here I am.” These three words, “Here I am,” are the “first” that I speak: not in any chronological, literal sense but because they are first in importance, in that it is from them that signification and grammar take their bearings and hence, the very structure of language itself. As we have already hinted in this chapter above, the arché of subjectivity consists in the return of the ego to itself: self-reflection, re-cognition21. But already in this language of the “self” lies hidden an ambiguity: at least in French, as Levinas points out, se or soi is an “accusative that derives from no nominative” (1998b: 11, etc.). To be able to say “I” or “I am,” therefore, is already to be anchored in the radical passivity of this accusative self: “I have not done anything and I have always been under accusation—persecuted” (1998b: 114). But more than that, too, the accusative self, without a nominative, would refer to nothing but itself—or more precisely, to nothing but “the sound of my voice or the figure of my gesture” (1998b: 149). “Here I am”—the very act of saying—“is thus to make signs of this very signifyingness of [my] exposure”: to put into language my vulnerability in sensing the other and in being sensitive to his demand that I do him good (1998b: 143).

21 Cf., for example, section [1.6] of this chapter above. At issue here, to put it simply, is whether subjectivity is reducible to consciousness, an assumption that Levinas considers to have dominated philosophical thought at least prior to Hegel (1998b: 103). But, as Levinas goes on to point out, “[consciousness] already rests on a “subjective condition,” an identity that one calls ego or I”: “[i]f the return to self proper to cognition, the original truth of being, consciousness, can be realized, it is because a recurrence of ipseity has already been produced” (1998b: 102, 106-7). This recurrence, however, is not a recurrence of the ipseity as “I” but of the ipseity as “one” to an other self: the ego confronted by the face of the stranger and having nothing else to turn to, to recur to. As Bernasconi (2002: 241-2 [242]) explains: “Although the oneself or rather the me…is ‘in itself’, it is not ‘in itself’ like matter, of which it can be said that it is what it is…. The me is in itself ‘like one in is one’s skin’—cramped, ill at ease.”
3.4. Responsibility

Deep within my sense faculties, my emotions and the language I will use to articulate my thoughts and utterances, therefore—in short, at the very heart of my identity and subjectivity—lies buried a profound responsibility I have for the other, a charge I cannot help but take up as soon as I respond, as soon as I answer, in all my saying, “Here I am.” But from where does this responsibility originate? What exactly am I responsible for? I sense, and am affected by, the face of the stranger, but the poverty, the destitution, I see, feel and hear carved out in its immediacy to me predate my regarding them, as it were; I am, however, responsible for them as I offer myself to him: “Here I am.” Here again we are at the indeclinable se which is embedded in (French) grammar, but whereas Levinas makes use, first of all, of the reflexive aspect of this accusative self in his account of its coming to say, here in analysing the primordial burden of responsibility to which it is subject he emphasises its complementary passive sense. Time passes (se passe), and the accusative self (se) at the basis of language is thereby implicated in, accused of, responsible for everything that comes to pass: “The response which is responsibility, responsibility for the neighbour that is incumbent, resounds in this passivity”—that is, of the grammatical construction (Levinas 1998b: 14-15). Responsibility is thus different from—because prior to, in the self under accusation—a commitment to him, my own initiative, that “I” consciously will and freely assent to (1998b: 136-140).

3.5. Incarnation

These four movements of the self or the same for Levinas which we have analysed in the immediately preceding sections—sensation, sensibility, saying, and responsibility—are resumed by the philosopher under the rubric of incarnation:

The body is neither an obstacle opposed to the soul, nor a tomb that imprisons it, but that by which the self is susceptibility itself. Incarnation is an extreme passivity; to be exposed to sickness, suffering, death, is to be exposed to compassion, and, as a self, to the gift that costs…. (Levinas 1998b: 195 n. 12; emphasis mine)
By thus having susceptibility facilitate embodiment rather than merely follow on from it Levinas aims to achieve two things principally (which, in fact, will turn out to be one): in the first place, to situate the “hypostasis,” or mask, of being under which the “self” appears antecedent to consciousness, to self-reflection, when “faced” with the good—the ego “from the first backed up against itself…twisted over itself in its skin…in itself already outside of itself” (Levinas 1998b: 104, 106)\(^2^2\); in the second, to discover the sense in which “embodiment is a necessary rather than contingent condition of the ethical relationship” (Perpich 2005: 296-303 [296]). The ethical is thereby revealed to be not the heightened rational awareness that the body-soul duality issues in but instead a sharper corporal one: in other words, the very meaning and purpose of the various facets of material existence rather than an adjunct to them.

3.6. Being

Even though, as we have already seen in this chapter, Levinas seeks to ground selfhood in the “otherwise than Being” that is the Good and alterity, this does not mean that the philosopher leaves no place in his account for this former concept: “[o]n the contrary, it is on the basis of proximity”—sense, sensibility, saying, responsibility, incarnation—“that being takes on its just meaning” (Levinas 1998b: 16). And if being (esse) is (self-)interest (interesse), the point of undermining it or refounding it in being’s other is revealed: the (self-)“disinterestedness” (dès-intéresse-ment) of the Good beneath Being enables a deep awareness of the other as truly Other, beyond the superficial comparison of the Same and its alter ego. Out of this awareness, this letting the other be pure alterity, arises then, for the first time, the possibility of truly comparing these two incomparables: that is, of doing justice between them (Levinas 1998b: 16). The pursuit of self-interest supposes war and oppression, but disinterestedness brings an end to this violence, imposes reason, separates truth and ideology, re-establishes the human as human, and opens out to responsibility and peace (1998b: 4; 45; 159; 190 n. 34): “Disinterest is a form of goodness”—nonetheless irreducible to morality, a “good conscience”, altruism,

\(^2^2\) Cf. n. 21 of this chapter above.
benevolence or even human love—“because it is an interest [for the other]...in the infinite [dés-, desire]23: “[i]nterest is totality, disinterest infinity” (Gaston 2006a: 21).

4. The Same in 4 Macc

4.1. Sensation in 4 Macc

As deSilva points out in his study on 4 Macc to which we have already referred so often in this thesis, the Greek πάθη that so heavily exercises the author of the work “is a rather complex idea: in English one would use ‘emotions’, ‘desires’ and ‘sensory experiences’ to cover a comparable semantic field” (1998: 52-3; my emphasis)24. How then do subjects in 4 Macc interact with the πάθη on the level of Levinasian sensory awareness? As our author asserts in his “psychological” portrait of the person in 1.20-35, and demonstrates with his stories of Joseph, Moses, Jacob, David, the martyrs, and so on, the individual is susceptible to the sensual torments, or ecstasies, of “pleasure” (ἡδονή), “pain” (πόνος), “desire” (ἐπιθυµία), “delight” (χαρά), “fear” (φόβος), “sorrow” (λύπη), “anger” (θυµός) and their “many offshoots” (1.28). And in every case, as we have already seen in section [2.2.2] of Chapter 5 above, the mechanism of perception is the same: the senses imprint on the “inside” of the mind its impressions of what is on the “outside”, beyond the self—“producing the corresponding affect”—like a signet ring carves a seal in a bed of wax (Philo, Opif. 166). The subject, then, depends on these sensory intaglios embedded in the mind as a small child depends on the impression of the “wondrous likeness both of mind and form” of her parents in her upbringing and education (4 Macc 15.4).

4.2. Sensibility in 4 Macc

The effects of sensory perceptions on the individual subject are forever being described in very colourful terms in 4 Macc: we are “attracted” to (κινοµενοι) also

23 As Bergo suggests in her translator’s gloss on désintéressement as it appears in Levinas’s Of God Who Comes to Mind (Levinas 1998b: 199 n. 17): “[w]ith this term, Levinas underscores the etymological sense of “inter,” or among, and “esse,” or being. Dis-interestness...or away from, out of, our engagement with beings” (emphasis original). But the prefix dés- or dis- here also carries in it a sense of an intensification or an infinition of this movement “away from,” or “out of”—cf., for example, the word desire (French: désir), or in English, disgruntled.

24 Cf. our discussion of the “emotions” or “passions” in section [1.1] of Chapter 5 above.
“disturbed,” “aroused,” “assailed” by, etc.\(^\text{25}\), and we “crave” (ἐπιθυμοῦντες), the “pleasure” (ἡδονάς) to be had from eating forbidden foods (1.33-34), Joseph “nullified the frenzy [οἴστρον] of the [sexual] passions” (2.3), David (and the martyrs) conquered “the drives of the sense-emotions [παθῶν ἀνάγκας],” quenched “the flames of frenzied desires [οἴστρων φλεγμόνας],” and overthrew “bodily agonies [τῶν σωμάτων ἀλγηδόνας]” (3.17-18), etc. Far from being deleterious or inopportune, however, these feverish sensory experiences are actually the sine qua non of the attainment of καλοκαγαθία for our author, as a brief survey of a key synonym for this word in our text, γενναίος (deSilva 1998: 81)—“noble in mind, high-minded” (LSJ: s.v.)—suggests. To shed “[…] sweat in sufferings [τοῖς…πάθεσιν: i.e., on account of the πάθη] even to death [μέχρι θανάτου]” is called “noble” (γενναίῳ, 4 Macc 7.8) by the writer of the work, the fifth brother calls his and his brothers’ “pains” (πόνων) “noble” (γενναιοτέρων), “good” (καλάς) and so many “gifts” (χάριτας, 11.12), the mother is said to have “endured nobly” (γενναίως ὑπέμεινας) for having withstood the “flood of your emotions” (τῶν παθῶν…κατακλυσμῷ, 15.32), and so on. And in fact, there is a sense in 4 Macc in which to fight the “sacred and noble battle for religion [ἱερὰν καὶ εὐγενῆ στρατείαν…τῆς εὐσεβείας]” (9.24; cf. 16.16) consists not so much, in the end, in withstanding the assaults of Antiochus as much as those of the senses: “All of these [the martyrs], by despising [ὑπεριδόντες, lit. “looking over” (ὑπέρ-όραω)]…the emotions [τῶν παθῶν]…died for the sake of…goodness [ὑπὲρ τῆς καλοκαγαθίας ἀποθανόντας]” (1.9-10; emphasis mine).

### 4.3. Saying in 4 Macc

“The subject [λόγον] I am about to discuss [ἐπιδείκνυσθαι] is most philosophical [φιλοσοφώτατον],” writes the author of 4 Macc at 1.1-2: “[it] is essential [ἄναγκαίος] to everyone who is seeking knowledge [ἐπιστήμην], and in addition [ἄλλος] it includes the praise of the highest virtue….” “Interestingly,” Wood (2006: 58) comments on these verses, “we see in the notions of intellectual and moral virtue [here] that the Hebrew and Greek traditions coincide,” but in fact something even more interesting is taking place: …λέγω δὴ φρονήσεως (4 Macc 1.2). McLean (2012: 196-7, [196 n. 67]) alters the NRSV translation of φρόνησις—“rational judgment”—for

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\(^{25}\) Cf. \textit{Il.} 16.249, where κινήσῃ is used for the action of disturbing a wasps’ nest (LSJ: s.v.).
the probably more apt “practical wisdom”\textsuperscript{26}, with the aim thereby of further grounding his hermeneutics of the “present sense-event” of a text: following Gadamer, following Aristotle, he suggests that “the primary goal of hermeneutics is...the discernment of practical wisdom for living in the present...[which] always concerns the person of the interpreter, the care of the self, and one’s thoughtful engagement with others and the world” (McLean 2012: 196; my emphasis). But what happens if we now substitute the subjunctive sense of λέγω in 4 Macc 1.2b—“I mean”—for its indicative sense: “I say”? “To say” would therefore be grounded, right from the very beginning of the work, in an ethical concern for practical, as opposed to intellectual, wisdom.

4.4. Responsibility in 4 Macc

If φρόνησις—practical, ethical wisdom—is therefore the foundation of the act of saying in 4 Macc (1.2), could an examination of this word in the text disclose anything of the attitude of our author towards the responsibility that inheres in “making response” to the Other, to the Good, in this way? The act of exercising φρόνησις—φρονέω—is associated by the mother-martyr with the dolour of giving birth (ἀδινας) and other “more grievous” (χαλεπωτέρας) pains at 4 Macc 16.8\textsuperscript{27}, but more tellingly for our purposes she equates it here with self-implicating care for others, in this case such as is involved with raising children: “I endured [ὑπέμεινα],” she says, “[...] [the] anxieties [φροντίδοις] of your upbringing [ἀνατροφής].” Of still greater import for us in this vein, however, are Eleazar’s words at 6.17, which reflect the real stakes involved in speaking rightly out of properly oriented practical wisdom: “Never may we, the children of Abraham, think [φρονήσαμεν] so basely [κακῶς] that out of cowardice [μαλακοφυγήσαντας] we feign [ὑποκρίνασθαι] a role [δράμα] unbecoming [ἀπρεπές] to us!” To exercise φρόνησις correctly (καλῶς), then, is the

\textsuperscript{26} Cf. Hiebert’s observation that 4 Macc 1.19—“Supreme over all of these [viz. the various kinds of wisdom: “rational judgment” [φρόνησις], “justice” [δικαιοσύνη], “courage” [ἀνδρεία] and “self-control” [σωφροσύνη, 1.18] is φρόνησις...”—“comports with the thinking of Stoic philosopher...Zeno of Citium” (2008: 247-8). According to Plutarch (Mor. 441a), Zeno taught that φρόνησις must be defined “as δικαιοσύνη when it is concerned with what must be rendered to others as their due, as σωφροσύνη when concerned with what must be chosen or avoided, as ἀνδρεία when concerned with what must be endured” (quoted in Hiebert 2008: 247-8).

\textsuperscript{27} Even if this verse forms part of the hypothetical maternal “faint-hearted” speech imagined by the author in 16.5-11: here the contrast is not that the real-life “holy and God-fearing mother” with the “mind like adamant” (16.12-13) did not, in fact, suffer any kind of pain for her children, but that she did not consider that her pregnancies, nurturings and nursings (16.7) were “in vain” (µάτην, 16.8).
only way to make “eloquent response to the exhortations of the tyrant” (cf. 6.1): to act like a “manly man” and play the part assigned to one in life (cf. 6.5; 7.11-12; etc.); to not “slink away” (ἀπορέπω) but to “equip” oneself with “goodness” to defend its cause (11.22; cf. 1.10).

4.5. Incarnation in 4 Macc

“The body is…that by which the self is susceptibility itself. Incarnation is an extreme passivity…”: these words of Levinas’s (1998b: 195 n. 12) which we quoted above (section [3.5]) also come to ring true with respect to the notion of incarnation in 4 Macc. The “flesh” (σάρξ) in our work is “torn by scourges” and “cut to pieces” (6.6), “burnt” (9.17), “flayed” (9.28), etc., but perhaps the most arresting detail of the portrait of corporality painted by our author comes in his description of the sufferings of the third brother (10.1-11). After having his hands and feet disjoined, his fingers, arms, legs and elbows broken, and finally his limbs dismembered (10.5-6)—and after having submitted to a scalping “in a Scythian fashion” and the dislocation of his vertebrae (10.7-8)—we read that “[…] he saw his own flesh [ἐκορά τὰς ἐσωτερικὰς σάρκας] torn all around and drops of blood flowing from his entrails” (10.8; my emphasis). But still he is said to be able to speak (φημί) and to suffer (πάσχω; 10.9-10): speaking and suffering then, do not depend on the body or the “flesh,” but logically precede it28. What is more, the fact that the third brother “was speaking” (ἔφη, φημί, φήμη) here not only contains a trace, in that very word, of his “Jewish” φρόνησις29, but his confession that “[w]e are suffering because of our godly training and virtue [ἀρετήν]”30 (10.10; my emphasis) prompts the listener of the text to again remember that the martyrs’ cause is one of nobility and goodness (cf. 10.3).

28 Cf. these words of the fourth brother at 10.19: “See, here is my tongue; cut it off, for in spite of this you will not make our reason speechless.”
29 “Thus phêmê designates, in the Odyssey, an utterance with prophetic properties of which the speaker is unaware,” concludes Bakker in his study on Polyphemus (2002: 139; my emphasis). Is the third brother then a prophet, in the Levinian sense of that word, for having spoken thusly? Levinas writes of the “witness” of “prophecy” (1998b: 149-52 [151]; my emphasis): “It is…exposing of the exposure, saying, saying that does not say a word, that signifies, that, as responsibility, is signification itself, the one-for-the-other. It is the subjectivity of the subject that makes itself a sign…It is the bottomless passivity of responsibility, and thus, sincerity. It is the meaning of language, before language scatters into words, into themes equal to the words and dissimulating in the said the openness of the saying exposed like a bleeding wound…”
30 Ἀρετή is, along with γεννάλος, yet another synonym for καλοκαίρια in our text, according to deSilva (1998: 81) and Danker (1982: 319). Cf. sections [2.1] and [4.2] above.
4.6. Being in 4 Macc

“It is unreasonable [ἄλλογιστον] for people who have religious knowledge [εἰδότας εὐσέβειαν] not to withstand [ἀνθίστασθαι] pain,” insists the mother-martyr to her sons at 4 Macc 16.23. It is noteworthy that here, towards the end of the work, the ἐπιστήμη promised at the outset of the discussion (along with “the praise of the highest virtue,” φρόνησις, 1.2) has become a different way of “knowing”: οἶδα. Does this particular verb, as asymptote, then reflect yet another attempt at “reconciling” “Greek” and “Jewish” ways of knowing: that is, “ontology” and “ethics” (cf. Wood 2006: 58, quoted in [4.3] above)? Elsewhere in the text it is used only for the certainty “that it is blessed to endure any suffering [πόνον] for the sake of virtue [διὰ τὴν ἀρετὴν]” (7.22) and “that those who die [ἀποθησκοντες] for the sake of God [διὰ τὸν θεὸν] live to God” (16.25). Crucially then, despite its etymological connection, οἶδα would not be dependent on seeing (at least in a literal, visual sense: εἶδο) and the perception of “forms” (ἰδεῖς; cf. 1.14, 18), but would be a “knowing what it is” that would have the Other—virtue, nobility, goodness—already embedded in it. To reflect that fact this “knowledge” could perhaps be called an antisteme (from ἀντίστημι)—forever poised between the “Greek” and the “Jewish”—to the episteme of the Western Platonic tradition: an attempt at “making to stand,” “setting up,” “placing in the balance,” etc. (ἵστημι) both Being and its “opposite” (ἀντί-).

5. Substitution and the psyche (ἀντίψυχος) in Levinas and 4 Macc

We have then, in Levinas and 4 Macc, the call of the Good—represented here in these pages by the touch of the stranger’s face, object of the law for the radically passive creature—and the response of Being, which stirs in the savouring of sense that induces in me a sensibility to the Other of which I only become aware in beginning to speak, in listening to myself and in taking on my body. In arranging the foregoing sections of this chapter as we have—not only linearly, but concentrically as well—we have already hinted that each of these categories in the Good and in Being are interrelated, share a certain interdependence: the “touch” of the Good and the “sensation” of Being, for example, or the Good as “creation” and Being as “incarnation,” for another. But how precisely does the one “become” the other? How—according to Levinas, and to the author of 4 Macc—does the self appropriate
the call of the Good in her being? In this the third section of this chapter we will attempt to answer these questions, and others, with the conviction that the effort will lay bare the “hostage,” the substitute, the ἄντιψυχος in all her naked glory.

5.1. Maternity and psyche

One of Levinas’s most privileged metaphors for his notion of the substitution of the Same for the Other is that of maternity. Typical in this respect is the following thought:

The-one-for-another has the form of sensibility or vulnerability, pure passivity or susceptibility, passive to the point of becoming an inspiration, that is, alterity in the same, the trope of the body animated by the soul, psyche in the form of a hand that gives even the bread taken from its own mouth. Here the psyche is the maternal body. (Levinas 1998b: 67)

At one level, the gesture the philosopher makes here is (relatively) easy to conceive of: I am responsible for the other I have “interiorised” in my being—sensibility of the Same for the face of the Other, for example—as a mother is infinitely, indefinitely, responsible for the child which has gestated inside her. But is that all Levinas means to say here? How would the “opposites” we have discovered above then hold together? Why the particular allusion to “inspiration” and the “psyche”? Psychisme comme un corps maternel: Guenther retranslates the last phrase of the quote from Levinas just cited and literally opens it up—

…“Psychism, like a maternal body.” The word “like” is important here. It holds open a gap or delay between responsibility and maternity. To bear the Other ethically is not the same as literally bearing a child in pregnancy…. I become like a maternal body by giving time to the Other, opening for her a future that

31 Elsewhere Levinas takes this figure beyond strictly biological maternity (i.e., for women only) in connection with Num 11.12: “In proximity the absolutely other, the stranger who I have “neither conceived nor given birth to,” I already have on my arms, already hear, according to the Biblical formula, “in my breast as the nurse bears the nurseling.” He has no other place, is not autochthonous, is uprooted, without a country, not an inhabitant, exposed to the cold and the heat of the seasons. To be reduced to having recourse to me is the homelessness or strangeness of the neighbor. It is incumbent on me” (1998b: 91).
exceeds expectation, and a past that exceeds representation. (2006: 105-6; emphasis original)

The psyche figured by the maternal body, or the maternal body figured by the psyche, would then take it upon itself to continually make space in the self for the impossible memory of the Other—or, to put that another way, to forever “breathe into” (ψύχειν) the synchrony of Being the diachrony of the Good. It is in this sense that Levinas can say that “[t]he psyche or animation is the way a relationship between uneven terms, without any common time, arrives at relationship” (1998b: 70). But because all this has already, always “taken place,” this inspiration by the psyche in the self has already, always become my expiration, and the other to whom I owe my existence now depends on me for his.

Such is the attention we have paid, over the course of this work, to both the maternal body and the labours of maternity itself in 4 Macc that a brief review of the most pertinent verses in this sense will suffice at this point. The mother’s “belly” (γαστήρ) is the site in which the “affection of family ties” (ἀδελφότητας φιλωτα) is “implanted” (φυτεύσασα) in the infants born to her (4 Macc 13.19), her “blood” (αἵματος) and her “life” (ψυχῆς; also, of course, the “breath” that assures their safe delivery “to the light of day,” 13.20), and the milk from her bosom that which nourishes them in familial affection (13.21-22). The maternal “inmost parts” (σπλάγχνα) are also described in 4 Macc as the seat of the all-consuming, all-entangling, tortuous (πολύπλοκος) emotion of a mother’s love (φιλωτεκνίας στοργῆ, 14.13; cf. 16.3-4; cf. also the mention of the “mother of the nation” holding the “prize of the contest” in her σπλάγχνα, 15.29)32. And so on the profile of the parturient body goes: the mother-martyr is said to have suffered in her own self, to a surpassing degree, the “yearning of parents toward offspring” (φιλόστοργε) and its concomitant “indomitable suffering” (ἀδύσμαστα πάθη; 15.13-17 [13]), she weighed up “in the council chamber of her own soul” (βουλευτήρῳ τῇ ἑαυτῆς ψυχῇ) whether to encourage her children to capitulate or to resist (15.25-27), etc.

32 Cf. also our discussion of the σπλάγχνα in section [2.2.2] of Chapter 5 above.
What is more novel for us and more interesting for our purposes here, however, is the way in which the passion of the mother and the maternal body in 4 Macc is already interpreted as a kind of proto-substitution even quite apart from any mention of the ἀντίψυχος—in 16.13, for example:

...[A]s though [ὁσπερ] having a mind like adamant and giving rebirth [ἀνατίκτωσα] for immortality [ἀθανασίαν] to the whole number of her sons, she implored them and urged them on to death for the sake of religion.

DeSilva (1998: 74; 150) may be correct to see this “rebirth for immortality” phrase as a metaphor for the glories of martyrdom, but there is something else going on here too, as a comparison with one of the only attested ancient parallels in terms of the word ἀνατίκτω—in Aelian, Nat. an. 1.17—suggests:

...[T]he dog-fish of the sea, having given birth, bear their young with them rather than leaving them in the mud. And if it happens that something scares them, these young worm their way back into their mother’s internal parts [ἐξ τῆς μητέρας ἔσεδυ αὖθις κατὰ τὸ ἄρθρον]: the fear having subsided they then emerge again, just as if [ὁσπερ] their mother had given birth to them anew [ἀνατικτόμενον αὖθις]. (trans. author from the Greek in Scholfield 1958: 1.34)

To be pregnant (κυεῖν) in 4 Macc, then—or to have been pregnant, either with one’s own sons or daughters, or with the other—is to be like this “dog-fish” (κύων), giving birth to such a fledgling and bearing within oneself the ultimate responsibility for its wellbeing. Plutarch, in another series of observations on the same fish, describes this burden in the following terms:

...[The dog-fish] sustain and carry [their] newly hatched young, not without, but within themselves, as if from a second birth. When the young grow larger, the parents let them out and teach them to swim close by; then again they collect them through their mouths and allow their bodies to be used as dwelling-places, affording at once room and board and sanctuary until the young become strong enough... (Soll. an. 33.1, trans. Cherniss and Helmbold 1957: 12.457)
If the tribulations of motherhood, therefore, can act as a metaphor (ὄσπερ) for the imperative of substitution in 4 Macc—quite apart from its strictly biological sense—might the same be said of the reflex of breathing (ψυχεῖν, ψυχῇ)33? As we have seen above, the brother-martyrs, in their mother’s womb, are said by our author to have grown and been “brought to the light of day” (τελεσφορηθέντες) “through the same ψυχή” (διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς ψυχῆς, 13.20; cf. the “wondrous likeness [ὁμοιότητα...θαυμάσιον] both of ψυχή and of form” shared by parents and children, 15.4). The brothers also speak “as from one ψυχή” (ἀπὸ τῆς αὐτῆς ψυχῆς, 8.29), and coordinate all their actions “with the guidance of the ψυχή” (τοῖς τῆς ψυχῆς ἀφηγήμασιν), and an “immortal ψυχή of devotion” (ψυχῆς ἀθανάτου τῆς εὐσεβείας), shared by all of them (14.6). In each of these references, the important thing to notice is not only that the selfsame ψυχή is, to a certain extent, interchangeable between individuals in 4 Macc, but also that it “breathes” into the self an intuition of an infinite temporal horizon that stretches between the irrecoverable memory of the womb and birth, on the one hand, and the impossibility of immortality and a telos, on the other.

5.2. Philosophy and justice

But there is another complication that must be resolved before we come to the heart of substitution and atonement in Levinas and in 4 Macc, one that will have already become apparent in the recognition that there are always more than two: what about those “other” others I have not “met” face-to-face? What have I to do with them? This is, after all, the question of living in the world, in society, as opposed to in the cloister of a mother-child relationship, even extended to include the self and the other (Guenther 2006: 153; Sandford 2000: 91). We will remember the language of the Saying (Dire) and the Said (Dit) which was used above as a kind of shorthand for the an-ἀρχή of the Good and ethics (in the infinitive), on the one hand, and its concretisation in Being and interpretation, on the other (in the past participle)34. The inevitable movement from the one to the other—which we have tried in this chapter to interrupt with respect to 4 Macc, despite recognising the effort to be in vain35—Levinas reinterprets in the following terms:

33 Cf. our discussion of ψυχῇ in 4 Macc in section [3.1] of Chapter 3 above.
34 See n. 3 above.
[The Saying] must spread and assemble itself into essence, posit itself, be hypostasized, become an eon in consciousness and knowledge, let itself be seen, undergo the ascendancy of being [i.e., become a Said]. Ethics itself, in its saying which is a responsibility, requires this hold. But it is also necessary that the saying call for philosophy in order that the light that occurs not congeal into essence what is beyond essence… (1998b: 44-45 [44])

In other words, the frozen, synchronous Said is only justified ("it is also necessary…"), for the sake of ethics, if accompanied by the intellectual "adventure" of the "endless critique, or skepticism" of it effected by philosophy (or criticism, as is hopefully the case in this chapter). And if the Said is only justified by this "philosophical" word—and philosophy, in turn, by the ever-present ethical demand—the "other" other piece in the puzzle of substitution will be the advent of justice: the presence of a "third party" to the mother-child, self-other dyad. The justice made possible by the "wisdom of love at the service of love"—rather than that of the "love of wisdom"—is what I knew to be lacking in me before the face of the "other" other: it is what turns me—self or the Same—into "an other like the others" (Levinas 1998b: 161-2; emphasis mine). From now on, my having tried to justify my ethical response to the one who approaches me—my having been conscious of not having met all his demands—sets an ethical standard for me, this other, and the other facing him, and inaugurates in our midst the "comparison, coexistence, contemporaneousness, assembling, order" that politics—our "togetherness in a place"—demands (Levinas 1998b: 157).

“…[B]y your deeds [διὰ τῶν ἔργων] you made your words [σου λόγους] of divine philosophy [θείας φιλοσοφίας] credible [ἐπιστοποίησας]…” (4 Macc 7.9). In praising the martyr Eleazar in this way, does our author also attempt to drive a wedge, "philosophically" speaking, between "words"—ontology—and "deeds"—ethics? "Philosophy," in his work, is primarily a matter of right action rather than right reflection: it is to "philosophise" (φιλοσοφοῦντες, φιλοσοφέω: 8.1); to "live[] as a philosopher by the whole rule of philosophy" (τὸν τῆς φιλοσοφίας κανόνα φιλοσοφῶν, 7.21; cf. 5.22; 7.7); to weigh up claims to the "truth" of things, pursue the right path,

36 "Justice is this very presence of the third party and this manifestation…" (Levinas 1998b: 191 n. 2).
and oppose the errors of others (5.5-38 [11]; etc.) \(^{37}\). It is in that last sense an *antiphilosophy* (ἀντεφιλοσόφησαν, 8.15), as we have already discovered in this thesis \(^{38}\). But the author of 4 Macc also gives his “divine (anti)philosophy” another name: φιλοσοφώτατος (“most philosophical,” 1.1). Rather than being a mere superlative suffix, the -τατος ending here can be interpreted as integral to the principal word, φιλόσοφος, itself, as de Brosses explains:

When they want to mark the superlative degree of something…[t]he Greeks and Latins extend the word by ending it *with a highly stressed motion of the mouth*…the Greeks depict it by *tatos*, the Latins by *errimus* or *issimus*. (quoted in Genette 1994: 382 n. 18; emphasis mine)

Could the φιλοσοφία of 4 Macc then be a φιλοσοφώτατος because it is fixated on the *mouth*: *my mouth* out of which *my bread* must be snatched to feed the other in my substitution for him (cf. Levinas 1998b: 55 and passim)? The echo here is tempting to latch on to, and what is more, it helps us to understand more fully the character of the ἀντίψυχος.

Since we propose to more properly consider, and problematise, the various facets of δικαιοσύνη in 4 Macc elsewhere in this thesis \(^{39}\), it remains for us here in this chapter simply to suggest, in very broad outlines and following Levinas’s lead, how the eternal clamour for “justice” might set in motion the operation of the mechanisms of substitution in our text. This we can do, in fact, with nothing more than a couple of verses taken from Eleazar’s defence of the φιλοσοφώτατος in 4 Macc 5.15-38:

> You scoff at our philosophy [φιλοσοφίαν] as though living by it [ἐν αὐτῇ βιούντων] were irrational, but it teaches us self-control [σωφροσύνην], so that we master all pleasures and desires [ὡστε πασῶν τῶν ἡδονῶν καὶ ἐπιθυμιῶν κρατεῖν]…[I]t instructs us in justice [δικαιοσύνην], so that we hold in balance all our habitual inclinations [ὡστε διὰ πάντων τῶν ἡθῶν ἴσονομεῖν]… (5.22-24)

\(^{37}\) “Philosophy” in 4 Macc also leads directly to the kind of “antistemic” knowledge most prized by the author (7.21-22), as we have already seen above (section [4.6]).

\(^{38}\) See section [3.1] of Chapter 3 above.

\(^{39}\) See, for example, section [3.2.2] in Chapter 7 below.
Here for v. 24a we have followed the alternative translation offered in the NRSV for the standard “…so that in all our dealings we act impartially”, so as to bring out, in the first place, the *inclusio* between “habitual inclinations” and “pleasures and desires” in v. 23a. But what ends up commanding our attention to an even greater extent than this parallelism in the two verses is the equivalence drawn here between “justice” and a certain *isonomy* (*ἰσονομέην*). “Philosophy” in 4 Macc, then, would lead to “justice”—*ἰσονομία*—whose scales to mete out the *same* law for all are balanced, *on both sides*, by the ἀντί-ψυχος (6.29; 17.21) who makes the “other” to resemble (*ἰσον*) the “same” (13.20) but without imposing the tyranny of *equivalence* between them.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter, by following the logic of some of the categories of thought which Levinas has used to reflect on the “Other” and the “Same”—the “Good” and “Being,” “creation” and “incarnation,” the “law” and “responsibility,” etc. (sections [1] and [3] above)—we have, in the first place, attempted to mould yet another theoretical substrate upon which to graft the operations of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement in 4 Macc.

With respect to the text which has been under study in this thesis, we have seen in these pages that the call to the Other that sounds therein is the call to a lofty καλοκαγαθία ([2.1]). Because this “goodness and nobility” is ultimately *impossible* to fully act out or even *describe* (μόνον τὸ καλὸν ἀγαθὸν: Aristo of Chios), the author of 4 Macc maintains that the martyrs of the work, like all Jews, fall into its debt (ὅφειλετε, 4 Macc 16.19), forever to remain there, for the very fact of having been created by God ([2.2]). Not even the law that orients the Jew to the Good can ensure her safe passage to this hither side of Being, since the law predates the creation of the self (2.21) and therefore always *exceeds* the capacity of this self to accommodate its demands ([2.3]). Before the neighbour, or the stranger, or the *enemy*, therefore—to whom the Jew in 4 Macc is brought by the law ([2.4]), and whose proximity she feels in the cold “embrace” (ἀσράσασα, 15.24 [A]; [2.6]) of the “face of murder” he wears as a mask (προσωπεῖον, 15.15; [2.5])—the only response will be one of absolute helplessness and radical passivity in the face of these “sensations” (πάθη, [4.1]).
These “emotions” will always remind the Jew of 4 Macc of the Good in the measure that her “sweat,” “pains,” “endurance,” etc. “for the sake of goodness” (1.9-10) can be called “noble” (7.8; 11.12; 15.31; cf. 9.24; 16.16; section [4.2]), but only when she begins to speak will the impossible demands of καλοκάγαθία really begin to resonate in her incipient self: to “say” (λέγω) in 4 Macc is to exercise φρόνησις (1.1-2; section [4.3])—practical, ethical wisdom—and to exercise φρόνησις—φρονέω—is to attempt to respond to, or on behalf of, the Good (6.1; 11.22; cf. 1.10; section [4.4]). This “saying” or “responding” in responsibility to the Good does not require a body (10.8-11), which would then be at the service of the ethical relationship ([4.5]): “knowing” in 4 Macc then, in turn—and “Being” itself—would not be based on an epistemological “seeing” but on a prior “antistemological” balancing of Being and its “opposite” (16.23; [4.6]).

But how would this “antistemology” in 4 Macc then work, exactly, to balance Being—the Same—and the Good—the Other—and to substitute between the two? As we have seen in this chapter, these two poles are reconciled in the work, in a local sense, in the maternal body—the mother who forever offers “room and board and sanctuary” to her children (cf. Plutarch)—and in a more general sense in the psyche (ψυχή), which circulates in the Same, the Other and the “other” Other as blood and placenta circulate in the womb (4 Macc 13.19-22) and at the same time “breathes” (ψύχειν) into this community of three the anarchical, interminable timeline of the infinity of the Good (14.6; [5.1]). The ἀντί-ψυχος, therefore—the subject of this “antistemology” or “antiphilosophy” (8.15)—circulates between the Same, the Other, and the “other” Other in the same manner as the ψυχή, but in his case he ensures the justice (ἰσονομία, 5.24) necessary for “psychical” substitution by forever making these two opposites “resemble” each other without ever being the same (ἰσον, 13.20; [5.2]).
CHAPTER 7:
BETWEEN TYRANNY AND DEMOCRACY: THE ANTIPOLITICAL

Introduction

In this chapter—our last in this thesis—we propose to explore the political dimensions of the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc: to situate this vicarious substitute, and the process of vicarious substitution in which it is implicated, in relationship to political concepts in the work such as tyranny, theocracy, democracy and the city or “nation.” The author of 4 Macc, at the end of his retelling of the martyrs’ story, suggests that these have brought back “peace” and “observance of the law” to the homeland, Jerusalem (4 Macc 18.4)—but in light of the fact that the martyrs are also said to have “purified” the nation in their death “as an atoning sacrifice” (17.21-22), is this peace and observance of the law really the same as that which reigned before the persecution of Antiochus (3.20), or is it different?

In contrast to other attempts to figure the political in 4 Macc, we propose to read neither from the left or the right but from outside the political continuum altogether: from what Nicole Loraux calls the “antipolitical” space of the theatre (id. 2002a; 2002b). While commentators have often noted the affinity of 4 Macc with Greek tragedy, no sustained reading of the text through such a lens—with all its political implications—has yet been attempted. As we will see here, however, the serious consideration of the theatrical or tragic aspects of the text (section [3] below) throws into doubt many of the easy interpretive categories simply assumed by scholars of 4 Macc, either by comparisons with other political sites in the ancient world or with their modern analogues. Between the conceptual poles, however imagined, of “tyranny” (section [1]) and “theocracy” or “democracy” in 4 Macc (section [2])—represented by Antiochus, on the one hand, and the ancestors of the Jews (3.20), on the other—we propose to make space for the martyrs, who are often imagined as heroes of “democracy” but who instead bring something much more radical.
1. Tyranny in 4 Macc

1.1. Tyranny in 4 Macc in the context of the ancient world

From the very beginning of his work, the author of 4 Macc presents the martyrs and their heroic achievement as implacably opposed to tyranny, represented above all by the person of Antiochus (1.11; 8.15; 9.30; 11.24; etc.). In what, though, does this tyranny consist, and why and how exactly do the old man, the young men and their mother oppose it?

Heininger and deSilva have both outlined the ways in which the portrayal of King Antiochus in 4 Macc conforms to the ancient stereotype of the tyrant, with deSilva in particular suggesting that “[t]he portrait drawn by Lucian of Samosata of the tyrant Megapenthes (Cat. 26) could be applied with only the slightest modification to Antiochus” (deSilva 2007: 105-110 [106]; Heininger 1989: 43-59). That is, Antiochus, like Lucian’s tyrant, is ferocious in his bloodthirstiness and rapacious in his greed (see his invention of the various barbarous tortures, for example [4 Macc 8.12-14], and his acceptance of Jason’s bribes [4.17-18]); he is savage, high-handed, supercilious and nefarious in the extreme, “an arrogant and terrible man” (4.15). Like Cyniscus says of Megapenthes, so we could say of the king in 4 Macc: “he did not leave a single form of excess untried,” “[i]t would have been less dangerous to look steadily at the sun than at this man,” and so on (Cat. 26; trans. Harmon 1967: 2.51). But there is of course more to the evil of tyranny than personal complexes and megalomania, however, as Heininger and deSilva note. Aristotle, for example, sums up the idea of tyranny under three heads: not only does the tyrant humiliate his subjects—as by torturing them and ravaging their resources, etc.—but he also takes away their power and sows distrust among them (Pol. 1314a14-29; ed. Everson 1996: 147).

Another way of putting this last-mentioned facet of Aristotle’s policy of tyranny—that the tyrant is careful to create mistrust and enmity between friends—is, to use Aristotle’s own words, that “tyrants are at war with the good” (Pol. 1314a19). DeSilva finds this tyrannical antagonism towards the good epitomised in the dying words of the second brother, who seeks to expose the vanity of “the arrogant logic of
your tyranny” (4 Macc 9.30; deSilva 2007: 106-110). Ironically, Antiochus’s words and deeds are not “logical” at all: in contrast to the martyrs, who live lives according to the divine “reason,” to “the mind that with sound logic prefers the life of wisdom” (1.15), Antiochus is described as “savage of mind” (9.15), a “hater of virtue” and a “hater of humankind” (11.4), as a “most savage beast” (12.13); he fails to see the “reasonableness” of the Jewish way of life (5.6-13; 8.5; 10.13; 12.3; etc.; deSilva 2007: 106). But it is in Antiochus’s arrogance and pride that deSilva locates the essence of his tyranny—or, better put, in fact, in his imperialistic pretensions. And even if deSilva’s argument at this point is rather weak—for he simply assumes the connection between “tyranny” and “imperialism” without any explanation for this manoeuvre (though it could of course be related to his postcolonial “hermeneutic”)—we suggest that his distillation of tyranny into the politics of arrogance and pride can serve us well in this chapter. Before taking up deSilva’s analysis here in detail, however, we must think through in greater detail his project of recovering 4 Macc as “resistance literature” (2007: 101)—a somewhat problematic term which, as we will argue, taints his interpretation both of the tyranny of Antiochus in particular and of 4 Macc as a whole.

1.2. Reading from the house/home

As deSilva acknowledges in his conclusion, the title of his paper—the first part of which reads “Using the Master’s Tools to Shore Up Another’s House”—is inspired by a celebrated quote from African-American lesbian poet Audre Lorde, to the effect that “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house” (deSilva 2007: 127). A close comparison between the ways in which deSilva and Lorde use the idea, however, brings into sharp relief what might be called the subversion of deSilva’s own “subversive stance” in reading 4 Macc through the “optic” of postcolonial criticism (2007: 100)—or, in short, his inability to cut through the tyrannical logic of his own interpretive location.

1 See, for example, the opening to deSilva’s section on “the character of empire” in 4 Macc: “Imperialism takes on flesh in 4 Maccabees in the person of Antiochus IV, whom the author presents from the very outset as a “tyrant” imposing “tyranny” on the Judean people (1.11)” (2007: 105). While the broader project of “postcolonial” biblical criticism is certainly laudable, the simple equation of “imperialism” and “tyranny,” in our opinion at least, does the cause of careful and socially aware biblical study very few favours indeed.
For deSilva, the essence of 4 Macc as a piece of “resistance literature” consists in that author’s warning to his audience of the pitfalls for faithful Jews of feeling too ‘at home’ in the surrounding Greek culture. As deSilva explains, our author considers it altogether more virtuous and profitable that his listeners concentrate on rediscovering and renewing their own roots:

[The author of 4 Macc] summons his audience…to renew their commitment to live in their own house, to value that house, to talk bravely about the meaningfulness and desirability of inhabiting such a house, and to defend that house with exemplary action that solidifies and unites their fellow Jews in devotion to that house. (2007: 127)

But is the “house” really the best place from which to read 4 Macc? In the essay from which deSilva takes the leitmotif for his own essay, “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House,” Lorde calls our attention to the way in which the home is also a site of repression and subjugation. “[H]ow do you deal with the fact,” Lorde challenges an audience of white feminist academics at a conference at New York University, “that the women who clean your houses and tend your children while you attend conferences on feminist theory are, for the most part, poor women and women of Color [sic]?” (1984: 112). And indeed, it is only in this context that what Lorde means by the master’s tools and dismantling his house comes clearly into view—that “[it] is an old and primary tool of all oppressors to keep the oppressed occupied with the master’s concerns” (1984: 113). In other words, just as for Lorde academic feminism will make no difference until the racist, homophobic, patriarchal taxonomy of “divide and conquer” becomes an all-encompassing “define and empower” (1984: 112), so in postcolonial biblical criticism no change will be felt until the master’s political categories of “defiant speech,” “exemplary action,” “solidarity,” etc. are shrugged off. DeSilva unwittingly shows us the danger of remaining ‘at home’ in overly familiar political language, where a strategy of apparent “resistance” can all too easily decay into yet another space of oppression and maltreatment. Can the mother-martyr in 4 Macc—and those who identify with her—really “commit” to and “value” living in a house in which she is effectively silenced?

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2 For more on these terms, see section [2.4.4] in the Introduction to this thesis above. See also deSilva 2007: 112-25.
by both her father and husband (4 Macc 18.6-19)? Of the Jewish colonial whom deSilva believes has learnt to use the Greek master’s tools to shore up his own house—his philosophy, literature, political thought and so on—deSilva writes that “[s]urely the master would have regretted teaching [her] the use of his tools” (2007: 127). But equally, on this reading, the colonial would rue having learnt them, particularly if Lorde is correct that “only the most narrow perimeters of change are possible and allowable” if the tools of patriarchy are allowed to determine the tools of resistance (1984: 111). What is needed in the case of the interpretation of 4 Macc, then, is another politics—and it is our contention in this chapter that we might begin to glimpse this politics if we read 4 Macc from another place, namely, the theatre.

1.3. Limitations of the political/postcolonial reading

The rejection of what we are calling here the “master’s politics”—and the embrace of “another politics” in the interpretation of 4 Macc—what might these look like? To begin thinking this project we will return to deSilva’s reading, already alluded to [1.1] above, of the tyranny of Antiochus as the politics of arrogance and pride. We will be particularly interested here in how the possibility of reading 4 Macc from another place outside the “house” or the “home” begins to reveal political—or antipolitical—facets to the text with which deSilva’s postcolonial stance is incapable of dealing. Reading deSilva’s paper side-by-side with an essay by the classical scholar Nicole Loraux (2002b) will, it is hoped, reveal to us a way in which the master’s house may in fact be dismantled—not by using his tools but precisely by using the tools of the other.

DeSilva’s conclusion to his paper, as we have already seen, is that the martyrs of 4 Macc—by modelling faithfulness to their indigenous culture, defiant speech and action and the practice of solidarity—strike a blow at the very heart of “empire.” But does the “widespread imitation” of this model of “nonviolent resistance” against “tyranny” (deSilva 2007: 101; 122 n. 64), assuming that is in fact the goal of the

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3 See also Lorde’s original quote in more detail than deSilva provides: “For the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us temporarily to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change” (Lorde 1984: 112).
author of 4 Macc, really exhaust the political possibilities there to be condemned or commended in the text?

We suggest that Loraux’s work, in concert with deSilva’s, can help us see more clearly how 4 Macc actually “[creates] spaces for resistance and the affirmation of an alternative set of interests,” which is in fact deSilva’s professed aim (2007: 100). Running through Loraux’s book is an ongoing comparison between Euripides’ *Trojan Women* and Sartre’s version of the same. This is of interest to Loraux in her quest to recover “other, more hidden, voices” in the genre of tragedy—specifically, the voice of *mourning*—over and above the political voice that Sartre emphasises in his adaptation (Loraux 2002b: 13). Loraux’s words, we suggest, resonate deeply for us here in this chapter:

We no longer believe, as Sartre did, that the advent of postcolonial regimes can produce a “new man,” and for that reason among others, we no longer demand that tragedy become a weapon in the struggle. (2002b: 13)

This is to say that a work such as Sartre’s—the fruit of his opposition, in particular, to the policy of the United States in the Vietnam War, and to all “colonialist expeditions” in general—now strikes us as “dated” (Loraux 2002b: 4, 9-10; Sartre 1967). Not only that, but now we see more clearly Sartre’s modifications to Euripides’ text—his deletions, interpolations, substitutions of discourses for dialogues, and so on—as so many manipulations rather than innocent adaptations designed to amplify its meaning for moderns. In other words, Loraux believes Sartre comes close to *abusing* rather than *using* the text: “I am not certain that his adaptation…is, always and in every detail, careful to refrain from harmful manipulation” (Loraux 2002b: 7).

As will have become clear by now, we are not certain either that deSilva, in his postcolonialist reading of 4 Macc, has refrained from using the text to serve an agenda, rather than drawing out in his interpretation its finer points of meaning. One general example will illustrate our point here, before we move on finally to examine what deSilva means by defining “tyranny” as the politics of arrogance and pride. Loraux says of Sartre:
…[H]e has taken what to the Greeks would have to be “subtle contradiction” and converted it into “negation, rejection” on the assumption that, as outsiders, we would understand it better. Clearly, it did not bother him that what he calls contradiction might, rather, be the very ambiguity that constitutes tragedy itself… (2002b: 10)

In order to serve his political purpose then, according to Loraux, Sartre had to leave nothing to chance and nothing to ambiguity. The same could be said of deSilva; not only is the scholarly uncertainty of the date and place of the writing of 4 Macc glossed over in his paper—a fact that nonetheless prevents “the absolute historical specificity preferred for postcolonial interpretation” (2007: 101 n. 8; etc.)—but, more tellingly, not even the presence of a gaping black hole of interpretive doubt at the centre of the text can prevent the imparting of the political lesson. The following footnote, though relegated to the margin, casts a long shadow over the entire paper:

It would be an interesting further study to examine the implications of the author’s using a model of domination (the domination of the passions by “reason”) in a text that sets out to resist another kind of domination (the domination of one’s commitment to one’s ancestral way of life and customs by the presence and representatives of imperialism).… (deSilva 2007: 103 n. 18)

Despite what deSilva affirms here the question goes right to the heart of his completed study, for it shows that his reading of 4 Macc cannot encompass the contradiction of the martyrs (and the author) resisting imperialist domination on the one hand and advocating auto-domination (ἐγκράτεια; 4 Macc 1.1, 7, 30, etc.) on the other. It is clear, as we have already said, that we must listen more carefully to all the voices in 4 Macc that stake a claim to the political if we are to uncover the “antipolitical” nature of the ἀντίψυχος, and in doing so move away at last from the domination of the comfortable “home” of master political categories. But still, if we are prepared to give full weight to the force of the contradictions that will come up,

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4 DeSilva continues: “Where “reason” is ultimately equated with the motivations associated with maintaining the Jewish way of life, and “passions” with those leanings and motivations associated with exploring alternative, is another kind of “imperialism” being inscribed, in this case the domination of one’s (ancestral) culture over the individual’s inclinations in an attempt to curtail his or her “freedom” to move into a new cultural location?” (2007: 103 n. 18).
there is much to be appreciated in deSilva’s analysis of tyranny as essentially the politics of arrogance and pride.

1.4. Troubling the tyranny/democracy dichotomy: the example of παρρησία

For deSilva, a vital part of the author’s and martyrs’ political “activism” in 4 Macc—if indeed we could call it that—is their turning of classical Greek philosophical, moral and political ideals against their Greek imperialist overlords. That is, the author and martyrs upend the dominant Greek/barbarian ideology, such that the Greeks in the story—supposed harbingers of civilisation, enlightened political administration and self-control—are actually portrayed as “crude-minded” (4 Macc 9.15) and as savage beasts (12.13), and the supposed “barbarians”—the Jews—as a law-abiding people of peace and harmony (3.20-21; etc.). What this means for deSilva is that the struggle in the background to 4 Macc—waged both in the world of the text and the world behind it—is whether “Greeks” or “barbarians” have the right lay claim to the moral superiority and rich legacy of Hellenic democracy. Establishing the truth or otherwise of this claim will be our principal task in section [2] below, but for now we must try and see how deSilva’s assumption leads him to define “tyranny” as the polar opposite of “democracy.”

DeSilva’s diametric schema between “tyranny” and “democracy” is easiest to see in his reference to the martyrs’ “defiant speech.” For his postcolonial interpretation to work, deSilva must define democracy as the practice of fearless speech, and tyranny as its suppression. “The martyrs exercise “frank speech” (παρρησία [4 Macc 10.5]), an ideal of Greek democracy,” deSilva suggests. “The exercise of παρρησία was especially important where democracy was threatened by, or replaced by, monarchy or tyranny” (2007: 117; see his other references to democracy on 105; 105-6 n. 22). But it is simply not the case that παρρησία is positive and democratic always and everywhere, and its absence negative and tyrannical. Foucault, on whom deSilva is leaning here, admits the same thing further on in the lectures gathered in Fearless Speech, his “genealogy of the critical attitude in Western philosophy” (2001: 170-71): summarising παρρησία as a “speech activity” in which the speaker choose “frankness instead of persuasion, truth instead of falsehood or silence, the risk of death instead of life and security, criticism instead of flattery, and moral duty instead of self-interest
and moral apathy,” Foucault suggests that “that, then, quite generally, is the positive meaning of the word *parrhesia* in most of the Greek texts where it occurs from the fifth century BC to the fifth century AD” (2001: 13, 19-20; my emphasis). *Most*, but not all: for as Foucault goes on to point out, beginning with Euripides’ *Orestes*, the overwhelmingly positive sense that *παρρησία* had carried previously comes to be interrogated. The questions of who should be entitled to use *παρρησία* and what kind of formation is required for its proper practice will lead to the criticisms of the “fearless speech” by the “Old Oligarch” (pseudo-Xenophon; *The Athenian Constitution*), Isocrates (*On the Peace*; *Areopagiticus*) and Plato in the *Republic* (Foucault 2001: 75-88). The salient point for us in this chapter is that just as deSilva flattens out historical differences in his paper with respect to the date of the writing of 4 Macc (2007: 101 n. 8), so he flattens out the evolution of the meaning of *παρρησία* in the broad span of Greek political thought, all with the aim of constructing a “postcolonial” interpretation that threatens at several points to turn into a simple apology for democracy.

Before we move on to the next section of this chapter—in which we will begin to think about the political “system” that the martyrs and author of 4 Macc commend, instead of that which they condemn—let us look at a key quote from Foucault. Outlining the “problem” that spurred the ancient criticisms of *παρρησία* referred to above, Foucault writes:

> Because *parrhesia* is given even to the worst citizens, the overwhelming influence of bad, immoral, or ignorant speakers may lead the citizenry into tyranny, or may otherwise endanger the city. Hence *parrhesia* may be dangerous for democracy itself. (2001: 77)

We have here a convenient summary of the point we are attempting to make in this section: that even deSilva’s own example of *παρρησία* shows that the definitions of “tyranny” and “democracy” upon which he bases his argument are not as stable and straightforward as he might like them to be. But one is here also reminded of Sartre, who, as we have already seen, allowed his political commitments to do violence to the text he “adapted” (e.g. Loraux 2002b: 7). It is as if deSilva has applied the martyrs’ example of “speaking truth to power” (2007: 117) directly to himself as well as a kind
of interpretive mandate, and that this piece of eisegesis, like it did for Sartre, has lead him to distort and exaggerate his message. Explaining the martyrs’ bold speech in this way amounts both to misrepresenting them—after all, Foucault never defined παρρησία as “speaking truth to power”—and to missing both the significance of their “speaking out” and the power of the other “political” concepts in the text.

2. Theocracy and democracy in 4 Macc

We are not arguing in this chapter that the author and the martyrs of 4 Macc (or the interpreter of the work, for that matter) should be judged according to the measure of the ancient Greek virtues of ἀπραγμοσύνη, “minding one’s own business,” and αἰδώς, “modesty,” as Isocrates and pseudo-Xenophon might have thought (Markovits 2008: 65-8). We are suggesting, rather, that their “fearless speech” (παρρησία) heralds something other than the modern democracy that deSilva is too quick to introduce into his interpretation. We are now at a point where we can begin to analyse the other side of his Greek/barbarian, tyranny/democracy equation.

2.1. Theocracy

Before we focus in on the question of democracy in 4 Macc, however, we must address ourselves to other political readings of the text in which commentators have argued for the promotion therein of theocratic and/or aristocratic rule. Although he does not distinguish sufficiently between monarchy, aristocracy, theocracy and democracy in order for us to be certain, van Henten does seem to come out in the end.

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5 Here we must offer a word on this slogan, which has now been repeated so many times as to have almost lost all meaning. Often wrongly attributed to Noam Chomsky or Edward Said (e.g. Hart 2000: 117)—one of the Reith Lectures Said gave in 1993 bears the motto as its title (Said 1996)—it is actually a Quaker maxim that was popularised through a peace pamphlet published by the Friends at the height of the Cold War (Cortright 2008: 123-25). Whatever deSilva’s own religious and hermeneutical convictions, then, it is anachronistic and too pietistic to attribute it to the martyrs of 4 Macc. Moreover, it is not even overly effective as a resistance strategy, as Chomsky and Arundhati Roy, among others, have pointed out. Here is Chomsky: “I strongly disagree [with the slogan]. The audience is entirely wrong, and the effort hardly more than a form of self-indulgence.… One should seek out an audience that matters—and furthermore…it should not be seen as an audience, but as a community of common concern…We should not be speaking to, but with…” (1996: 60-1, emphasis original; see also Lazarus 2011: 202-3).

6 See, for example, van Henten’s treatment of the word πολιτεία in 4 Macc 3.20; 8.7 and 17.9. After arguing, correctly in our opinion, for the undecidable nature of this word in 4 Macc—on the basis that it was often used by Athenian politicians as nothing more than a propagandistic piece (for example, in the slogan πάτριος πολιτεία) to appeal to “our way of life” in the absence of “a written fixation of their
in favour of the view that the author and martyrs of 4 Macc uphold a *theocratic* constitution (van Henten 1997). What this means in practice is never precisely spelled out by van Henten but we can make out the argument by closely examining the verses he adduces for his claim.

The question that will occupy us in the remainder of this chapter is this: whether the conditions of “profound peace” (βαθεία εἰρήνη) and “observance of the law” (εἰνομία) that obtained in Jerusalem prior to the occupation of the city by Antiochus (4 Macc 3.20-21) really are the same conditions “won back” by the martyrs through their heroic bravery (cf. their bringing back “peace” and “observance of the law” in 18.4). For scholars such as van Henten, for example, “peace” and “observance of the law” mean the same thing before and after the atrocities, or at least the martyrs offer no challenge to the previously established polity meant to guarantee these conditions: “…the Maccabean martyrs alone gain the victory over Antiochus and restore the old and ideal situation for the Jewish people” (1997: 262-3). This old political order (πολιτεία, 3.20; 8.7; 17.9) in 4 Macc is patterned after the Athenian constitution *but with one important difference*—it is of course linked to the Torah, and to the special relationship between the Jewish people and their God. Thus the Jewish political “way of life” (πολιτεία) in 4 Macc is a *theocracy*, according to van Henten, in which the high priest, rather than the king or emperor, is regarded as the guarantor of peace and “good order” (εἰνομία; cf. Philo, *Spec.* 3.131; van Henten 1997: 259-61).

2.1.1. *The high priest Onias (4 Macc 3.20-4.14)*

That the high priest Onias plays an important role in the security and stability of the nation certainly seems to be the import of the story of the raid on the temple treasury by his rival Simon and his ally Apollonius, an episode that forms part of the prehistory to the martyrdoms in which the ancestral peace and good order are threatened (4 Macc 3.20-4.14). Onias is presented in 4.13 as a safeguard against
“human treachery” (ἀνθρωπίνης ἐπιβουλής) and the steward of “divine justice” (θείας δικης), just as the high priest in the theocracy envisioned by Josephus was ultimately responsible, in concert with the other priests, for the “superintendence of the Law” and the “punishment of condemned persons” (C. Ap. 2.164-67; 184-89; 193-94). Polish’s reminder that “[t]he theocracy of Josephus never existed, except as an ideal” is well-taken but ultimately of little import to us here; what matters more to us—and this is what van Henten overlooks—is the point that “the necessity of theocracy linked to subjugation is apparent…. [T]he priesthood cannot coexist with Jewish power, only with foreign power” (Polish 1989: 33-50 [46]; my emphasis). The fact of the idea of the Jewish theocracy (or better perhaps, hierocracy) being defined over and against any idea of a Jewish autocracy, tyranny, monarchy, oligarchy, aristocracy or democracy (cf. C. Ap. 2.165; Rajak 2001a: 201-2) means that as soon as foreign patronage is withdrawn, a power struggle will result. This is precisely what happens in 4 Macc when King Seleucus dies after having actively ruled over Judea even to the point of providing funds for the temple services (3.20-21; cf. 4.15-19); it is also what happens, or so we sustain, when the blood of the martyrs has purified the homeland of all trace of Antiochus and his troops (17.20-22; 18.4-5). How, after all, are we to explain those notes in 4 Macc to the effect that Antiochus, even after all his anti-Jewish decrees and persecutions, “had not been able in any way to put an end to the people’s observance of the law” (4.24) or even to “rule over our nation” (17.20)? The system of theocracy carries on under foreign occupation in 4 Macc but the martyrs in their sacrifices inaugurate a new era of liberation and “peace.”

2.1.2. “Mother of the nation” (4 Macc 15.29)

The second part of van Henten’s argument for a defence of theocracy in 4 Macc, along with his appeal to Josephus, is the presence in the text of comparisons between the martyrs and important people in Jewish history. The presence in the philosophical prelude to the martyrdoms (1.1-3.18) of Joseph (2.2-6), Moses (2.17-18), Jacob (2.19-20) and David (3.6-18) suggest that the author of 4 Macc seeks to place his heroes on

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8 Quoted in Walzer et al. 2000: 1.189-91; see the commentary by Orwin, “Flavius Josephus on Priesthood,” pp. 191-5 of the same volume.
9 Even if van Henten does see that “the ideal Jewish way of life, with a situation of εὐνομία, could well be realized under foreign government” (1997: 259).
10 “As [Josephus] later clarified…what he meant by “theocracy” is, in reality, a hierocracy….” (Wardle 2010: 33).
their level. Throughout the work, furthermore, as we have already seen in this thesis\(^{11}\), the martyrs are compared, either directly or indirectly, to Abraham and Isaac; at the conclusion to the work we read that “the sons of Abraham with their victorious mother are gathered together into the chorus of the fathers” (18.23). What is of interest to van Henten, however, as he seeks to present “[t]he Maccabean martyrs as restorers of the Jewish polity” (1997: 243)—i.e., of the “theocracy”—is the title of “father” given to Eleazar in 4 Macc (7.1, 5, 9). The crux of van Henten’s argument is that “father” Eleazar, along with the children and their mother who are true sons and daughters of “father Abraham” (14.20; 15.28; 17.6; cf. 9.1-2, 29; 13.17), restore the law of the “fathers” that brings peace and prosperity to the nation (3.20; cf. 18.5). Because the references to “father Eleazar” are quickly followed by a reference to “father Aaron” (7.11-12), van Henten understands Eleazar’s epithet as having a theocratic/hierocratic basis—that is, that Eleazar’s intercession is effective because of his priestly status (7.6; cf. 5.4; 6.5). As the author of 4 Macc explains: “For just as our father Aaron, armed with the censer, ran through the multitude of the people and conquered the fiery angel, so the descendant of Aaron, Eleazar, though being consumed by the fire, remained unmoved in his reason” (7.6; cf. Num 16.41-50; Wis 18.20-25).

But what of the honorific “mother of the nation” (ὦ μήτηρ ἔθνους) bestowed upon the mother-martyr at 4 Macc 15.29? Van Henten explains away this title, stating simply that it “recalls Abraham’s being the father of Israel” (1997: 262). But in fact the epithet constitutes a direct challenge to the theocracy—the polity and peace of the “fathers” in 4 Macc—even given the extent to which the mother-martyr is “masculinised” in the rest of the work\(^{12}\). For the designation “mother of the nation” recalls the figure of Rachel, the wife of Jacob, who appears in the book of Jeremiah weeping bitterly for the children of Israel who have died or gone into exile (Jer 31.15); in later Jewish tradition this archetypal “mother of mothers” (em-ha-em in Yiddish) is also called the “mother of the nation” (em-ha-am; Brenner 2008: 256-7). Whereas Jacob, therefore, is a symbol in 4 Macc of the theocratic polity established in the homeland prior to the persecution of Antiochus (2.19; 7.19; 13.17; 16.25), the emergence of Rachel, his wife, can be thought of as representing the chance of the

\(^{11}\) For more on this see, for e.g., Chapter 2 of this thesis above.

\(^{12}\) See Chapter 4 of this thesis above.
new political order won by the mother, her children and the old man Eleazar. And whereas Jacob stands for the politics of the “domination” of the passions by devout reason that enables the “domination” of subjugated peoples by the representatives of imperialism and tyranny—which according to the terms of the argument set out by deSilva that we referred to above (section [1.3])—the mother-martyr as a Rachel figure stands for another politics, the politics of mourning. But before we move on to consider something of what this other politics may entail we must take account of the possibility—as we have already seen, defended by deSilva—that the martyrs and the author of 4 Macc promote democracy, rather than theocracy, in the face of tyranny and domination.

2.2. Democracy

Further to the appeal to the martyrs’ “defiant speech” (παρρησία) that we considered in [1.4] above, there are two other arguments that have been advanced in favour of the hypothesis that the author and heroes of 4 Macc defend the ideal of democracy. We have already alluded to one very briefly: van Henten’s suggestion that the epitaph in 4 Macc 17.9-10 contains terms that echo contemporary non-Jewish inscriptions that condemn tyranny and praise democracy (see n. 6 above). The other argument that we will consider here has less to do with the idea of “democracy” as an actual political system than as a convenient foil to tyrants and tyranny: democracy as tyranny’s “natural” antithesis, its binary opposite that turns out not to be as “opposite” as some commentators might like (see section [1.4] above). That is, below we will look at the sense or otherwise of Levenson’s contention that “[t]he book known as 4 Maccabees and the Jewish theology of martyrdom for which it is one of the earliest witnesses is more democratic than Paul” (1993: 189; my emphasis).

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13 Pardes, for example, also understands Jacob and Rachel as a kind of conceptual pair. But pace Fokkelman, and despite the many parallels in their lives, Rachel is not simply Jacob’s mirror image—the (female) image of the (male) “image of God”—but a comparable likeness with her own hopes and “dreams” (Pardes 1993: 60-78).

14 Elsewhere deSilva resorts to the language of the stereotype in a discussion on παρρησία in the Letter to the Hebrews (Heb 3.6; 4.16; 10.19): “[The addresses of the letter] are not to let their neighbours, in effect, bully them (like tyrants, the stereotypical enemies of democracy and, especially, free speech)...” (2000: 139; emphasis mine). As we have tried to show thus far in this chapter, though, this stereotype is not as obvious or as stable as deSilva would like to think.
2.2.1. The argument from the πάτριος πολιτεία

To return then, first of all, to van Henten’s assertion that the vocabulary of the epitaph in 4 Macc 17.9-10 “can be found…in Athenian decrees against tyranny” (1997: 263): would it really be proper simply to “replace” πολιτεία in 17.9 with νόμοι, δῆμος or δημοκρατία for the purposes of comparative analysis with pagan sources? Are these words really synonyms (“related words”; van Henten 1997: 264)?

As we have already seen, the word πολιτεία occurs three times in 4 Macc (3.20; 8.7; 17.9), on each occasion with a different shade of meaning. In its political sense in the ancient world the word is very slippery: it is often found in appeals to restore an “ancestral constitution” (πάτριος πολιτεία) but, like contemporary calls to return to the “original” ideals that inspired a party, organisation, country, etc., different people had different ideas as to what the founding “fathers” intended. Commenting on Lysias’ speech Preserving the Ancestral Constitution Todd points out that “the slogan is noted for its adaptability”:

…[I]t is a striking feature of the political debates of the late fifth century [i.e., in the immediate aftermath of the overthrow of the Thirty Tyrants] that both sides—those who wished to impose a property qualification, and those who wished to maintain the radical democracy—were equally keen to argue that their proposals matched the original intentions of the founding fathers of the Athenian polis. (2000: 335-6)

This fits with Fuks’s conclusion in his more general study of the “ancestral constitution” which, as Doran conveniently summarises it, holds that the phrase “referred not to some archaizing originalism, but to the laws currently in existence and to the existing constitution” (Doran 2011; 423-33 [427]; Fuks 1953)15. In other words—and this is the key point, we would argue, with respect to 4 Macc—πολιτεία, as a piece of political propaganda, can hardly be equated simply with “democracy” without further qualification. But in van Henten’s view, because the martyrs have

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15 Even though he rests his argument on its intrinsically democratic nature, van Henten’s own conclusion is that “the πάτριος πολιτεία functioned primarily as a convenient slogan appealing to nostalgic feelings about the past” (1997: 197).
“destroyed” (καταλελόκαμέν; 4 Macc 11.24) the tyranny of the tyrant “who wished to destroy [καταλόσασαι] the πολιτεία of the Hebrews” (17.9), both the martyrs and the πολιτεία must be “diametrically opposed” in this “destruction” to the tyrant and tyranny; hence democratic (1997: 259). The reality is somewhat different: instead of a simple black/white schema with tyranny or democracy being the only alternatives, the political spectrum in 4 Macc is a broad continuum, with the extremes of tyranny and democracy on either end and flux in the middle. Proof of this can perhaps be found in the way that the pagan sources van Henten cites actually parallel the use of πολιτεία in 4 Macc 3.20 more than at 17.9; referred to the “fathers” (οἱ πατέρες ἡμῶν), πολιτεία may very well mean a political status quo, but referred to the martyrs (in 8.7 as well as 17.9), even van Henten admits that a better translation may be “way of life” or even “customs”\(^\text{16}\).

2.2.2. The argument from “egalitarianism”

Levenson’s assertion (see above, section [2.2]) that 4 Macc upholds a political ideal of martyrdom that is more “democratic” than Paul’s, at least, is an example of a slightly different usage of the word that must be deliberately kept in mind when interpreting the text. He means to say that the author’s theology is more egalitarian: “To all Jews who die the consecrated death it applies the language of propitiation or expiation that Paul was to apply to Jesus alone” (1993: 189; emphasis original). Whereas for the apostle it was the death of one man that brought redemption to Israel, in 4 Macc it is the blood of seven brothers, their mother and an old priest that makes atonement for the sin of the nation and purifies the land of Jason’s apostasy and Antiochus’ tyranny (6.27-29; 17.20-22). But this more “egalitarian” theology has little to do with the democratic ideology with which we have taken in issue in deSilva’s reading of the book. As we have tried to show so far in this chapter, even if there traces of a defence of the “democratic,” broadly speaking, in the martyrs’ heroic suffering and death, it cannot be said that they refer to democracy in its unadulterated, idealistic, egalitarian sense. Whose παρρησία do the martyrs model in 4 Macc 10.5, for example (cf. [1.4] above)—the “free speech” prized by the democrats or the mindless “chattering” derided by the aristocrats? Whose πολιτεία are they said to

\(^{16}\) “[Τὸν πατρίον ἐθόν, 4 Macc 18.5] may be seen as a parallel of 17.9 and may therefore indicate that πολιτεία in 4 Macc 3:20; 8:7 and 17:9 refers to the Jewish way of life” (van Henten 1997: 199).
“defend”—that of the founding fathers of time immemorial or that of the fathers in power in their own day ([2.2.1] above)? In the paper we discussed above that afforded us a starting point in this chapter deSilva makes a conscious hermeneutical choice to adopt a reading “stance” that uncovers discourses in 4 Macc that legitimate or resist “tyranny” (2007: 100). His postcolonial positioning is all well and good thus far, but there are other ways of reading the political in 4 Macc that do not lead to his problematic coloniser/colonised, tyrannical/democratic dialectic (problematic in the sense that “tyranny” cannot be simply equated with “empire,” as we have seen, nor “democracy” with the “subaltern”). In [1.2] and [1.3] above we put the other way forward that we intend to take in this chapter in terms of moving away from the “house” as the best place from which to interpret 4 Macc. We are looking, in other words, for a way in which to describe the political significance of the martyrs of 4 Macc that does not rely overly on the baggage-laden, highly unstable vocabulary of the political “masters,” or founding “fathers,” of the work.

3. The antipolitical in 4 Macc

Are there other political voices in 4 Macc apart from the tyrannical, the theocratic and the democratic? Loraux’s essay on Sartre—the insights of which we applied to deSilva, mutatis mutandis ([1.3] above)—has already suggested to us the presence therein of the mourning voice of Rachel ([2.1.2] above). The mother-martyr’s designation as “mother of the nation” (4 Macc 15.29) constitutes a direct challenge both to the tyranny of Antiochus and to the “democracy,” or better theocracy, of the “fathers.”

There are, we suggest, four elements in 4 Macc that suggest that the “peace” and “observance of the law” that prevailed in Jerusalem before and after the martyrs of the work are not the same: those traces therein of the mourning, vengeance, memory and the feminine. As we have already seen (sections [2.1.1]-[2.1.2]), the high priest and priests, alongside the mother-martyr as “mother of the nation,” will no longer enjoy the same authority as “father[s] of the nation” in the manner of father Abraham, father Aaron, and the other patriarchs. As a Rachel figure, the Maccabean mother weeps bitterly and endlessly for her children (4 Macc 16.5-11; cf. Jer 31.5)—a natural and instinctive lament that the author of the work tries to silence (4 Macc 16.12), perhaps
because it falls outside the only acceptable, institutional manner and occasion in which to remember the martyrs (1.10; 3.19; 14.9; 17.8-10). Despite the authoritative injunction to forget outside the official time of “this anniversary” (1.10) and “the present occasion” (3.19)—see, for example, the way in which the mother-martyr “disregards” the dreadful fate that befalls her sons (15.23, 24)\(^{17}\)—it is clear that the martyrs in fact model a determined remembering, one connected with vengeance towards their external enemies (9.9; 10.11, 15, 21; 12.12; 18.22; etc.) but that could very well extend to internal threats as well. It is not hard to imagine the kind of revenge that could be taken by the new order on Simon, Jason and their fellow “revolutionaries” (cf. 3.21), for example. These elements of the feminine, mourning, memory and vengeance in 4 Macc disrupt the organisation of the city—whether Jerusalem or any other—because they disrupt its established power structure, the rhythm of its civic observances and the political amnesty upon which the polis is founded. It is in this sense that these four elements of the martyrs’ resistance, and the reading of 4 Macc based on them, might be labelled as “antipolitical”—Loraux’s term not for political “indifference or neutrality” but for “any behaviour that diverts, rejects, or threatens, consciously or not, the obligations and prohibitions constituting the ideology of the city-state” (2002b: 26-7 [26]).

We return to Loraux, then, who as we have already seen criticises Sartre for his postcolonial interpretation of Trojan Women, arguing that its manifest political agenda—and a “dated” one at that—does inexcusable violence to the ancient text (section [1.3] above). It could be argued that Loraux’s lessons from Sartre and his failed experiment with tragedy cannot be applied to the interpretation of 4 Macc, a work which has most in common with the ancient genre of the protreptic discourse (see section [1.9] of the Introduction to this thesis above). But are there really no tragic elements in 4 Macc that might enable us to read the text antipolitically—which, as we have seen above, would involve reading the work from the “theatre” instead of from the “house” ([1.2] above)?

3.1. 4 Macc as tragedy

Even if there is little in 4 Macc to suggest that it was intended to be played, there is some evidence that its author borrows images and concepts from the world of the theatre.

\(^{17}\) For a further discussion on the undecidable nature of “forgetting” in 4 Macc, see, for e.g., section [3.5] of Chapter 2 of this thesis above.
Hadas (1953: 100-101) gathers together some key examples: the brothers are described on several occasions as a “chorus” (4 Macc 8.4; 8.29-9.9; 13.8-18; 14.7-8), and mention is made at the end of the work of the “chorus of the fathers” (18.23); the language of the curse, familiar to tragedy, is made to apply to Antiochus (ἀλάστορ, 9.24; 11.23; 18.22); an epitaph is worked into the text after the manner of Euripides (17.9-10; cf. e.g. Tro. 1188-91). Arneson (2008) mentions others: the life of reason and the life of passions are likened to roles played by actors (6.17); heroes from the history of Israel as presented as fixed characters (6.5); the body is likened to a costume (15.15). Taken together, these facets of the text go towards supporting the now quite common conclusion that 4 Macc in general—and its motif of atoning death for a friend, city or philosophy in particular—were modelled on, or least directly inspired by, the dramas of the ancient Greek tragedians (Williams 1975: 196).

3.1.1. *Mourning: the mother’s lament (4 Macc 16.6-11)*

We are comfortable, then, citing the textual evidence to which we have just referred, in reading 4 Macc from the perspective of tragedy and the antipolitical. How would the dramatic lament of the mother at 4 Macc 16.6-11 factor into such a reading? Following the author’s cue at 16.5 and the parallel “imaginary speech” in 8.17-26, exegetes usually read the lament in 16.6-11 as a speech that the mother-martyr could have given had she been emotionally and spiritually feeble (e.g. deSilva 1998: 73-4). Upon seeing her children tortured to death, any other woman without the benefit of the self-control and pious assurance that are the fruits of the life of devout reason, guided by the Torah, might have regretted the agony of a mother’s love; it might have seemed to her “profitless,” “fruitless,” and pointless anxiety to have given birth to her children only for them to meet such a grisly end (16.7-8). The Maccabean mother, however, seizes the chance not to lament her giving birth to her children but to urge and implore them on to “rebirth for immortality” (16.13). Instead of weeping for herself and her children, the mother-martyr in fact gives a speech in which she

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18 See 4 Macc 16.5: “Consider this also: If this woman, though a mother, had been fainthearted, she would have mourned over [her children] and perhaps spoken as follows…. As suggested, 16.6-11 is the second of two fictive speeches in 4 Macc, the other one in 8.17-26 being introduced at 8.16: “Let us consider, on the other hand, what arguments might have been used if some of [the brothers] had been cowardly and unmanly…."

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encourages and persuades each of her sons “to die rather violate God’s commandment” (16.16-24 [24]).

But there are other ways of reading 16.6-11: both as “the expected reaction of a mother who experiences such a fate” (Hellerman 2001: 35; emphasis original) and—what is ultimately of greater import—as a lament “composed by women” that echoes “the laments of real women of the eastern Mediterranean area” (Miller 1994: 288; Crossan 1999: 529-31). Given the connection made throughout 4 Macc, frequently commented upon in this thesis, between masculinity and reason and femininity and passion (14.11-12; 15.5, 23, 30; 16.1-2; etc.), this second suggestion to read the lament as a genuine and perhaps historical expression of grief has much to commend it. DeSilva, in a paper specifically devoted to “the achievement of the heroine of 4 Maccabees,” devotes several pages to a comparison between the mother-martyr of 4 Macc and mothers in the plays of Euripides (2006c: 261-7), but his work suffers in that he, like the author of 4 Macc, dismisses the voice of real women and their own understanding of motherhood and femininity. For even if the lament in 16.6-11 was not spoken by the mother-martyr in 4 Macc, as deSilva holds, we agree with Miller that it was likely spoken by some woman—even perhaps a Jewish woman—and this echo of the feminine can be a useful tool of resistance in reading a work where the only apparent option open to faithful Jewish women is to become like men.

It is as if there were two mother figures in 4 Macc, therefore: one a male imagining of the woman as he would have liked her to be and one a vision of the woman as she (probably) actually was. Both women suffer the untold, deeply physical anguish of grief (4 Macc 14.13; 15.11), a pain more bitter than birth pangs (15.16) that is likened also to torture (15.22), an overwhelming flood of emotions (15.32) and a “raging fiery

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19 One particular example from deSilva’s paper will suffice to illustrate this point. Giving full weight to the natural, concessive sense of καίπερ (“although”) in 4 Macc 16.1—rendering the key part of the verse “if this woman had been fainthearted, even though she was a mother”—deSilva writes: “Motherhood is itself a proof of a particular woman’s fortitude and endurance (by reason of the rigors of labor and delivery), whereas those who have not yet carried and delivered a child remain ‘unproven’ in this regard” (2006c: 261 n. 25). This kind of thinking is to be dismissed as nothing other than a man presuming to know what makes a “good woman” and imagining what it is like to carry children and give birth. Here in this chapter we prefer to try to listen to real women describing their experiences of motherhood and bereavement, however difficult that exercise is and however much the words of these women have been twisted by the male author of 4 Macc.
furnace” (16.3-4)\textsuperscript{20}, but the difference between the two is that in the male version the woman accepts and seeks meaning in death (“for the sake of God,” 16.19, 21), whereas in the woman’s own words she rages against it. Holst-Warhaft, writing on laments in Greek tragedy, explains the clash between the two in terms of (female) “tears” and (male) “ideas”:

…[W]omen, whose involvement with the dead body is an intimate one\textsuperscript{21}…need no heightened retelling of the stories of death to comprehend its reality or to quicken their emotional response. They move from experience to art, from tears to ideas. Men, whose experience of death is…less physical…must re-read death in art or play in order to experience it. The movement…[is] one that progresses from ideas to tears. (1992: 22)

Tears, therefore, amount to a kind of protest, “not just against the injustice of death over life but the injustice of male over female” (Crossan 1999: 533). Tears also protest the inadequacy of the official idea of death in coming to terms with despair, fear, anger and grief—or, in the language of 4 Macc, the ultimate inadequacy of (a man’s) exhortations to “courage,” “endurance,” and “hope” in the face of the (woman’s) experience of death\textsuperscript{22}. We have in this a reason, then, why the author of 4 Macc is so desperate to purge any trace of tears from his text (e.g. 15.19, 20; 16.12): tears threaten the official idea that Torah-guided reason, coupled with the promise of eternal life with God, should be enough to cope with the “passions” of despair and desolation.

\textsuperscript{20} In his portrait of the mother, deSilva is very careful to emphasise that she suffered as great and many tortures, in her grief, as were inflicted on her sons (cf. 4 Macc 15.22); his point is “not that she remains untouched by these sufferings”—in the mode of some Cynic or Stoic sage in the grip of apatheia (lack of emotion) or aponia (lack of pain)—“but that she remains unmoved in her moral purpose by them [cf. 15.11, 14]” (2006c: 264-5). As he explains, he seeks to rescue the author of 4 Macc from the charge of “contradiction” (264): if reason cannot eradicate the passions, but only tame them (e.g. 1.6; 3.2-5), how is it that the martyrs can control their experience of pain to such a degree that the tyrant’s fire is “cold” to them, his catapults “painless” and his violence “powerless” (11.25)? DeSilva’s project of righting what he considers to be the “contradictions” of 4 Macc is interesting in the light of Loraux’s comment that “it did not bother [Sartre] that what he calls contradiction might, rather, be the very ambiguity that constitutes tragedy itself…” (see [1.3] above).

\textsuperscript{21} Cf. in 4 Macc the extraordinarily poignant detail that the mother “looked at the eyes of each one [of her sons] in his tortures gazing boldly at the same agonies, and saw in their nostrils the signs of the approach of death” (15.19).

\textsuperscript{22} See, for example, how the male author—at his comfortable narrative remove from the horror of the tortures—takes it upon himself to exhort the mother directly to “take courage” (15.4)—she who had seen at first hand “the flesh of children burned upon the flesh of other children, severed hands upon hands, scalped heads upon heads, and corpses fallen on other corpses” (15.20).
3.1.2. Vengeance: the curse language (4 Macc 9.24; 11.23; 18.22)

As we saw above (section [2.1]), the desire that underlies 4 Macc is to return to the way things were in Jerusalem before Antiochus’ incursion: to the way things had always been, to the “peace” and “observance of the law” which reigned in the time of the “ancestors” (οἱ πατέρες, 4 Macc 3.20). But we have just seen in the previous section the way in which the tears of the Maccabean mother appropriate this civic “always” for a different purpose: insofar as “tears” win out over “ideas,” the future will be a space not for peaceful coexistence or “public harmony” (ὁµόνοια, 3.21) but for weeping and mourning: the “mother of the nation” refusing always to be comforted for her children.

Another trace of what we are calling here the “antipolitical” in 4 Macc—antipolitical in the sense that it threatens the way things have “always” been in the polis—is the spectre of vengeance, which raises its head in the language of cursing used by both the brothers and the author (ἀλάστορ, 4 Macc 9.24; 11.23; 18.22). “[J]ustice has laid up for you intense and eternal fire and tortures,” the seventh brother tells the tyrant, “and these throughout all time will never let you go” (εἰς ὁλὸν τὸν αἰῶνα οὐκ ἀνήσουσίν σε, 12.12; emphasis mine). DeSilva (1998: 137) has no qualms in interpreting this verse as meaning that “those who persecute God’s clients [i.e., those who keep “faith” (πίστις) with God] will themselves be pursued by divine justice in the temporal world and throughout eternity,” but this uncomfortable image of a vindictive, jealous, rancorous God tends to raise more questions than it answers. For how, to begin with, does this vengeful regime of “divine justice” (cf. 9.9, 32 [“divine wrath”]; 10.11, 21; 11.3; 12.18; 13.15) fit in with the exercise of human justice in the city?

The fact is that, in the philosophical vision of 4 Macc, passions such as the desire for revenge actually inhibit the proper performance of justice. Eleazar defines “justice” (δικαιοσύνη) at 4 Macc 5.24 as acting impartially (ισονομεῖν) in all one’s dealings (ἡθῶν)—or, in an equally valid translation, as keeping in balance all one’s habitual inclinations. But this equilibrium is disrupted by “malicious emotions” (2.16) such as spite (1.4), anger (1.24), boastfulness, covetousness, thirst for honour and rivalry (1.26), lust for power, vainglory, boasting and arrogance (2.15). Or, more precisely,
impartiality and equanimity are rendered impossible by the “malevolent tendency” (κακοήθης διάθεσις) inherent in each of these passions (1.25). As the author observes with regard to anger: anger breeds pleasure and pain (1.24)—pleasure at the expectation of revenge, pain in the dwelling on the perceived slight (cf. Aristotle, Rhet. 2.2.1; deSilva 1998: 62)—and pleasure and pain, being the two major “sources” of the emotions (4 Macc 1.20), breed further “malicious emotions” that cause the “jungle of habits and emotions” to grow wild and out of control (1.28-30). According to the author of 4 Macc, Moses and Jacob were able to act with justice (2.6b) precisely because they did not let their anger or desire for revenge get out of control (2.17-20).

Calling the tyrant Antiochus ἀλάστορ (4 Macc 9.24; 11.23; 18.22), however, flies directly in the face of the example of Moses and Jacob because the very word betrays a sense of malice and pain. It does not matter that the author and the martyrs do not take revenge themselves but offer it up to God—variously called “just Providence” (9.24), a “great avenger” (11.23), and “divine justice” (18.22)—because even just to speak the word ἀλάστορ is to succumb to the temptation to anger and the desire for revenge. Ἀλάστορ: the pain of the privative α--; the promise not to forget, not to let it ever escape one’s notice (λαθεῖν; λήθομαι). Commenting on occurrences of ἀλάστορ and its derivatives in ancient Greek texts, Loraux calls the word an “undecidable”:

Alast-: a matrix of meaning to express the pathos…of an irreparable loss, a disappearance (alaston penthos of Penelope at the thought of Odysseus, of Tros weeping over his son Ganymede in the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite), or a death (alaston penthos of Eupeithes)… [A]lastór, the name of the criminal insofar as he has “committed unforgettable acts [alesta]” [Plutarch, Quaest. rom. 25]…the name of the avenging demon of the dead victim who tirelessly pursues the murderer… (2002a: 161-2)

What is certain, however, is that if the pain is never to be forgotten—the revenge from which Antiochus “will not escape” (4 Macc 9.32) will be “eternal” (9.9; 13.15) and “unceasing” (10.11) and will extend from this life to the next (12.18; 18.5, 22)—the anger will fester and the cause of impartiality and justice will suffer.
3.1.3. Memory and the necessity of “forgetfulness and ignorance” (4 Macc 1.5; 2.24)

We have shown in sections [3.2.1] and [3.2.2] above that the traces of mourning and vengeance in 4 Macc threaten to hijack the future of the Jewish people newly won by the martyrs of the work: the future threatens to become not a space for a return to the way things have “always” been but an endless stream of tears and recriminations. Loraux, commenting on laments and curses in Greek tragedy, shows us that weeping and revenge also impact on the past and the present:

…[L]ike mēnis [“wrath”], alaston [whether mourning or vengeance, see (3.2.2) above], expresses an atemporal duration, immobilized in a negative will, that makes the past into an eternal present. (2002a: 162)

Something like this is palpable in 4 Macc, we might say, in the way in which the author brings long-past events into the present: “on this anniversary” (1.10), the “present occasion” (3.19), “even now” (14.9). But it is also evident in the fact that the punishment of Antiochus is said to extend from the past to the present to the future: “divine justice pursued and will pursue the accursed tyrant” (θεία δίκη μετήλθεν καὶ μετελεσται τὸν ἀλάστορα τύραννον, 18.22). This threat that justice will be done—justice which, as we have seen, will not apply equally to everyone (ἰσονομεῖν) as long as it is based on anger, mourning and vengeance—is particularly troubling when the case of Simon and the “revolutionaries” is considered (3.21-4.14). If Jerusalem is to again be a city that is “temperate, just, good, and courageous” (cf. 2.23), an amnesty must be declared—the past must be thought of as past and divisions must be forgotten if the city or the “nation” is to be one (1.11; 17.20; 18.4; etc.)

And yet there is no mention of an amnesty in 4 Macc, and this is because the kind of antipolitics represented by the martyrs refuses to forget. The closest we come is the imposition of forgetting on the mother by the author of the work, as at 4 Macc 15.23-24:

—Van Henten’s observation on the neologism ἐθνήδον (“as a whole nation”) in 4 Macc 2.19 certainly fits in well with the point we are attempting to make here: “The phrase may suggest that the author of 4 Maccabees tends to look at people from a national perspective” (1997: 239 n. 260).
But devout reason, giving [the woman’s] heart a man’s courage in the very midst of her emotions, strengthened her to forget [παραδέων], for the time, her parental love. Although she witnessed the destruction of seven children and the ingenious and various rackings, this noble mother forgot [ἐξέλυσεν] all these because of her faith in God.…

The mention of “a man’s courage” (ἀνδρειώσας) here is vital, for it speaks to the way in which the male author of the work tries to remake the woman in his (male) image—and as we have seen above (section [3.2.1]), men’s reports of women’s experiences of death are not at all to be trusted. The mother’s “forgetting” here is, then—like this “man’s courage” thrust deep into her woman’s body (σπλάγχνα)24 and soul (πάθεσιν)—a sinister imposition on her by the author of the work25. If there is again to be “peace” and the “observance of the law” (18.4)—states in which the author of 4 Macc has an interest—there must be this forgetting or, in other words, an amnesty: what Loraux calls a “founding forgetting” (2002a: 42-3 [43]), a forgetting of the fact that, wherever there is “victory” (4 Macc 1.11; 6.10 [ἐνίκα]; 7.3 [νίκη]; 17.10, 11-15 [νίκος, ἐνίκα]; 18.4, 23; etc.), there has been, and still will be, division26.

And this is the case in 4 Macc, too, since forgetting actually trumps reason, wisdom and the law. One is capable of reason only with the aid of wisdom, and capable of wisdom only by “education in the law” (1.15-17), but necessarily prior to this official schema is the fact that while reason rules over the emotions “of the body” (3.1)—“those that are opposed to justice, courage and self-control” (1.6)—“reason does not rule over its own emotions” (1.6; 3.1), which are instead ruled by “forgetfulness and ignorance” (1.5; 2.24). Without forgetfulness, then, reason loses its defining complement, and without reason there can be no wisdom or “observance of the law.”

24 For more on this word—here translated “heart” but referring in fact to the female body—see section [2.2.2] of Chapter 5 of this thesis above.
25 For an alternative reading of the mother-martyrs’ “unbinding” (ἐξέλυσεν) of all that she had experienced—one that (hopefully) avoids the male/political imposition of amnesty over the female/antipolitical experience of death in the desire to mourn—see Chapter 2 of this thesis above, and in particular section [3] of the same.
26 Loraux observes that the word κράτος—“power,” “might,” “rule”—“is often associated with nikē, victory, both over enemies from the outside, the others, and over enemies from inside, one’s own.” And on κράτος she writes: “…as if the cities refused to admit that there could be a place in political practice for kratos—because that would mean ratifying the victory of one part of the city over another and thus having to renounce the fantasy of the unitary and indivisible city—the word is strangely absent from both civic speech and historical narrative…” (2002a: 68-71 [69]).
3.1.4. The feminine and the “politics of the strange”:
the brothers’ swansong (4 Macc 15.21)

Because of its association with important female figures in Greek tragedy—Electra, Hecuba, Cassandra, Andromache, Antigone—Loraux calls her antipolitics of mourning and wrath that do not ever forget a “woman’s politics, even a “politics in the feminine”—impossible in Greece, and yet presented—where fury has replaced logos” (2002b: 22, 26-7 [22])27. Certainly in 4 Macc tears and vengeance threaten the εὔσεβής λογισμός, “devout reason” (1.1; etc.)—but are they uniquely a feminine phenomenon in the work?

As we have seen, mourning is exclusively the domain of the mother in the book, but it could be argued that a principal effect of this lamenting—that of displacing logos, meaning (as in the “expressive clarity” of official political discourse) in favour of phonē, sound (Loraux 2002b: 39-40, 54-5, 84, and passim)—is also achieved by the seven brothers in their harmonious music. “Neither the melodies of sirens nor the songs of swans attract the attention of their hearers as did the voices of the children in torture calling to their mother” (4 Macc 15.21; cf. 14.3, 6-7). While not strictly mourning, obviously, commentators on this verse have not failed to draw attention to the fact that swans were thought to sing a beautiful, plaintive song just before dying (e.g. deSilva 2010: 1735; Tobin 1993: 1833; cf. Holsinger 2001: 58-60; and the references in Arnott 2007: 183). Loraux makes mention of the swansong of Cassandra (Ag. 1444-46) in connection with what she calls the “conquest of eternity through mourning” (2002b: 35, 102 n. 33): for that reason we propose to include the brothers’ swansong here, if only as a kind of thought experiment to test the limits of the so-called “politics of the feminine.”

We saw above (section [3.2.2]) that at 4 Macc 5.24 Eleazar defines “justice” (δικαιοσύνη) as applying the law equally (ἰσονομεῖν) in all one’s dealings (ἡθῶν)—or, alternatively, as keeping in balance all one’s habitual inclinations. As soon as something out of the ordinary is introduced, then—something “inhabitual” (ξενικόν) in speech, for example, such as a “rare word, a metaphor, a lengthening, and anything

27 And this is certainly the way feminist scholars have taken up the idea of “antipolitics”; see, for example, Athanasiou and Tzelepis 2010: 111-8; Songe-Møller 2010: 217ff.
beyond the ordinary use,” or a melancholy cry (cf. Aristotle, *Poet.* 1458a22-3)—the effect will again be the hindering of justice. This “strangeness” (Loraux’s preferred translation of ξενικόν; 2002b: 40-41) of the lamenting moan, of the brothers’ swansong, gives antipolitics the alternative name of a “stranger’s politics, a politics of the strange” (Reed 2008: 25)—even if Athanasiou and Tzelepis point out, rightly, that woman in general, and Antigone in particular, are the first of these “strangers” (2010: 111-8).

And so, if we ask again the question put by these women—“[W]hat is the political positioning that...“antipolitics” sets in motion?” (Athanasiou and Tzelepis 2010: 111)—our answer here is that the strangeness of mourning speech fosters an allegiance not to the city or the nation, not to a particular theocracy or democracy, nor even (or only) to a woman-as-stranger, but to all strangers in all their strangeness. Loraux writes of the “other allegiance” of tragedy that arouses the spectator “to transcend his [sic] membership in the civic community and to comprehend his even more essential membership in the race of mortals” (2002b: 89, 93; my emphasis). We might say that the author of 4 Macc alludes to this “other allegiance” in his mention that the first brother did not just die but “broke the thread of life” (ἀπέρρηξεν τὴν ψυχήν, 9.25). Behind all the language of “immortality” in the book (7.3; 9.22; 14.5-6; 16.13; 17.12; 18.23; etc.)—which as Loraux points out is actually guaranteed by the city (2002b: 51)—this quintessentially tragic expression (cf. Aeschylus, *Pers.* 507; Euripides, *Orest.* 864; *Iph. taur.* 974; *Tro.* 756; etc.) suggests a basis for the “other politics” in 4 Macc which can be exercised by all the “race of mortals” alike: Jews, Greeks, Egyptians (cf. 4 Macc 4.22), Persians (18.5), and so on.

**Conclusion**

An antipolitics of mourning, vengeance, memory and the “strange,” then: such is the “peace” and the “law” that the martyrs of 4 Macc restore to the nation by the end of the work. The heroes of the work might have conquered tyranny in the person of Antiochus but that is not to say they bring back the monarchy, aristocracy or theocracy of the “fathers” nor even that they usher in a golden age of democracy, as the easy interpretive dialectics would have it. Despite what other scholars have found, we have seen here that, insofar as they refuse to give up their eternal laments and
demands for justice, the martyrs of 4 Macc preclude the possibility of democracy, for which the necessary condition is amnesty. In fact, in relationship to “political” concepts of the city or nation, peace or law, the ἀντίψυχος in the text stands for “another,” “oppositional” politics (anti-), one based not on loyalty to one’s fellow citizens, as in a democracy, but to one’s fellow mortals (-psychos, “life”).

What sense does it make, then, to speak of the vicarious substitute and of vicarious substitution in this new regime? A great irony in our text is that the antipolitics of the martyrs of 4 Macc, as ἀντίψυχος, recalls even in its very name the so-called “antipolitics” of Simon, described in 4 Macc 4.1 as “a political opponent [ἀντιπολιτευόμενος] of the noble and good man, Onias.” But whereas Simon is said to have been eventually forced into exile (φυγὰς ὄχετο τὴν πατρίδα, 4.1) after having been unsuccessful in his attempt to discredit Onias (οὐκ ἴσχυσεν κακῶσαι, 4.1), the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc remain firmly in the centre of public life, in the cult of the martyrs, from where it continues to represent the antipolitical project that might be defined as the focusing of a certain “discord” (διαβάλλων)—always and already present—“for the sake of the nation” (ὑπὲρ τοῦ ἔθνους, 4.1): not necessarily, that is, with an eye to “betraying” the nation, as Simon was said to have (προδώσων, 4.1), but as an eternal witness to the inevitable deterioration (κακῶσαι, 4.1) of any and every political system (cf. Herodotus, Hist. 3.82)—to the distance that always remains, for example, between strength (ἰσχύς)—victory—and justice (ἵσονομία).
CONCLUSIÓN: LO SUBLIME

1. Resumen de la tesis y alcance de la conclusión

El principal propósito que ha guiado esta tesis no ha sido otro que el de contribuir al conocimiento del judaísmo del segundo templo y los orígenes del cristianismo al describir la figura del ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac y los mecanismos de sustitución y expiación vicarias que ella representa en el texto.

Empezamos en estas páginas, así pues, señalando nuestra convicción de que la delineación del sustituto y sacrificio vicario en la obra obliga a rastrear los dobleces del claroscuro inherentes al cuadro imaginado en 4 Mac 17.7; dobleces de entre los cuales emerge el estremecimiento (ἐφρήττον), que, según hemos conjeturado, facilita una clave importante para la lectura del texto en su integridad. Esta atención especial que hemos prestado a la tensión entre lo visual y lo textual en 4 Mac obedece, en primer lugar, a nuestro reconocimiento de que este escrito bien puede considerarse como una écfrasis: como una descripción vívida “ante los ojos” que interrumpe las preocupaciones temporales de la narrativa al llamar la atención sobre los elementos espaciales internos a ella. Yuxtaponer 4 Mac y lo que sabemos de las fuentes probables de su autor —tanto 2 Mac como las crónicas de Jasón de Cirene (2 Mac 2.19-32)— permite, por otra parte, leer la obra como una “demonstración ocular” de este tipo, dada, especialmente, la apropiación que el autor de 4 Mac hace de la tarea del “epitomista” o historiador “popular” articulada en 2 Mac —es decir, preocuparse solamente por “lo necesario para la decoración” de la historia más “exhaustiva”, y esforzarse “por seguir las normas de un resumen [τοῖς ὑπογραμμοῖς τῆς ἐπιτομῆς]” (2 Mac 2.26, 28-29, 31).

Nuestro análisis de la relación entre “obra” y “ornamento” en 4 Mac —qué es lo central al texto y qué lo periférico, qué lo esencial y qué lo tangencial— remite, por lo demás, al modo en que la filosofía de la “deconstrucción” de Jacques Derrida aborda este problema. Las reflexiones de Derrida sobre el “ergon” y el “párergon” en la obra de arte nos lleva a ver, en efecto, que el elemento (aparentemente) “ornamental” por excelencia en 4 Mac —a saber, el mismo ἀντίψυχος, novedad introducida por su autor que no encontramos en ninguna de sus fuentes— se sitúa, en
realidad, *entre* el contenido histórico-narrativo de la “obra” y su “ornamento” "histórico-poético" (*ὡς ἀληθῆσις ἱστορία o πλάσμα*): la écfasis. De la misma manera en que la “descripción vivida” hace diluye el límite entre lo textual y lo visual, lo temporal y lo espacial (y, a su modo, lo esencial y lo tangencial), el ἀντίψυχος ocupa un espacio incierto, irrespresentable e *indecidable* entre la escritura y la pintura, el pasado y el futuro y la presencia y la ausencia; espacio del cual el *estremecimiento* que provoca, incluso en aquel que lo *imagina*, no es, sin embargo, más que un signo.

Tras sostener en la Introducción, así pues, que la descripción del cuadro de los mártires de 4 Mac en 17.7 funciona como écfasis del ἀντίψυχος (es decir, como un “signo cuasi-natural” de ese “referente irrespresentable” [Erickson 2010: 150]), hemos dedicado cada uno de los capítulos de nuestro estudio a explorar ciertas facetas de este sustituto y sacrificio vicario en tanto que —valdría decir— significado imposible.

En el Capítulo 1 esto supuso transitar *más allá* de los elementos de la “religión judía” y la “filosofía griega” en 4 Mac hacia lo “egipcio” y el ἀντίψυχος como *jeroglífico*: como ideograma opaco que, al signar de un modo más “gráfico” y más visceral que éste, desafía la “transparencia” del *logos* —no sólo el discurso propio de una guía filosófica “griega” para la adquisición de la virtud como es en último término 4 Mac, sino también el de una *exégesis* académica y en ese sentido “griega” de una obra “judía” semejante a la de este tesis. Nuestra propuesta de acudir a lo “egipcio” “antes que” a lo griego/judío responde, por tanto, a la intuición de que es posible interpretar 4 Mac, simultáneamente, *como* una obra “griega” y *como* un escrito “judío”, *según una lógica conceptual que no privilegia, sin embargo, ninguna de tales categorías* y que, por lo mismo, no ocasiona tampoco ninguna violencia (epistemológica): en tanto que jeroglífico “egipcio”, el ἀντίψυχος es tanto el “pájaro de cenizas” griego como el “pájaro de arena” judío en una *anti-síntesis* frágil —“encarnizad[a], y a la vez no encarnizad[a] [πικράς... καὶ οὐ πικράς]” (4 Mac 18.20)— que es siempre más bien *promesa* que realidad.

A continuación, en el capítulo 2, nos ocupamos de otra de las manifestaciones de la bifurcación griego/judío en 4 Mac —a saber, la de las diferentes *economías* que lo “griego” y lo “judío” representan en el texto: la “filantropía” (cf. 5.12) y el “sacrificio”, respectivamente—, y de nuevo hallamos que el ἀντίψυχος no encaja en...
ninguna de esas categorías: de la misma manera en que trastorna el camino de la significación como “indecidable”, la “anti-vida” que, sin embargo, la da (v.g. ἀντίψυχον αὐτῶν λαβὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχήν, 6.29) des-barata y viene a trascender, de algún modo, el círculo eco-nómico de la adquisición y la entrega, el crédito y la deuda, la transgresión y la recompensa.

En el Capítulo 3 examinamos los aspectos específicamente temporales de 4 Mac, a diferencia de los semánticos o económicos, y atendiendo a ellos —y dada la peculiar mezcla en el texto entre cuerpo, alma y vida antes y después de la muerte (v.g. 17.12, 18)— sugerimos que es necesario pensar el ἀντίψυχος según la sintaxis del καιρός: el “momento favorable” del sabio estoico que se lanza a la oportunidad de “señalar fuera” (cf. ἀπόδειξιν, 3.19) de sí mismo en pos de su formación correcta y de la virtud suprema. Es en la medida en que propicia el Kairos (1.10; 3.19) —o, dicho de otro modo, en la medida en que propicia una re-presentación o “contra-actualización” de los eventos del Chronos en el tiempo del Aion, según la lógica de la “pre-elección” estoica (προαιρέσις) que determina todas sus elecciones subsiguientes— como “adquiere sentido” el ἀντίψυχος: plantándose, como hizo Aaron, “entre los muertos y los vivos” y “[efectuando] la expiación” por el pueblo (4 Mac 7.11-12; 17.22; cf. Nm 16.47-48 [heb. 17.12-13]); es decir, revelando el horizonte de la muerte en el Chronos como la Vida del evento puro en el Aion.

En el Capítulo 4 analizamos la dinámica compleja de la “masculinidad” en 4 Mac, sobre la que el estudio de Moore y Anderson (2010), en especial, ha llamado audazmente la atención de los estudiosos. Pero nuestro enfoque y nuestras conclusiones son otras, pues sostenemos que la “feminización” de Antíoco y sus tropas, la cual les reduce a la vergüenza, de un lado, y, de otro, la “masculinización” de los mártires que les eleva y confiere honor, permanecen incompletos en la obra; hecho, éste, que tiene implicaciones importantes para nuestra comprensión del ἀντίψυχος: en tanto que mujer “masculina” (v.g. 4 Mac 15.30) y niño/anciano “femenino” (v.g. 7.13; 8.1), el sustituto y sacrificio vicario se sitúa en algún punto entre los dos extremos del continuo sexual antiguo, por lo que es capaz de sustituir cualquier punto de este espectro.
En el Capítulo 5 retomamos algunas de estas observaciones sobre la identidad sexual antigua y estudiamos las trazas de lo “abyecto” en 4 Mac atendiendo al sentido que dicho concepto tiene en el pensamiento de Julia Kristeva. Así, analizamos la codificación de la “ley” como ‘masculina” y de la “naturaleza” como “femenina” (v.g. 1.28-29): una demarcación altamente inestable que el ἀντίψυχος, del que se dice que ha sido educado en la ley en el pecho de su madre (v.g. 13.19-22), está destinado a vencer. Si el sustituto y sacrificio vicario en 4 Mac, en tanto que andrómino, redefine los límites entre lo “masculino” y lo “femenino” (véase a este respecto el Capítulo 4), reinscribe también los que demarcan el “sujeto” —el judío “masculino” sujeto a la Ley (v.g. 2.5-6)— del “objeto” —las influencias “femeninas” o maternas que están siempre en su camino (ob-jacere), pero de las cuales la Ley le llama a apartarse (v.g. 1.28-29). Como “abyecto” andrómino “limitrofe”, entonces —en cuanto situado en el límite entre lo “masculino” y lo “femenino”, o lo que es lo mismo, entre el “sujeto” y el “objeto”— el ἀντίψυχος revela y remedia un aspecto arbitrario de la Ley que la pone en riesgo, a saber: la posibilidad de entender en el ἀντίψυχος un sujeto disociativo o plural cuyos límites físicos, incluso —por no hablar de los psicológicos o legales— resultarían entonces imposibles de distinguir (8.25; 15.20).

Este hallazgo de que cualquier separación ahí entre “sujeto” y “objeto” es ilusoria se ve reforzado en el Capítulo 6 de la mano de la filosofía de Emmanuel Levinas, cuya interpretación de la psique maternal que “inspira” la sustitución del Yo por el Otro proporciona, a nuestro juicio, un modelo muy sugerente para interpretar la ψυχή que circula libremente entre los mártires en tanto que ἀντί-ψυχος (v.g. 8.29; 13.20; 14.6; 15.4). Luego en el Capítulo 6 tratamos de mostrar que el pilar sobre el que reposa el edificio conceptual de 4 Mac en su totalidad es el del Bien como καλοκἀγαθία (v.g. 1.10; 3.18; 11.22; 13.25; 15.9; etc.): un ideal fundamentalmente inalcanzable hacia el cual la Ley (2.21-23) y la “filosofía divina” (5.22-24) sólo pueden llevar a sus adeptos a medio camino. Pero si es este Bien en cuanto totalmente Otro lo que subyace a esa Ley y esa filosofía, quiere ello decir que el Yo —el Uno— que las suscriba se comparará siempre con ese Otro y será incapaz de estar a su altura. Será por tanto desde la responsabilidad que siente por semejante carencia como nacerá su deseo de hacer justicia a ese Otro —que es Otro en las fibras de su ser como una criatura en el seno de una madre: deseo que habrá de esperar, para realizarse, a la llegada del ἀντί-
ψυχος— que en cuanto tal equilibrará la balanza entre lo Uno y lo Otro (ἀντί-; 5.24), pero sin suprimir las diferencias entre ellos (... διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς ψυχῆς...; 13.20).

El Capítulo 7, por último, examina y cuestiona las diferentes opciones políticas mencionadas en 4 Mac: de la “tirania” de Antíoco (1.11; etc.) a la teocracia/hierocracia/democracia de la “constitución” judía (3.20; 8.7; 17.9), respecto de las cuales el espectro de lo “femenino” vuelve a hacer sentir su presencia: el ἀντίψυχος es la promesa de una antipolítica fundada no en la oposición, como este nombre puede dar a entender, sino en la liberación de todo lo que la idea de la “política” quiere reprimir: la mujer como el luto, la venganza, la memoria y el arquetipo de lo “extraño” (cf. 16.6-11). Si justamente una “antipolítica” es el nombre que el autor de 4 Mac da a la disensión de Simón del statu quo en Jerusalén bajo Seleuco como rey y Onías como sumo sacerdote (ἀντιπολιτευόμενος, 4.1)—desafío que puede explicarse en razón de sus lealtades conflictivas (v.g. 4.3)—, tal termino puede denotar asimismo el compromiso heterodoxo de los mártires para recordar (13.12; 15.28; 16.18; etc.) y cobrarse venganza (9.24; 11.23; 18.22) frente a la versión oficial que requiere que “el olvido y la ignorancia” —la amnistía— esté en el centro tanto de la vida individual como de la cívica (v.g. 1.5; 2.24; 18.5, 22; etc.). Con su “antipolítica”, por lo tanto, los mártires abren la ciudad (judía) a lo “extraño” —a la influencia no sólo de lo “griego” sino de lo “egipcio” (4.22) y lo “persa” (18.5)— levantando así un reto frente al discurso político —o, de nuevo, frente al logos (cf. el Capítulo 1)— al dar voz a un gemido ininteligible (15.21; 16.6-11).

A lo largo de los capítulos de esta tesis, entonces, hemos tratado de reescribir la figura del ἀντίψυχος de 4 Mac y las estructuras de sustitución y expiación vicarias que éste representa en la obra. O, para ser más precisos: mediante la exégesis “deconstructiva” del texto (conforme al sentido en que dicho término reviste en la obra de Derrida), hemos tratado de reescribir el ἀντίψυχος “anagramáticamente”, moviéndonos para ello desde la analogía, empleada para nombrar y analizar las “oposiciones binarias” conceptuales que presenta nuestro texto —el habla como vida, legitimidad, presencia, etc. (en el Fedro) y la escritura como muerte, ilegitimidad, ausencia, etc.— al
anagrama, al “juego citativo” del fármacon que desbarata estas y las demás dicotomías conceptuales (Derrida 2007b: 146).1

¿Adónde, pues, nos han llevado todos estos esfuerzos en los capítulos anteriores? En nuestra introducción fijamos como nuestro objetivo en esta tesis el de contra-escribir, por anagramaticalidad y anagrafía2, la contra-visión de lo ético suministrada y modelada en 4 Mac por la contravida, el ἀντίψυχος. Habiendo puesto en marcha la “deconstrucción” de las oposiciones binarias elencadas hasta aquí y con cuyo resumen se abre esta Conclusión, nuestro trabajo dista por tanto de quererse completo: tras percibir cómo podrían formarse los “anagramas” individuales de los indecidibles de nuestro texto, aún debemos pronunciarnos sobre lo que estos indicarían en su conjunto —esto es, como jugadas indivisibles en la estrategia de anagrafía puesta en obra por nuestro autor (4 Mac 17.7-10). O más bien —y dado que en este trabajo hemos experimentado de primera mano los peligros que acompañan a la suposición de que el camino de la significación es lineal y directo—: ahora que hemos dejado comparecer al Otro —el ἀντίψυχος— en la connoción de la paronomasia, ¿cuáles son las implicaciones de sus irrupción? ¿Qué podría inaugurarse con ella?

Responderemos a estas dos cuestiones en las páginas que siguen al repasar, en primer lugar, cómo los “anagramas” o indecidibles que hemos descubierto en 4 Mac funcionan juntos según la lógica particular de la anagrafía prevista por nuestro autor

1 En este punto, merece la pena revisar las ideas de Derrida acerca del anagrama y la “anagramaticalidad” mencionadas en la Introducción: “Cuando una palabra se inscribe [sic] como la cita de otro sentido de esa misma palabra, cuando el proscenio textual de la palabra fármacon, aun significando remedio, cita, re-cita y da a leer lo que en la misma palabra significa, en otro lugar y a otra altura de la escena, veneno... la elección de una sola de esas palabras... por el traductor tiene como primer efecto neutralizar el juego citativo, el «anagrama», y en último término sencillamente la textualidad del texto traducido... esta interrupción del paso entre valores contrarios es ya un efecto propio del «platonismo»...” (Derrida 2007b: 146; el subrayado es original). En particular, véase nuestra discusión sobre la lectura de Derrida del Fedro en las secciones [3.5.1] y [3.5.3], y especialmente la n. 40, de la Introducción.

2 Hemos tomada la idea de “anagramaticalidad”, tal y como acabamos de sugerir en el párrafo y la nota anteriores, de la lectura “deconstructiva” de Derrida en general y de la del Fedro en particular. La idea de “anagrafía”, por otra parte, remite —como recordará el lector— a la sección [3.5.2] de la Introducción y, en concreto, al giro que da el autor de 4 Mac de un escribir a un pintar y a un cierto inscribir (ἀναγράφειν, 17.8) en 17.7-10 y por el uso que él hace de esta última técnica para por fin reproducir “aquí” y “ahora”, de algún modo, sus mártires en tanto que ἀντίψυχος: “Aquí yacen un anciano sacerdote, una mujer cargada de años y siete jóvenes...” (17.9). Como procederemos a explicar en más detalle en la siguiente sección [2] de esta Conclusión, sin embargo, también pretendemos señalar con “anagrafía” la manera en que Apolonio de Tiana conjetura que lo “augusto” y lo “imponente” se muestra a la imaginación: un paralelo que, como sostendremos, proporciona una explicación convincente, en nuestra lógica “deconstructiva” y ecfrástica, de la colocación de la “inscripción” a los mártires en 17.9-10 como punto culminante de la obra en su conjunto.
en 17.7-10; luego, en segundo lugar, regresaremos sobre el arteficio de la pintura relativa a la “historia de tu piedad”3 con el que comenzamos esta tesis —y, así, sobre la semejanza del “ahora” irrepresentable prefigurada por el “estremecimiento” (ἔφριτον, 17.7)— para confirmar nuestra hipótesis de que el epitafio de 17.8-10, en tanto que anagrafía, surte su efecto como una cierta transcripción del instante sublime, inexpresable en el lenguaje y irrepresentable en el tiempo, en el ámbito de la imaginación. Finalmente, recogерemos el problema del estremecimiento en 4 Mac —agitación de la paronomasia del indecidible, escalofrío de la representación de las torturas de los mártires, temblor del ahora imposible— en un intento de sugerir que este signo no verbal contiene en sí cuanto hemos visto acerca de lo ético en tanto que indecidible e irrepresentable —“lo ético y el más allá del lenguaje” centrado en la contravida (ἀντίψυχος)— que 4 Mac propone.

2. Lo indecidible en 4 Mac como “anagrafía”

En la sección [3.5.3] de la Introducción nos aventuramos a decir que reescribir anagramáticamente el ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac —por medio de los dos gestos característicos de la “metodología” de la deconstrucción: la inversión y reinscripción de las oposiciones binarias del texto— equivaldría a reescribirlo anagráficamente y, de ese modo, a hacer aparecer la figura del ἀντίψυχος en el “aquí y ahora”, tal y como pretende el autor en 4 Mac 17.9: “Aquí yacen...”. No obstante, e incluso antes de señalar esta hipótesis en concreto —en la sección [3.5.2] de la Introducción— hemos sugerido que la anagrafía de 4 Mac 17.8-10 (ἀναγράψατ, 17.8) funciona no sólo como un epitafio para los mártires —“Y sobre el sepulcro convendría grabar las siguientes palabras como memorial para nuestro pueblo...” (17.8)—, sino también como una evocación de tales mártires en tanto que ἀντίψυχος y en tanto que realmente presentes a la mente en virtud de las facultades ecfrásticas de la “imaginación” (φαντασία). Un texto clave del cual dependemos para esta interpretación es la Vita Apollonii de Filóstrato, 6.19; pasaje, este, que convendrá ahora revisar:

3 Recordamos aquí que en la Introducción —y particularmente en la n. 30 de la misma— leímos la materia del cuadro imaginado en 17.7a, τὴν τῆς εἰς εἰσεβήσας σου ἱστορίαν, en un sentido más amplio que el estrictamente literal: esto es, como inclusivo de los sufrimientos de todos los mártires y no sólo de los de la madre, bajo licencia, entre otras cosas, de la indeterminación gramatical de la frase ποικίλας βασάνως μέχρι θανάτου en v. 7b —“... los más variados tormentos hasta la muerte...”— aplicable a cualquiera de los miembros de la familia, o a Eleazar.
... La imaginación [φαντασία]... [es], con mucho, una artista más sabia y más sutil [σοφότερα... δημιουργός] que la imitación [μιμήσεως], puesto que la imitación sólo puede crear lo que ha visto [ὁ εἴδεν], mientras que la imaginación puede crear también [δὲ καὶ] lo que no ha visto [ὁ μὴ εἴδεν]; la imitación concibe su ideal [ὑποθήσεται] con referencia [πρὸς τὴν ἀναφοράν] a la realidad [τοῦ ὁντος], y se muestra, a menudo, desconcertada [ἐκκρούει] por terror [ἐκπληξίας], mientras que la imaginación nunca lo está, sino que marcha [χωρεῖ] inquebrantable [ἀνέκπληκτος] y por sí misma hacia la meta que ella misma se ha trazado [ὑπέθέτετο]... (Vit. Apoll. 6.19; traducción del autor del griego original en Conybeare 1912: 2.78)⁴

Sin embargo, ¿qué relación guardan exactly la anagramaticalidad y la anagraficalidad en 4 Mac —independientemente del parecido léxico de ambos términos? La respuesta es obvia pero interesante a la vez. Todo gira aquí en torno a la doble naturaleza del ἀναγράφω en 17.8: una palabra que puede referirse al acto de hacer presente por medio de la escritura tanto en la página (o sepulcro) —los intereses textuales de la anagramaticalidad deconstructiva— como en la imaginación —las preocupaciones conceptuales de Apolonio y del autor de 4 Mac. Dicho de otro modo: según la lógica de la anagrafía y conforme al uso que de ella hace nuestro texto, el escribir (anagramaticalidad) y el significar (anagrafia) del ἀντίψυχος coinciden: el sustituto y sacrificio vicario “se cae por su propio peso” (ἂζιον)⁵ —se lleva a sí mismo a la mente o imaginación (ἀναγράφει... καὶ ἀνατυποῦται: Filóstrato)— a

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4 Repárese también en este otro pasaje de la Vit. Apoll., que, según comentamos ya, nos ha aportado la inspiración necesaria para comparar a Filóstrato con el autor de 4 Mac: “... Porque yo [Apolonio] imagino que vosotros [egipcios] podíais haber construido templos para ellos [los dioses]... sin haber introducido ninguna imagen [de ellos; δειγμα δὲ μὴ ἔσφαλεν], dejando que los que frecuentaban los templos [imaginaran] las imágenes de los dioses; ya que la mente [ἡ γνώσις] puede, más o menos, dibujar [ἀναγράφει] a los dioses y figurarlos [ἀνατυποῦται] mejor [κριτέριον] que ningún artista [δημιουργός]; pero vosotros habéis privado a los dioses el privilegio de la belleza [τὸ... καλός] tanto del ojo exterior [ὁρῶν] como de la intuición interior [ὁπονουσθεὶς]...” (Vit. Apoll. 6.19; traducción del autor del griego original en Conybeare 1912: 2.80).

5 Véase nuestra discusión de este término —decisivo para nuestro propósito aquí— en la sección [3.5.2] de la Introducción (y especialmente en la n. 54 de la misma). En resumen: ἄζιον en 4 Mac 17.8 no ha de pensarse como lo “conveniente”, “apropiado”, “oportuno”, etc. conforme a su traducción habitual, sino, teniendo en cuenta su relación intrínseca con ἔξον (“posible”) en 17.7, y por más que esto resulte un tanto extraño e incluso incómodo, como “axioma” o “axiomático”: es decir, la anagrafia de 17.8-10 tiene no depende de nada más que su propia pretensión de verdad (tiene que “caer[se] por su propio peso” como un concepto: ἄπειρον), ya que no es “possible” demostrarla mediante la escritura o la pintura.
medida que el autor lo inscribe en 17.8-10: “Aquí [ἐνταῦθα]6 yacen [ἐγκεκήδεωνται]...”. De ese modo, por tanto, y con el fin de repetir la propuesta del autor de 4 Mac, consistente en en reescribir anagráficamente a los mártires de 4 Mac —que es el único modo, como ya hemos visto, de concretar el “aquí” y el “ahora” del ἀντίψυχος— nos hace falta (re)descubrir la textualidad esencial de los indecidibles presentados bajo el signo de la anagramaticalidad: esto es, debemos (re)enfocarlos atendiendo no a lo qué significan, sino preguntándonos cómo significan. El pensamiento de Apolonio, mencionado má arriba, sobre la anagrafía y anatipografía de la imaginación (Vit. Apoll. 6.19), nos suministrará comparación instructivo para esta labor, que acometeremos en la siguiente sección.

2.1. La psique y la imaginación

En primer lugar, y barajando7 un tanto el orden de nuestros capítulos: podríamos imaginar ahora que la psique levinasiana que descubrimos en 4 Mac (véase el Capítulo 6) funciona, en el nivel de la escritura del ἀντίψυχος (que no en el de su significado), como una traza de la imaginación apoloniana (φαντασία). De hecho, Levinas invita a tal comparación entre la psique y la imaginación en diversos pasajes en su obra (v.g. id. 1993: 84; 2000: 77; cf. Sallis 2010: 88-9)8, pero, como señala Çirakman (2004: 91-116 [113]) con razón, esta imaginación/psique no debería entenderse como una facultad del sujeto ya dispuesta en la conciencia, sino como algo “aporético, equivoco, disruptivo [y] de-sintetizador” que pone de relieve la impotencia de toda posible facultad:

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6 Este adverbio, ἐνταῦθα, se compone de la preposición ἐν, “en”, y el demostrativo ταῦτα, forma neutra y plural de “este”. En el contexto de nuestra lectura de la anagrama de 4 Mac 17.7-10 serviría, así pues, para recordar al lector que está “en este” lugar —a saber, en la inscripción de 17.8-10— donde “yace” el ἀντίψυχος.

7 Una de las ilustraciones más eficaces que Derrida ofrece del juego de la diseminación inherente a la “deconstrucción” es el anagrama de la trace (“traza”, “rastro”, “huella”) y el écart (“apertura”, “brecha”, “intervalo”, etc.) por medio de una cadena léxica sostenida que abarca asimismo y entre otros valores la carte (“carta”, “naipes”), como en las expresiones francesas les cartes écartées, écart aux cartes (Gaston 2006b: 53, 85).

8 Véase también el comentario de Levinas sobre “las normas del lenguaje religioso”: “... [la imaginación] no es una simple facultad de reproducción, un mero duplicado de la percepción de los objetos a la que la imaginación debería todo, por fuera de sus poderes de ilusión. Por el contrario... la imaginación es la más profunda dimensión del psiquismo humano; opera de entrada en el elemento del lenguaje poético, “raíz misteriosa” de todas las energías del alma...” (Levinas 2006: 135; el subrayado es mío).
[La] función [de la imaginación levinasiana]... podría interpretarse atendiendo al modo en que destruye los límites de toda actividad unificadora o sintética al indicar hacia un “más allá” que persigue a ésta última... [Esta imaginación] revela la “pasividad más allá de la pasividad” y denuncia cualquier intento de comprender a la alteridad del Otro desde el interior de la representación. (Çirakman 2004: 113)

En el contexto de 4 Mac, esta revalorización de la psique como lugar en el que imaginar el ἀντίψυχος y la sustitución y expiación vicarias encuentra su eco en el deslizamiento alrededor de la ψυχή que el texto opera entre “vida”, “mente”, “alma”, “espiritu”, etc.⁹ En particular, notamos el modo en el que la ψυχή y la imaginación están conectadas para nuestro autor en versículos como 15.25-27:

En su alma [τῇ ἐαυτῆς ψυχῆ], como [καθάπερ] si se tratara de un tribunal, veía [la madre: ὁρόσων] terribles consejeros [δεινοῦς... συμβούλους]: la naturaleza, el parentesco, el amor maternal y la tortura de los hijos. Pero esa madre, como si dispusiera de dos votos para sus hijos, uno de muerte y otro de indulto, no eligió [οὐκ ἐπέγνω, lit. “no reconoció”] la salvación de sus hijos por un breve tiempo...

(traducción del autor)

Tal y como la madre, por lo tanto, “ve” en su ψυχή a los “terribles consejeros” que tratan de influirle para que no anime a sus hijos a tomar el camino del martirio, los oyentes de 4 Mac “veían” en 17.8-10, esto es, veían en la psique-imaginación por medio de la anagráfia, la realidad abrumadora y “terrible” del ἀντίψυχος."¹⁰

2.2. El Kairos y el “ahora”

Si el ἀντίψυχος se vislumbra en 4 Mac 17.7-10 por el ejercicio de la ψυχή (cf. 15.25) —el “espíritu” ante el cual el sujeto se halla totalmente pasivo, tal y como (καθάπερ) se dice que los mártires-hermanos “se mueven” por (κινοῦνται) “las órdenes del

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⁹ Véase la sección [3.1] del Capítulo 3 más arriba.

¹⁰ Nótese también cómo, mediante esta lectura, el “como” (καθάπερ) de la psique-imaginación de la madre —es decir, la expresión usada por nuestro autor para enfatizar la cualidad figurativa del arteficio del “tribunal” de su alma— conectaría con el “por así decirlo” (καθάπερ) del ἀντίψυχος en 17.21, proporcionándonos así una pista acerca del modo en que este último debe interpretarse.
¿Qué lugar puede entonces asignarse, en nuestra relectura/reescritura de los indecibibles del texto, a la traza de lo “antipolítico” en 4 Mac analizada en el Capítulo 7? Como vimos en el Capítulo 5 (secciones [3.2.1] y [3.2.2]), el mártir Eleazar (y, por extensión, la suma de los mártires como ἀντίψυχος), es comparado en 4 Mac 7.8 a un “administrador de la ley” ([δημιουργός] οῦν νόμον) que “la defiende hasta la muerte con el escudo de su propia sangre y su noble sudor contra las pasiones”. Señalamos allí que el ἀντίψυχος, al igual que este δημιουργός, es el responsable de reinscribir la ley de la ciudad (18.4), especialmente después de su ascenso al gobierno (μετελάβετε, 16.18) —un código que estará marcado por una nueva e inestable relación entre lo que se había excluido (a saber, la naturaleza femenina) y lo que se había incluido (la Tora masculina). La reinscripción en 4 Mac de la naturaleza femenina en tanto que la naturaleza sagrada (15.13; cf. 13.19-22) prepara así el terreno para el regreso de todas aquellas cosas desterradas por la tiranía y olvidadas, a propósito, por la democracia: el luto, la venganza, la memoria y la Otra arquetípica, la mujer (véase la sección [3.2] del Capítulo 7). De un lado, entonces, el δημιουργός es quien usa su cuerpo “como un
baluarte \[φυλακή\]” de la ley incipiente (cf. 13.13; 15.32); pero, de otro lado —no ya el del *significado* del ἀντίψυχος, sino el de su escritura—, el δημιουργός es el artista cuya técnica se ve superada por la imaginación, tal y como Apolonio nos recuerda. Del mismo modo en que el δημιουργός antipolítico en 4 Mac renueva constantemente la ley en virtud de su propia naturaleza femenina (v.g. ἀνανεωσάμενοι, 18.4) —copiando sus dictados y exponiéndolos públicamente (ἀναγράφω)\footnote{De nuevo, otra acepción de nuestro verbo clave aquí: véanse las referencias recogidas en LSJ: s.v.}—, la imaginación como δημιουργός sugiere o representa (ἀναγράφω) a la mente esta ley en tanto que antiley del ἀντίψυχος.

### 2.4. Lo abyecto y la chora

Leyendo 4 Mac de la mano de Kristeva, en el Capítulo 5 descubrimos el espacio extraño de la *chora* en nuestro texto (sección [3.2.2]): ese espacio que, además de ser el “lugar” (χώριον) de las torturas de los hijos (15.20) —y después, tras la victoria de la razón divina en ellos, el “escenario” donde “bailan” (χορεῖον; cf. 8.4; 14.6-8) y luego “nacen” otra vez a la inmortalidad (χόριον; cf. 16.13)— es también el espacio en el que los mártires en su calidad de ἀντίψυχος redefinen el yo o el sujeto en el texto con anterioridad a la elección de la Ley (masculina) sobre la naturaleza (femenina). Ahora, no obstante —comparando 4 Mac 17.7-10 y los indecidibles de la obra con la filosofía de la percepción mental de Apolonio—, estamos en condiciones de matizar esa primera descripción de la *chora*: si es posible interpretar χορεῖ, en el nivel de la anagrafia del ἀντίψυχος, como la manera en la que la imaginación “marcha”, desinhibida, en pos de su referente irreal y oculto, χορίον/χορεῖον/χόριον en 4 Mac 15.20 se podría leer entonces como un *verbo* más bien que como un *sustantivo* —esto es, como el modo en que el ἀντίψυχος “hace sitio”, “abre paso” y “se retira” (χορέω) para dejar irrumpir a la naturaleza o el cuerpo (χόριον) en el alma formada por la Ley (v.g. 3.1-5; 5.25-27). Asimismo, y para subrayar el sentido en que la imaginación en 4 Mac constituye una expresión de la *psique* pasiva (cf. la sección [2.1] de esta Conclusión), podríamos usar este χορέω en 15.20 para reinterpretar el χορεῖ de Apolonio a la luz del ἀναγράφω (17.8) en 4 Mac 17.8-10: el yo como un rehén de lo “augusto”, lo “imponente” o lo *pasmoso* cuya imagen se ve forzada a acomodar la imaginación.
2.5. Lo andróginio y el autodominio

En sus laceraciones (déchirures) y heridas (blessures), el ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac comprende —“comunica” con y sustituye entre— lo “masculino” y lo “femenino” (Bataille; véase el Capítulo 4): posee los genitales (déchirures/blessures) tanto de una mujer —la madre-mártir del texto— como de un hombre —Eleazar y los jóvenes—, y aunque se dice que es “más noble que los hombres en fortaleza y más viril que los varones en resistencia” (4 Mac 15.30), su continua susceptibilidad ante los dolores físicos y emocionales (v.g. 11.11; 14.9-10; 15.7, 16) da a entender que es algo menos que un “hombre varonil” como, por ejemplo, David (3.17-18), Abraham (16.20), o Moisés (2.17-18; 9.2; etc.). El autor de 4 Mac pretender que el lector crea que el ἀντίψυχος ha conseguido “dominar” sus pasiones totalmente (πάθη; κρατεῖται, 2.9; ἐπικρατεῖν, 1.3, 31, 33; 2.4; περικρατεῖ, 1.9; 2.2; etc.)12, pero si todavía se revela esclava de las emociones del amor familiar (v.g. 9.23; 10.15; 13.19-27) o del afecto materno (v.g. 15.6-7), su verdadera situación es mucho más matizada de lo que esta primera impresión admite. De este ideal del autocontrol (ἐγκράτεια) hay sólo un pequeño paso anagramático hasta el ἔκκρουσις, el “desconcierto” o “repulsión” de la mimesis por “terror” (ἔκπληξις) que la imaginación debe evitar según Apolonio —especialmente si ἔκπληξις puede entenderse como una “enajenación mental” o una “pasión”, al modo, por ejemplo, de los “placeres sensuales” (ἀφροδισίων) en Polibio, Plb. 3.81.6. Al igual que el ἀντίψυχος, por tanto, la imaginación en 4 Mac 17.7-10 se topa frente a frente con el “terror” o la “pasión”, pero no se dejar turbar por ello (ἀνέκπληκτος); el terror, como las pasiones, es soportable, tolerable (ἀν-εκτός), pero el impacto inicial de ese terror y esas pasiones —πλήκ-, de πλήσσειν, “golpear”— inscribe en el sujeto, para siempre, su marca negativa.

2.6. El “don imposible” y lo “contrahecho”

Sean productos de la mimesis o de la imaginación, las imágenes de los dioses, para Apolonio, son sólo eso: imágenes (εἰδη) o imitaciones. Lo que diferencia a las primeras de las últimas es, sin embargo —según hemos notado—, la capacidad que tienen de comunicar la belleza y la atracción de lo “augusto”, lo “imponente” y lo

12 Sobre los diferentes términos que ponen de manifiesto la ἐγκράτεια (“autocontrol”) en 4 Mac, véase Moore and Anderson 2010: 184-5, 185  n. 21.
“pasmoso”, tal y como se dice por ejemplo de los misterios. “... [V]uestros animales y pájaros”, señala Apolonio a sus interlocutores en Vit. Apoll. 6.19, “tal vez sean de alta estima y de valor incalculable como retratos [μὲν... ζηλωτά δόξει τῶν εἰκόνων], pero los dioses se ven seriamente rebajados [παραπολλο... ἐστήξουσιν] por ellos en su dignidad [τίς αύτῶν δόξης]” (traducción del autor). Todo gira aquí, entonces, en torno a la “dignidad” o el “esplendor” del misterio (δόξα), y de si las apariencias (δόξαι) de la mimesis (δοκέω) o de la imaginación (δοξάζω) son las formas más indicadas y dignas para mostrarlos (φαίνω). Y como en el caso la moneda “contrahecha” (véase el Capítulo 2), la cuestión del advenimiento, exitoso o no, del misterio, sólo puede resolverse por las exigencias del momento: como comenta Apolonio, es más probable que “los perjuros y ladrones del templo y toda la muchedumbre de la gente soez desprecien [καταφρονεῖν] tales imágenes sagradas [las representaciones miméticas de los dioses] en vez de temerlas [δεδιέναι]” (traducción del autor). ¿Hay que equiparar la moneda ὠμόνως puesta en circulación por los mártires en su calidad de ἀντίφοξας (v.g. 4 Mac 3.21; 13.23 [A], 25) a la moneda de curso legal o a su falsificación (µιµήσασθε/µιµήµα, 9.23)? ¿Logrará ella “eliminar” los pecados del pueblo o conseguirá solamente que su deuda ante Dios se incremente — revelando así el “fraude” de las leyes del mundo y de la Tora y “desatando” al sujeto de su observancia (καταλόω, 4.24, 26; cf. ἕκλοω, 15.24; sección [3.5] del Capítulo 2)? Como hemos apuntado ya acerca de la mimesis y la imaginación, todo depende, en último término, del efecto que dé en producir en el receptor de la interacción/ transacción.

2.7. Lo “egipcio” y el jeroglífico

“... [S]in excepción mantengo...”, corre uno de los insultos que Apolonio levanta contra Tespesio en la Vit. Apoll. 6.19, “que mientras que en otros países la estatuaria [ἀγαλματοποιίαν] observa escrupulosamente [ἀπτεσθαῖ] las normas de la decencia y la conveniencia [φηµὶ τοῦ προσήκοντος], vosotros ponéis a los dioses en ridículo [καταγελᾶν] en lugar de creer realmente [νοµίζειν] en ellos [o en “ella”, αὐτό]” (traducción del autor). Ἀγάλματα, por tanto, es el nombre que se da aquí a las imágenes apropiadas de los dioses: un nombre que también contiene en sí una traza de la “gloria” o el “honor” (ἀγάλμα) del misterio en el que ellas se encuentran.
envueltas (LSJ: s.v.); pero escondido también detrás del nombre está el espectro de una representación formada por palabras en vez de imágenes pictóricas solamente, o, mejor dicho, por palabras y pintura —el jeroglífico:


Las ἀγάλματα que, según Apolonio, se fabrican en Grecia de la manera “más honorable” (κάλλιστον) y “más piadosa” (θεοφιλέστατον) posible, demuestran ser como jeroglíficos escritos por anagrafia en la imaginación —un signo, irónicamente, de lo “egipcio” frente a lo “griego”. Pues bien, la ἀγάλμα desempeña en 4 Mac 17.7-10 el mismo papel que corresponde a las ἀγάλματα de los dioses en Filóstrato: el ἀντίψυχος como jeroglífico es una palabra en pintura o una pintura en palabras —el sustituto y sacrificio vicario “ya percibido” en la imaginación como el “pájaro de cenizas de Memnón” (el pájaro griego o “egipcio”) y el “pájaro de arena” judío (véase la sección [3.1.2] del Capítulo 1).

3. De lo indecidible en la anagrafía al “estremecimiento”

Nuestro estudio de las oposiciones binarias y conceptos indecidibles que el autor de 4 Mac emplea para describir el ἀντίψυχος puede representarse esquemáticamente de este modo:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Judío</th>
<th>Griego</th>
<th>“Egipcio”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacrificio</td>
<td>Economía</td>
<td>“Don imposible”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aion</td>
<td>Chronos</td>
<td>Kairos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculino</td>
<td>Femenino</td>
<td>Andrógino</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sujeto</td>
<td>Objeto</td>
<td>Abyecto</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identidad</td>
<td>Alteridad</td>
<td>Psique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracia</td>
<td>Tiranía</td>
<td>Antipolítico</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cabe entonces preguntar: ¿Dónde, entonces, podemos decir que aparece el ἄντίψυχος en tal diagrama, dado que éste no puede equivaler a la mere *suma* de los términos que figuran en la tercera columna\(^\text{13}\)? Para contestar a esta pregunta —que es clave para nuestro propósito aquí, tal y como veremos— sería posible comparar nuestro esquema con el material gráfico del artista francés Henri Maccheroni, al que Jean-François Lyotard remite en su reflexión sobre lo irrepresentable en el arte y, en último lugar, sobre lo sublime. Como es evidente, nuestra “sección transversal” del ἄντίψυχος y la “matriz” elaborada (aunque no diseñada para su exposición pública) por Maccheroni para su serie *L’Archéologie du signe* comparten más que un parecido casual. Semejanzas accidentales aparte, no obstante —tales como la apariencia del cuadro o la tabla con sus filas, columnas y celdas—, ¿cómo puede ayudarnos Maccheroni a acercarnos al esquivo ἄντίψυχος de 4 Mac? Para empezar, debemos considerar el efecto de su serie *en su integridad*:

En 1976, el pintor [Maccheroni]... realizó una serie de pinturas provistas de un determinado título y que cumplen con las siguientes restricciones:

*L’Archéologie du signe* (título) se compone de 21 lienzos en el formato “figura 30” (92 x 73cm).

Las formas “geométricas” (en) que (se) ofrece la pintura son conocidas: cruz, círculo, cruz (+ O X).

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\(^{13}\) Los problemas que presentaría la mera suma de estos indecidibles serían a decir verdad muy graves: no sólo sería imposible *aislarlos* o *representarlos* para luego sumarlos —el ἄντίψυχος como el pájaro de Memnón “egipcio”, por ejemplo, comprende en 4 Mac los valores de *tanto* el fénix “griego” como del *hol* judío, el pájaro de arena (o cenizas; véase el Capítulo 1)—, sino también tendríamos que tener presente el hecho de que los indecidibles reflejan la diferencia irreducible, o *differance*, entre significado y significante de tal manera que agregarlos sólo *multiplicaría* hasta el infinito la *distancia* entre la “realidad” del ἄντίψυχος y las palabras que emplearíamos para describirlo.
Las formas son (generan) superficie(s) y acogen el color de tal modo que éste se presenta normalizado. Hay 7 colores (industriales): *écru*; tela vaquera; rojo; piel de leopardo; metal; blanco; negro.

Cada uno de estos colores es rigurosamente monocromo y autónomo.

Se trata, por lo tanto, de siete colores y de tres formas diferentes.

Los lienzos son signos y señalan el “antes” y el “después” (la *poiesis* y lo poético). El signo desplaza el tiempo a través de su permutación. Y los signos aparecen yuxtapuestos. Se muestran, así pues, sin que puedan demostrarse...

(Roesz 2008: 15; traducción del autor)


“Se trata, por tanto, de siete colores y de tres formas diferentes” —una + *écru*, un O de tela vaquera, una X roja, etc., y así hasta incluir las 21 permutaciones posibles de color y forma. Pero, ¿qué *significa* una serie de ese tipo? Lyotard (2012: 283; traducción del autor) observa, en primer lugar, que la pintura de Maccheroni “no muestra, ni siquiera sugiere, o lo hace lo mínimo posible, lo que presenta de los símbolos” —logrando así una “neutralización de elementos sensibles [que] estimula...
el discurso y deja sentir en los labios el fluir de las palabras inteligibles”\textsuperscript{14}; pero nada de esto le impide arriesgar una opinión al respecto. En efecto, señala Lyotard, si cada uno de los lienzos de Maccheroni se pudiera pensar como una frase —si, por ejemplo, su color, forma y orden en la serie pudieran considerarse que corresponden al mínimo de elementos sintácticos que requiere una gramática—, al exponer esta frase única cada lienzo también manifestaría, a la vez, las deficiencias de dicho “lenguaje”-matriz:

Contempla cada uno [de los lienzos] por separado y, por así decirlo, totalmente. Bajo semejante mirada, su valor, que consiste en... la red léxica, sintáctica y pragmática de un lenguaje conocido que relaciona una frase con otras frases posibles [y que constituye por tanto su matriz oculta]... puede borrarse siempre y cuando esa frase particular sea contemplada justo en el momento y de la manera indicados para que el universo o los universos que ofrece revelen su tiempo, su espacio, sus referentes y sus significados... pese a hundirse en la nada [consumidos por la matriz]...

Esta instantánea no tiene lugar en el tiempo del universo en que se presenta la frase en sí. De lo contrario, sería en el tiempo de otra frase que [re]presentaría a esa (primera) presentación. Luego en sí mismo el instante no se halla presente en ningún tiempo, sino que el tiempo se hace ahí. (Lyotard 2012: 297; traducción y subrayado del autor)

Dos puntos del análisis que Lyotard hace de la serie de Maccheroni pueden ser útiles para comprender la serie del \textit{άντιψυχος} de 4 Mac. Primero: si cada uno de nuestros conceptos indecidibles se expresa como una frase —“el \textit{άντιψυχος} es un pájaro de Memnón “egipcio”, o bien un “pájaro de cenizas”, etc.— y si cada una de estas frases indecidibles luego se sitúa en una serie, cada una de las frases se revelará entonces como una mera reiteración o representación de una frase maestra irrepresentable según las permutaciones permitidas por la lógica de cualquier matriz interpretativa y/o figurativa que dé (inevitamente) en imponérselle. Y efectivamente, todo esto lo sabíamos ya: cada uno de nuestros indecidibles, en su

\textsuperscript{14}O sea, logra que el extremecimiento se sienta haciendo así efectivo el “temblar con movimiento agitado y repentino”, el “sentir una repentina sacudida nerviosa o sobresalto en el ánimo” (DRAE), etc. que dicho término denota —como veremos con más detalle en la sección [4].
condición de frase, trataba de responder a —esto es, de reiterar o representar— la frase irrepresentable que se encuentra en el texto —“... habiéndose convertido, por así decirlo, en un ἀντίψυχος por los pecados de nuestro pueblo” (4 Mac 17.21; traducción autor; cf. 6.29). Pero he ahí ahora la revelación: los comentarios de Lyotard sobre la obra de Maccheroni nos orientan, o reorientan, hacia la cuestión del tiempo de la frase maestra del ἀντίψυχος: el sustituto y sacrificio vicario de 4 Mac es irrepresentable por estar fuera del tiempo que tardaría en desarrollarse una serie de frases, o una matriz, mediante la cual extraer sentido de la frase maestra inicial. O para expresarlo de otro modo: representar o capturar el ἀντίψυχος irrepresentable de 4 Mac — que ha sido tanto nuestra tarea como la del autor de obra atendiendo al cuadro imaginado por él en 4 Mac 17.7-10— sería como representar lo irrepresentable en el tiempo —esto es, como la “instantánea” o el “instante”, el momento del que Lyotard dice que “[e]l tiempo se hace” en él. ¿En qué sentido es viable esta revelación, esta sugerencia en este momento final de nuestra tesis, precisamente ahora que tratamos de ofrecer nuestra interpretación de cómo funcionan los mecanismos de sustitución y expiación vicarias en 4 Mac? Son cuestiones como ésta las que a continuación deberemos abordar.

4. Del estremecimiento a lo sublime

¿Qué significa el estremecimiento (ἐφρίττον; φρίκη) ocasionado por la pintura (verbal) del ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac 17.7? ¿Puede esta sensación, sólo indirecta en el registro del ζωγραφέω, encontrar una análoga en el del ἀναγράφω —que es, como ya hemos visto, la escritura que el autor de 4 Mac finalmente emplea con el fin de escribir el ἀντίψυχος en 17.9-10? La única otra ocurrencia de este “estremecimiento” en 4 Mac se encuentra en 14.9, donde de nuevo, como en 17.7, nuestro autor relaciona tal sensación a los sufrimientos de los mártires como ἀντίψυχος en el “ahora” elástico e irrepresentable de esta figura:


15 Véase lo dicho en el Capítulo 3 sobre el Aion, Chronos y Kairos, cuya relación exploraremos más a fondo en la siguiente sección.

Se asombraría uno de estos dos versículos no haya nada —aparte de la introducción (tardía) de ἐνεκαρτέρουν en 14.9b en la tercera persona plural— que indique de modo más concreto el sujeto de los verbos en 14.9a. De hecho, observando únicamente estos participios, se podría decir que por medio del estremecimiento, en el “ahora” elástico, los oyentes de 4 Mac tienen un acceso directo a las pruebas y desgracias de los mártires: de la misma manera en que “nosotros nos estremecemos mientras escuchamos [ἄκοιοντες] la tribulación de aquellos jóvenes”, nosotros también vemos (ὁρῶντες) lo que pasa, escuchamos (ἄκοιοντες) “la inminente amenaza”, soportamos (πάσχοντες) sus sufrimientos. Esta proximidad visceral entre los oyentes de 4 Mac y los mártires no se adultera de ningún modo en 14.9-10, donde se nos lanza de cabeza y “precipitadamente” (ταχέως) a verlos, escucharlos, soportar su dolor “agudísimo” (ἐπαλγέστερον), “intenso” (σύντομος) y “penetrante” (ὀξεῖα), que “acto seguido” (παραχρήμα) acontece. Luego la “realidad virtual” vicaria, visual, auditiva y corpórea del ἀντίψυχος en 14.9-10 —en el “ahora” del estremecimiento y el estremecimiento del “ahora”— sólo se ve aumentada en 17.7-8 por el paso de una representación gráfica (textual) del “ahora” a otra pictórica. Pero para entender mejor por qué es así, volvamos a Lyotard y a su análisis de las pinturas de Maccheroni y otros artistas de lo “sublime”.

La serie de pinturas realizada por Maccheroni antes mencionada (véase la sección [3]) es, según interpreta Lyotard, una serie que señala al “ahora” irrepresentable. La incertidumbre fundamental que la proximidad del momento provoca —“... une excitation de la parole qui met à la bouche l’eau des mots intelligibles...”, dice Lyotard (2012: 282)— es justamente lo que la estética denomina lo sublime:

Lo más probable es que sea [lo “sublime”] una sensación contradictoria. Es al menos un signo, el mismo signo de interrogación, la manera en que el sucede se retiene y se anuncia: ¿Suced? La pregunta puede modularse en todos los
tonos... Pero el signo de interrogación es “ahora”, now, como la sensación de que puede no suceder nada: la nada ahora... (Lyotard 1998b: 97-8)

Pero el sentimiento de lo sublime no es sólo el dolor que acompaña a la “neutralización de elementos sensibles” en vista del “ahora”; es decir, no es sólo la incertidumbre, o la ansiedad, de no saber qué decir, qué hacer, cómo reaccionar, etc. Lyotard, siguiendo a Burke\(^{16}\), también encuentra lugar en lo sublime para el placer o el deleite:

Ésta es la forma, entonces, en que se analiza el sentimiento sublime: un objeto muy grande, muy poderoso, que amenaza por lo tanto al alma con privarla de todo Sucede [esto es, de todo “ahora”], la sacude de “asombro” (en grados menores de intensidad, está embargada de admiración, veneración, respeto). El alma está petrificada de estupor, inmovilizada, como si estuviera muerta [es decir, afligida o destrozada por el terror]. Al alejar esa amenaza, el arte procura el placer del alivio, del deleite. Gracias a él, el alma se entrega a la agitación\(^{17}\) entre la vida y la muerte, y esta agitación es su salud y su vida. (Lyotard 1998b: 104; comentario entre paréntesis original)

El arte es por tanto, en este razonamiento, el vehículo apropiado para la aprehensión del “ahora” con sus sensaciones “contradictorias” de terror y deleite, y este punto lo ilustra Lyotard refiriéndose a las pinturas “zip” del artista norteamericano Barnett Newman. Lyotard escribe sobre la “sorpresa maravillosa” que las obras de Newman proporcionan, “que haya algo en vez de nada”: “... El caos amenaza [en los cuadros de Newman], pero se produce el relámpago del tzimtzum\(^{18}\)... que aparta las tinieblas, descompone como un prisma la luz en colores y los dispone sobre la superficie en un universo...” (1998a: 92). Este “relámpago en las tinieblas” en el arte de Newman

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\(^{16}\) En su *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757).


\(^{18}\) Battersby (2007: 190) escribe que tzimtzum “es el nombre otorgado por Newman para la raya tosca que tan frecuentemente atraviesa sus... lienzos, permitiéndole al ojo dividir y reunir los planos de colores en conjunto y separados”. Pero, como es sabido, tzimtzum también denota también y ante todo la idea cabalística de “la contracción de Dios mediante la cual comenzó la creación”, tal y como Froman señala (2002: 219).
representa para Lyotard un nuevo comienzo en camino ante lo pasmoso y lo terrible, que mantiene al dolor, a la incertidumbre y a la ansiedad a raya:

Se experimenta la posibilidad de que muy pronto ya nada suceda. Lo sublime es que del seno de esta inminencia de la nada, sin embargo, suceda, tenga “lugar” algo que anuncie que no todo está terminado. Un simple aquí está, la ocurrencia más mínima, es ese “lugar”. (1998a: 91)

Ahora bien, ¿qué tienen que ver Lyotard, Maccheroni y Newman con 4 Mac? Nuestra tesis es que la pintura del ἀντίψυχος en 4 Mac 17.7-10 puede y debe entenderse, precisamente, en estos términos de lo sublime, con la figura del sustituto que efectúa el sacrificio vicario alumbrando la oscuridad sofocante del “ahora” (νῦ) —esto es, el terror del estremecimiento (ἔφριττον; φρίκη: 14.9; 17.7)— y logrando que se distancie la amenaza de aniquilación que este último representa. O mejor dicho: del mismo modo en que Maccheroni y Newman pintan un “ahora imposible”, el autor de 4 Mac, en el cuadro imaginado por él en 17.7-10, indica un instante, un “ahora”, en el cual el
ántipnos hace sentir su presencia en 4 Mac 17.7 de una manera análoga a los “ángelos montados a caballo” que vienen a defender el tesoro del templo en 4 Mac 4.10:

[...] En su interior, los sacerdotes, junto con las mujeres y los niños, suplicaban a Dios que protegiera el lugar que iba a ser profanado. Pero cuando Apolonio se dirigía con un ejército armado para apoderarse del dinero, aparecieron [προυφάνησαν] del cielo ángeles montados a caballo, con armas resplandecientes [περιαστράπτοντες], y les infundieron un gran temor y temblor... (4.9-10)

Como estos ángeles —otros modelos importantes de la intercesión eficaz en 4 Mac— el ántipnos es la luz (φῶς; φάος) de lo que aparece en el momento, de lo que aparece al “ojo interno” en el “ahora” (φαντάζομαι; φαντάσμα; φαντάση). Y la ética que trae consigo —lo ético “más allá del lenguaje” o al final de la escritura (anagramaticalidad) y al principio de la pintura (anagrafía)— tiene, como su única exigencia, la de que uno entregue la lengua para que se la corten y los ojos para que se los perforen (cf. 4 Mac 18.21), es decir, la de que uno se estremezca atendiendo al significado de la elipsis después de que uno ha terminado de hablar (σιωπώντων, ἀπο-σιώπη-σίς, 10.18)... 

5. Epílogo

Nuestro estudio sugiere, así pues, que el ántipnos de 4 Mac representa, más allá del “rescate”, la “vida por vida” o la “vida sustitutiva” que otros estudiosos de la obra han analizado hasta aquí, la posibilidad misma de la “vida” tras su traición por parte del...

19 Pace Lyotard aquí, quien escribe que “[l]a occurrencia, el Ereignis [“evento”], no tiene nada que ver con el pequeño escalofrío [petit frisson], con el pathos rentable que acompaña una innovación” (1998b: 110). Pero en esta frase Lyotard apunta a los artistas, comerciantes y aficionados que confunden el ideal de la vanguardia con “amalgamas de citas, ornamentaciones, pastiches” —clínicos, baratos y vacíos— por pretender a toda costa alcanzar algo “nuevo” u ofrecer un producto “original”. El petit frisson no es aquí, por tanto, más que un “hormigueo menor” (Groys 2012: 153) comparado con el temor a lo numinoso connotado por el término φρίκη (LSJ: s.v.).
lenguaje (γράφω) —o, para ser más precisos, tras su traición por parte de los discursos religiosos, filosóficos, políticos y económicos. Cuando ninguna autoridad en el cielo o la tierra —la Ley de religión, la ley del país o incluso la literatura— puede mitigar la culpa de uno por la muerte de otro (v.g. 4 Mac 4.24-26), cuando la L/ley o la literatura sólo me conducen a la mitad del camino haciéndome “estremecer” (ζωγράφω) mientras intento cumplir con mi responsabilidad hacia el otro, el ἀντίψυχος es la promesa de que la vida continuará a pesar de esa decepción insuportable y de esa culpabilidad inaguantable. Otra oportunidad, otra vida, o lo que es lo mismo: una contravida, es decir, una contra-inscripción (ἀνα-γράφω) de la “responsabilidad” después de mi in(h)abilidad —y de la in(h)-abilidad del lenguaje— para responder a, y por, la muerte del Otro. El ἀντίψυχος emerge entonces como el re-spons-able al infinito —aunque ahora no como el que re-spond-e sino, como contra-escrito, como el infinitamente de-(s)puesto o el infinitamente ex-(s)pendido: como una libación (spondē) vertida (spendein) por el Otro, al final del lenguaje, “en ofrenda a Dios” (4 Mac 3.16).
CONCLUSION: THE SUBLIME

1. Summary of the thesis and scope of the conclusion

In this thesis we have attempted to make an original contribution to knowledge of Second Temple Judaism and Christian origins by describing the figure of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc and the mechanisms of vicarious substitution and vicarious atonement that it represents in this text.

We began in these pages with the conviction that the delineation of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice in our work must necessarily involve a tracing of the folds of chiaroscuro in the painting imagined in 4 Macc 17.7, from the midst of which emerges the shudder (ἔφριτον) that we have hypothesised supplies an important key to reading the entire text. This special attention we have paid to the tension between the visual and the textual in 4 Macc was prompted, in the first place, by our recognition that this writing could well be thought of as an ekphrasis: as a vivid “before the eyes” description that disrupts the temporal concerns of narrative by drawing attention to the spatial elements within it. Setting 4 Macc alongside what we know of the likely sources of its author—both 2 Macc and the chronicles of Jason of Cyrene (2 Macc 2.19-32)—provided us with further licence to read our work as an “ocular demonstration” of this type, particularly in the way in which our author’s borrowing of 2 Macc extends to his appropriation of the task of the “epitomist” or “popular” historian: “to consider only what is suitable for [the] adornment” of more “exhaustive” history, and to devote one’s efforts “to arriving at the outlines of the condensation [τοῖς ὑπογραμμοῖς τῆς ἐπιτομῆς]” (2 Macc 2.26, 28-29, 31).

Our analysis of the question of “work” and “adornment” in 4 Macc—to the question of what is central to the text and what is peripheral, of what is essential and what is tangential—later put us in mind of the way in which this issue has been approached in Jacques Derrida’s philosophy of “deconstruction.” Derrida’s reflections on the “ergon” and “parergon” in the work of art enabled us to see that the (apparently) “ornamental” element par excellence in 4 Macc—that is, the selfsame ἀντίψυχος, an innovation introduced by the author of this text and absent, as such, from both of his sources—is in fact to be found between the “work” of history and narrative and the
“adornment” of these by “poetical history” (ὡς ἁληθῆς ἱστορία or πλάσμα) and ekphrasis. In the same way in which the “vivid description” blurs the boundary between the textual and the visual, the temporal and the spatial (and, in turn, between the essential and the tangential), so the ἀντίψυχος inhabits an uncertain, unrepresentable, undecidable space between writing and painting, past and future, presence and absence of which the shudder it provokes, even in the one who imagines it, is a sign.

After having argued in our Introduction, then, that the description of the painting of the martyrs of 4 Macc in 4 Macc 17.7 functions as ekphrasis of the ἀντίψυχος (that is, as a “natural-like sign” of this “unrepresentable referent” [Erickson 2010: 150]), we then devoted each of the chapters of our study to an exploration of certain facets of this vicarious substitute and sacrifice as impossible signified.

In Chapter 1 of this thesis above this meant looking beyond the elements of “Jewish religion” and “Greek philosophy” in 4 Macc to the “Egyptian” and the ἀντίψυχος as hieroglyph: as opaque ideogram which issues in a challenge to the “transparency” of the logos—the discourse of both a “Greek” philosophical guide to the virtues (as is 4 Macc in itself) and that of a “Greek” academic exegesis of the “Jewish” (as this thesis must invariably amount to)—by signing in an entirely more graphic, more visceral way. Our discovery in returning to the “Egyptian” before the Greek/Jewish was, then, that of a vision of how 4 Macc can cogently be thought to be both “Greek” and “Jewish” but according to a conceptual logic which privileges neither and hence, occasions no (epistemological) violence: as Egyptian “hieroglyph,” we showed that the ἀντίψυχος is both the Greek “bird of ashes” and the Jewish “bird of sand” in a fragile anti-synthesis—“bitter…and yet not bitter [πικρᾶς…καὶ οὗ πικρᾶς]” (4 Macc 18.20)—that is always more promise than reality.

In Chapter 2, then, we took up another of the manifestations of the Greek/Jew divide in 4 Macc—that of the different economies that “Greek” and “Jew” represent in the text, those of “philanthropy” (cf. 5.12) and sacrifice respectively—and again found that the ἀντίψυχος fits precisely in neither category: in the same way in which it disrupts the path of signification as “undecidable,” the “anti-life” who yet gives life (e.g. ἀντίψυχος αὐτῶν λαβὲ τὴν ἐμὴν ψυχὴν, 6.29) interrupts and comes to transcend, in a way, the economic circle of give and take, credit and debt, transgression and retribution.
Chapter 3 then saw us consider the specifically *temporal* as opposed to the *semantic* or *economic* aspects of 4 Macc, on the basis of which—and given, in particular, the peculiar intermingling in the text between body, soul and life before and after death (e.g. 17.12, 18)—we suggested that the ἀντίψυχος must be thought according to the syntax of the καιρός: the “favourable moment” brought about by the Stoic sage who jumps at the opportunity to “point away” (cf. ἀπόδειξιν, 3.19) from himself to his right formation and supreme virtue. It is as bringing forth a Kairos (1.10; 3.19), we argued—that is, as achieving the re-presentation or “counter-actualisation” of the events of the Chronos in the time of the Aion, according to the logic of the Stoic “pre-choice” (προαιρεσις) which determines all his subsequent choices—that the ἀντίψυχος “makes sense” as standing, as Aaron did, “between the dead and the living” and “making atonement” for the people (4 Macc 7.11-12; 17.22; cf. Num 16.47-48): as revealing the horizon of death in the Chronos as *Life as pure event* in the Aion.

In Chapter 4 we then moved on to consider the complex dynamic of “masculinity” in 4 Macc to which the study of Moore and Anderson (2010), in particular, has so masterfully drawn the attention of commentators. Differentiating ourselves somewhat from these particular interpreters just mentioned, however, we argued that the shame-inducing “feminisation” of Antiochus and his troops and the honour-accruing “masculinisation” of the martyrs remain unfinished in our work, a state of affairs that has important implications for our understanding of the ἀντίψυχος: as “manly” woman (e.g. 15.30) and “feminine” boy/senex (e.g. 7.13; 8.1), the vicarious substitute and sacrifice would be located somewhere *between* either extreme of the ancient gender continuum and hence able to substitute for any other point on this spectrum.

Taking up again some of these observations on ancient sexual identity we then went on in Chapter 5 to study traces of the “abject” in 4 Macc according to the thought of Julia Kristeva. In this vein we analysed the coding of the “Law” in the work as “masculine” and of “nature” as “feminine” (e.g. 1.28-29): a highly unstable demarcation that the ἀντίψυχος, in fact—insofar as he is educated in the law at his mother’s breast (e.g. 13.19-22)—is destined to overcome. For if the vicarious substitute and sacrifice in 4 Macc as *androgy nous* redraws the boundaries between “masculine” and “feminine,” as we demonstrated he does in Chapter 4 above, he also...
reinscribes those between “subject”—the “masculine” Jew subject to the Law (e.g. 2.5-6)—and “object”—the “feminine” or maternal influence forever in his way (objacere) but from which the Law calls him to separate himself (e.g. 1.28-29). As this “borderline,” androgynous “abject,” then—since situated on this border between “masculine” and “feminine,” “subject” and “object”—the ἀντίψυχος reveals, and redresses, an arbitrary aspect of the Law that had threatened its “apocalypse”: that of the possibility it demonstrates in itself of a split or plural subject whose physical limits, even—not to mention its psychological or legal ones—are impossible to make out (8.25; 15.20).

This finding of ours in Chapter 5 that any thought of a definitive break between “subject” and “object” in 4 Macc is a fiction was only reinforced by our turn in Chapter 6 to Levinas, whose account of the maternal psyche “inspiring” the substitution of the Same for the Other provided us with a suggestive way to interpret the ψυχή that freely circulates between the martyrs as ἀντί-ψυχος (e.g. 8.29; 13.20; 14.6; 15.4). Here in this chapter we were able to show that the bedrock on which the entire conceptual edifice of 4 Macc rests is that of the Good as καλοκἀγαθία (e.g. 1.10; 3.18; 11.22; 13.25; 15.9; etc.): an ultimately unreachable ideal towards which the Law (2.21-23) and “divine philosophy” (5.22-24) can only take their adherents so far. But if it is this Good as totally Other that underwrites this Law and this philosophy, this means that the self—the Same—who subscribes to these last will forever measure himself against this Other and find himself lacking. And it will be from the responsibility he feels for this lack that his desire to do justice to this Other—this Other in the very fibres of his being as a child in a mother’s womb—will be born: a desire that must await, for its fulfilment, the arrival of the ἀντί-ψυχος—the one who will balance the scales between the Same and the Other (ἀντί; 5.24) but without obliterating the differences between them (...διὰ τῆς αὐτῆς ψυχῆς...; 13.20).

Chapter 7 of this thesis, finally, then took up the task of articulating the political options in 4 Macc from the “tyranny” of Antiochus (1.11; etc.) to the theocracy/hierocracy/democracy of the Jewish “commonwealth” (3.20; 8.7; 17.9), in the question of which the spectre of the “feminine” again came to be felt: the ἀντίψυχος is the promise of an antipolitics founded not on opposition, as that name might suggest, but rather on the release of all that the idea of “politics” is meant to
repress—woman as mourning, vengeance, memory and the archetype of the “strange” (cf. e.g. 16.6-11). If an “antipolitics,” we argued, is the name the author of 4 Macc gives to Simon’s dissent from the status quo in Jerusalem under Seleucus as king and Onias as high priest (ἀντιπολιτευόμενος, 4.1)—a defiance that can be explained by the fact of his conflicting loyalties (e.g. 4.3)—then it also can denote the heterodox commitment of the martyrs to remember (13.12; 15.28; 16.18; etc.) and take vengeance (9.24; 11.23; 18.22), for example, in the face of the official version that requires “forgetfulness and ignorance”—the amnesty—to be at the heart of both individual and civic life (e.g. 1.5; 2.24; 18.5, 22; etc). By their “antipolitics,” then, the martyrs open up the (Jewish) city to all manner of the “strange”—to the influence of not only the “Greek” but also the “Egyptian” (4.22) and “Persian” (18.5) as well—and issue a challenge to political discourse—or again, to the logos (cf. Chapter 1 above)—by giving voice to an unintelligible wailing (15.21; 16.6-11).

Throughout each of the chapters of this thesis, then, we have been trying to write the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc and the structures of vicarious substitution and atonement that it represents in the work. More precisely, in fact, in modelling our exegetical endeavours after the Derrida of “deconstruction,” we have been trying to write the ἀντίψυχος “anagrammatically”: attempting, as we have been, to move from using analogy to name and analyse the conceptual “binary oppositions” in our text—speech as life, legitimacy, presence, etc. (in the Phaedrus) and writing as death, illegitimacy, absence—to the anagram, to the “citational play” of the pharmakon that disrupts these and all other conceptual dichotomies (Derrida 2004c: 100-101)\(^1\).

Where have all our efforts in the preceding chapters then brought us to arrive? In our introduction above we set as our aim in this thesis to counter-write, by

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\(^1\) Derrida’s thoughts on the anagram and “anagrammaticality” are worth, at this point, revising at some length: “When a word inscribes itself as the citation of another sense of the same word, when the textual center-stage of the word pharmakon, even while it means remedy, cites, re-cites, and makes legible that which in the same word signifies, in another spot and on a different level of the stage, poison…the choice of only one of these renditions…has as its first effect the neutralization of the citational play, of the “anagram,” and, in the end, quite simply of the very textuality of the…text…. [T]his blockage of the passage among opposing values is itself already an effect of Platonism…” (2004c: 100-101; emphasis original). See also our discussion of Derrida’s reading of the Phaedrus in sections [3.5.1] and [3.5.3], and especially n. 40, of the Introduction to this thesis above.
anagrammaticality and anagraphy\textsuperscript{2}, the counter-vision of the ethical in 4 Macc that is modelled by the counterlife, the ἀντιψυχος. Accordingly, after our setting in chain the “deconstruction” of the binary oppositions in 4 Macc that we have seen to this point and summarised just above, our work is only semi-complete: after having seen how the individual “anagrams” of the undecidables in our text might be formed, it still remains for us to venture some comments as to what they might point in combination, that is, as indivisible moves in our author’s strategy of anagraphy (4 Macc 17.7-10). Or better yet, since in this thesis we have seen something of the dangers that accompany the assumption that the path of signification is a straightforward one: now that we have made the Other—the ἀντιψυχος—to arrive in the shock of the wordplay, what are the implications of this advent? What might such a coming inaugurate?

These two questions we will answer in this conclusion by first of all reviewing how the “anagrams,” or undecidables, that we have uncovered in 4 Macc function together by the particular logic of the anagraphy envisioned by our author at 17.7-10. Then, second of all, we propose to return to the conceit of the painting of the “history of your religion”\textsuperscript{3} with which we began this thesis—likeness of the unrepresentable “now” foreshadowed by the “shudder” (ἔφριττον, 4 Macc 17.7)—so as to confirm our hypothesis that the epitaph of 4 Macc 17.8-10, as anagraphy, works as a certain transcription in the imagination of this sublime instant, inexpressible in language and unrepresentable in time. Finally, we will bring together everything we have gathered in this study on the shudder in 4 Macc—shiver of the paronomasia of the undecidable,

\textsuperscript{2} The idea of “anagrammaticality;” as we have just suggested in the foregoing paragraph and footnote, we have borrowed from Derrida’s “deconstructive” reading in general and of the Phaedrus in particular. The idea of “anagraphy,” on the other hand, was suggested to us—as the reader will recall from section [3.5.2] of the Introduction to this thesis above—by the turn made by the author of 4 Macc from writing to painting to a certain inscribing (ἀναγράψαι, 17.8) in 4 Macc 17.7-10, and in particular by the use he makes of this last technique to finally render “here” and “now;” in some way, his martyrs as ἀντιψυχος: “Here [ἐν-ταύτη] lie buried an aged priest and an aged woman and seven sons….” (17.9). As we will go on to suggest in more detail in the next section [2] of this Conclusion, however, we also mean by “anagraphy” to call to mind the way in which Apollonius of Tyana conjectures that the “august” and the “awe-inspiring” are brought before and made truly present to the imagination: a parallel which, we will argue, provides a convincing explanation, in our “deconstructive,” ekphrastic logic, for the placement of the “inscription” to the martyrs in 17.9-10 as the climax to 4 Macc as a whole.

\textsuperscript{3} The reader will remember here that in the Introduction—and particularly in n. 30 of the same—we read the subject of the artwork imagined at 17.7a, τὴν τῆς ἐσομοίως σου ἱστορίαν, in a broader sense than the strictly literal—that is, as inclusive of the sufferings of all the martyrs and not only those of the mother—with the licence, among other things, of the grammatical indetermination of the phrase ποικίλας βασάνους μέχρι θυνήτου in v. 7b—“…varied tortures to death for the sake of religion…”—which could be applicable to any one of the members of the family, or even to Eleazar.
shock of the visual depiction of the martyrs’ tortures, tremor of the impossible now—in an attempt to suggest that this non-verbal sign encapsulates all we have seen in this study of the undecidable, unrepresentable ethics—“the ethics and the beyond of language” centred on the counterlife (ἀντίψυχος)—that 4 Macc proposes.

2. The undecidable in 4 Macc as “anagraphy”

In section [3.5.3] of the Introduction to this thesis above we ventured that to write the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc anagrammatically—that is, by the twin gestures of the “methodology” of deconstruction, the reversal and reinscription of the binary oppositions of the text—would be to write it anagnostically: to summon it up in the “here and now” as does its original author in 4 Macc 17.9: “Here lie buried….” Even before this particular hypothesis, however—in section [3.5.2] of our Introduction—we had suggested that the anagraphy of 4 Macc 17.8-10 (ἀναγράφαι, 17.8) functions not only as an epitaph for the martyrs—“Indeed it would be proper to inscribe on their tomb these words as a reminder to the people of our nation…” (17.8)—but also as a conjuring of these martyrs, as ἀντίψυχος, as really present to the mind’s eye by the ekphrastic faculties of the “imagination” (φαντασία). A key text upon which we relied for this interpretation was the Vita Apollonii of Philostratus, 6.19—a passage which, as such, we would do well now to revise:

…Imagination [φαντασία]…[is] a wiser and subtler artist [σοφότερα…δημιουργός] by far than imitation [μιμήσεως]; for imitation can only create as its handiwork what it has seen [ὁ εἶδει], but imagination equally [ὁ καὶ] what it has not seen [ὁ μὴ εἶδεν]; for it will conceive of its ideal [ὑποθησεῖα] with reference [πρὸς τὴν ἀναφοράν] to the reality [τοῦ ὄντος], and imitation is often baffled [ἐκκρούει] by terror [ἐκπληξία], but imagination by nothing; for it marches [χωρεῖ] undismayed [ἀνέκπληκτος] to the goal which it has itself laid down [ὑπέθετο]…. (Vit. Apoll. 6.19; trans. Conybeare 1912: 2.79)

As well as this other section from a few lines later in the Vit. Apoll. which we said provided us with the initial inspiration to compare Philostratus here with the author of 4 Macc: “…For I [Apollonius] imagine you [Egyptians] might have built temples for them [the gods]…without introducing any image [of them] at all [ἀγαλμα δὲ μὴ ἐσφέρειν], but leaving it to those who frequented the temples [to imagine] the images of the gods; for the mind [ἡ γνώμη] can more or less delineate [ἀναγράφει] and

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How exactly, though, does the anagrammaticality of 4 Macc relate to its anagaphicality—the lexical similarities between these two words that we relied upon to make the hypothesis in the first place now apart? The answer is an obvious yet interesting one. Everything turns here upon the double nature of the ἀναγράφει in 17.8: a word that can refer to the act of making present through writing both on the page (or tombstone)—the textual concerns of deconstructive anagrammaticality—and in the imagination—the conceptual concerns of Apollonius and the author of 4 Macc.

In other words, by the logic of anagraphy in our text the writing (anagrammaticity) and the meaning (anagraphy) of ἀντίψυχος coincide: the vicarious substitute and sacrifice “pulls its own weight” (ἄξιον)—brings itself to the mind or the imagination (ἀναγράφει...καὶ ἀνατυποῦται: Philostratus)—as the author inscribes it in 17.8-10: “Here [ἐνταῦθα] lie buried [ἐγκεκήδεωνται]....” In that way, then, in order to repeat in this study our author’s feat of writing the martyrs of 4 Macc anagraphically—the only way, as we have seen, to pin down the “here” and the “now” of the ἀντίψυχος—we need only (re)discover the essential textuality of the undecidables we uncovered anagrammatically: that is, we need to turn (again) from what they mean to how they mean, on the page, instead. Apollonius’ above-cited account of the anagraphy and anatypography of the imagination (Vit. Apoll. 6.19) will prove to be an instructive point of comparison for us in this task, to which we now turn.

2.1. The psyche and the imagination

In the first place, then, and shuffling the order of our chapters around somewhat: we might imagine now that the Levinasian psyche we discovered in 4 Macc in Chapter 6...
above works, on the level of the *writing* (as opposed to the *meaning*) of the ἀντίψυχος, as a trace of the (Apollonian) *imagination* (φαντασία). Indeed, Levinas himself invites such a comparison between the psyche and the imagination at various points in his work (e.g. id. 1987b: 46-7; 1988: 57; cf. Sallis 2010: 88-9)\(^8\), but as Çirakman rightly points out (2004: 91-116 [113]), this imagination-as-psyche is not to be understood as a *power* of the subject already come to consciousness “but as implying the impotence at the heart of any power,” as “aporetic, equivocal, disruptive, [and] de-synthesizing”:

[The] function [of the Levinasian imagination]…could be construed in terms of its shattering the limits of a unified or synthesized activity by pointing to “a beyond” that haunts it…. [I]t reveals the “passivity beyond passivity” that denounces any attempt to encompass the otherness of the Other within a unity of representation. (Çirakman 2004: 113)

In the context of 4 Macc, this resiting of the psyche as a place in which to imagine the ἀντίψυχος and vicarious substitution and atonement could find an echo in the slippage around ψυχή in the text between “life,” “mind,” “soul,” “spirit,” etc\(^9\). In particular, we note the way in which the ψυχή and the imagination are connected for our author in verses like 15.25-27:

For as [καθάπερ] in the council chamber of her own soul [τῇ ἑαυτῆς ψυχῇ] [the mother-martyr] saw [ὁρῶσα] mighty [δεινοῦς, lit. “dreadful”] advocates [συμβούλους]—nature, family, parental love, and the rackings of her children—this mother held two ballots, one bearing death and the other deliverance for her children. She did not approve [οὐκ ἐπέγνω, lit. “she did not *recognise*”) the deliverance that would preserve the seven sons for a short time…

\(^8\) Or again, in the context of a commentary on “the norms of the religious language constituted by prayer”: “…the imagination…would not be a simply reproductive faculty, doubling the perception of objects to which it owes everything except its powers of illusion. On the contrary, it would be the deepest dimension of the human psyche, immediately functioning in the element of poetic language, the ‘mysterious root’ of all the forces of the mind which are similar to the sur-real…” (Levinas 1994: 86-7; my emphasis).

\(^9\) See section [3.1] of Chapter 3 above.
Just as the mother, then, “sees” in her ψυχή the “dreadful advocates” that would sway her from counselling her children to martyrdom, so the auditors of 4 Macc would “see” in 17.8-10, in the psyche-imagination by anagrapy, the overwhelming, “dreadful” reality of the ἀντίψυχος.10

2.2. The Kairos and the “now”

If the ἀντίψυχος is glimpsed in 4 Macc 17.7-10 by the exercise of the ψυχή (cf. 15.25)—that “spirit” before which the subject is absolutely passive, just as (καθάπερ) the brother-martyrs are said to be “moved” by (κινοῦνται) the “guidance of the mind” (τῆς ψυχῆς ἀφηγήμασιν) at 14.6—what is it exactly that the ψυχή opens up to at this point? We have been hinting at the answer to this throughout the whole of this conclusion: through the psyche the auditors of 4 Macc imagine none other than the unrepresentable “now” and “here” of vicarious substitution and atonement. In Chapter 3 of this thesis above this “now” and “here” went by the name of Kairos: what we called there (especially in sections [1.3] and [2.1]) the impossible “now” of eternity (αιών)—the “life of eternal blessedness” which the martyrs are said to live “now” (νῦν) in 17.18 (τὸν μακάριον βιόδον αἰῶνα)—and the impossible eternity of the “now” (χρόνος)—the incompatibility of “incorruptibility” (ἀφθαρσία), proper to the αἰών, with “endless life” (ζωῇ πολυχρονίῳ; 17.12). In mediating between, or “counter-actualising,” the αἰών and the χρόνος—i.e., in “pointing away” (ἀπόδειξιν), through their “choice” (προαιρέσεις) of “moderate reason” (σῶφρονος λογισμός), to the eternal significance of their actions in the present—the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος enable a Kairos (3.19; cf. 1.10; 18.9) to which, in turn, as the reinscription of the “shudder” of the “now” of 17.7 (and 14.9), the anagrapy of 17.8-10 would point.

2.3. The antipolitical and the δημιουργός

What place the trace of the “antipolitical” in 4 Macc that we discovered in Chapter 7 above in our anagrophical re-reading/re-writing of the undecidables in the text? As we discovered in Chapter 5 above (sections [3.2.1] and [3.2.2]), the martyr Eleazar (and,

10 Note too how, on this reading, the “as” (καθάπερ) of the mother’s psyche-imagination—i.e., the expression used by our author to flag the figurativeness of the conceit of the “council chamber” of her soul—would connect with the “as it were” (ὡς ἐστι) of the ἀντίψυχος in 17.21, thus suggesting—or so we argue—the way in which the latter should be read.
by extension, the sum of the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος is likened at 4 Macc 7.8 to an “administrator of the law” ([δημιουργός τὸν νόμον] who “shiel[d] it with [his] own blood and noble sweat in sufferings even to death.” There in that chapter we saw that the ἀντίψυχος, as this δημιουργός, is the one responsible for reinscribing the law of the city (18.4) particularly after her succession to the government (μετελάβετε, 16.18)—a code that will be marked by a new and unsteady relationship between what was previously excluded (i.e., feminine nature) and what was previously included (the masculine Torah). The reinscription in 4 Macc of feminine nature as sacred nature (15.13; cf. 13.19-22) paves the way for the return of all those things banished by tyranny and forgotten, deliberately, by democracy: mourning, vengeance, memory and the archetypal stranger, woman (section [3.2] of Chapter 7 above). On one level, then, the δημιουργός is she who uses her body “as a bulwark [φυλακῇ]” for the incipient law (cf. 13.13; 15.32)—but on another, that of the writing as opposed to the meaning of the ἀντίψυχος, the δημιουργός is the artist whose figurative skill is bettered by the imagination, as Apollonius reminds us. Just as the antipolitical δημιουργός in 4 Macc will constantly renew the law according to her feminine nature (e.g. ἀνανεωσάμενοι, 18.4)—writing out its dictates and setting them up publicly (ἀναγράφω)11—so the imagination as δημιουργός suggests or represents (ἀναγράφω), to the mind, this law as antilaw of the ἀντίψυχος.

2.4. The abject and the chora

Reading 4 Macc alongside Kristeva, in Chapter 5 above we discovered the strange space of the chora in our text (section [3.2.2]): that site which, as well as being the “place” (χώριον) of tortures for the children (15.20)—and hence, the “dancing place” (χορεῖον) of the victory of divine reason in them (cf. 8.4; 14.6-8), and the scene of their “afterbirth” (χόριον) into immortality (16.13)—is also the space from which the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος redefine the self or subject in the text from before the choice for (masculine) Law over (feminine) nature. Now in this conclusion, however—comparing 4 Macc 17.7-10 and the undecidables in our text with Apollonius’ philosophy of mental perception—we are in a position to be able to nuance this description of the chora somewhat: if χορεῖ, on the level of the anagrapy of the

11 Yet another sense to our key verb here: see the references collected in LSJ: s.v.
ἀντίψυχος, can be read as the way in which the imagination “marches,” uninhibited, toward the suggestive conception of the unreal, unseen referent, then χωρίον/χορεῖον/χόριον in 4 Macc 15.20 can be read as a verb instead of a noun—as the ἀντίψυχος “making room,” “giving way,” “withdrawing” (χωρέω) for nature, the body (χόριον), in the soul formed by the Law (e.g. 3.1-5; 5.25-27). Or again, so as to underscore the sense in which the imagination in 4 Macc is an expression of the passive psyche (cf. [2.1] above), we could also, or alternatively, use this newly-discovered χωρέω in 15.20 to reread the χωρεῖ that Apollonius prompts us to supply with the ἀναγράψαι (17.8) at 4 Macc 17.8-10: the self as hostage to the “august,” the “awe-inspiring,” the dreadful whose image it is forced to accommodate in the imagination.

2.5. The androgynous and the self-possessed

In her lacerations (déchirures) and wounds (blessures), the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc encompasses—“communicates” with and substitutes between—the “masculine” and the “feminine” (Bataille; Chapter 4 above). She has the genitals (déchirures/blessures) of both a woman—the mother-martyr of the text—and a man—Eleazar and the boys—and although she is said to be “more noble than males in steadfastness, and more courageous than men in endurance” (4 Macc 15.30), her ongoing susceptibility to physical and emotional pain (e.g. 11.11; 14.9-10; 15.7, 16) suggests that she is still, all told, something other than a “manly man” like David (3.17-18), Abraham (16.20), or Moses (2.17-18; 9.2; etc.). The author of 4 Macc would have the reader believe that she has managed to fully “master” her passions (πάθη; κρατεῖται, 2.9; ἐπικρατεῖν, 1.3, 31, 33; 2.4; περικρατεῖ, 1.9; 2.2; etc.)12, but if she is still in the thrall of the emotions of familial love (e.g. 9.23; 10.15; 13.19-27) or maternal affection (e.g. 15.6-7), the truth of the matter is rather more nuanced than this picture allows. From this ideal of self-control (ἐγκράτεια) in our text it is only a short anagrammatical step to ἔκκρουσις, the “bafflement” or “beating-back” of mimesis by “terror” (ἐκπληξίας) which the imagination avoids, according to Apollonius—particularly if ἐκπληξίας is also capable of the sense of a “mental disturbance,” a “passion,” as are the “sensual pleasures” (ἅφροδισίων) in Polybius.

12 This survey of cognates of ἐγκράτεια (“self-control”) in 4 Macc is taken from Moore and Anderson 2010: 184-5, 185 n. 21.
Plb. 3.81.6, for example. Like the ἀντίψυχος, then, the imagination in 4 Macc 17.7-10 would meet with “terror,” or “passion,” but would be unfazed by it (ἀνέκπληκτος). The terror, like the passions, is bearable, sufferable, tolerable (ἀν-εκτός), but the initial impact of this terror and these passions—πλήσσειν, “to strike”—have forever inscribed in the subject their negative mark.

2.6. The “impossible gift” and the counterfeit

Whether products of mimesis or of the imagination, images of the gods, for Apollonius, are just that: images (εἰδη), or copies. What distinguishes the one from the other in their value, though, as we have already noted, is the respective capacity of each to communicate the beauty and suggestiveness of the “august,” the “awe-inspiring,” and the “dreadful,” such as of the mysteries. “...[Y]our animals and your birds,” says Apollonius to his interlocutors at one point in Vit. Apoll. 6.19, “may be esteemed and of much price as likenesses [μεν...ξηλωτυ δόξει των εικόνων], but the gods will be very much lowered [παραπολυ...ἔστηξοσιν] in their dignity [της αυτων δοξης].” All turns upon the “dignity” or the “splendour” of the mystery (δόξα), then, and whether it is the appearances (δόξαι) of mimesis (δοκεω) or of the imagination (δοξάζω) that are the most suitable and most dignified forms for showing them (φαίνω). And like that of the counterfeit coin (Chapter 2 above), this question of the advent of the mystery, whether successful or not, can only be resolved in the demands of the moment: as Apollonius puts it, it is more likely that “perjurers and temple-thieves and all the rabble of low jesters will despise [καταφρονειν] such holy objects [the mimetic representations of the gods] rather than dread [δεδιεναι] them.” Will the ὁμόνωμα coin put into circulation by the martyrs, the ἀντίψυχος, of 4 Macc (e.g. 3.21; 13.23 [A], 25) be discovered for legal tender or for a counterfeit (μιασσασθε/μιμημα, 9.23)? Will it succeed in “writing off” the sin of the nation or in “jacking up” its debt to God (χρεοκοπεω, 2.8), thus revealing the “fraud” of the laws of the world and the Law of the Torah and “unbinding” the subject from their observance (καταλυω, 4.24, 26; cf. ἐκλυω, 15.24; section [3.5] of Chapter 2 above)? Like the question of mimesis or imagination, it all depends on the effect produced in or by the one on the receiving end of the interaction/transaction.
The "Egyptian" and the hieroglyph

“...[W]ithout exception I maintain...,” runs one of the insults Apollonius levels at Thespesion in *Vit. Apoll. 6.19*, “that whereas in other lands statuary [ἀγαλματοποιίαν] has scrupulously observed [ἀπτεσθαι] decency and fitness [φημι τοι προσήκοντος], you rather make ridicule [καταγελάν] of the gods than really believe [νομίζειν] in them [or “it”, αὐτό].” Ἀγάλματα, therefore, is the name given here to fittingly wrought *images* of the gods: a name which also contains within it the hint of the “glory” or “honour” (ἄγαλμα) of the mystery in which they are enshrouded (LSJ: s.v.). But also lurking behind the name is the spectre of a representation formed by words, rather than pictures alone, or rather by words and pictures: the form of the *hieroglyph*—

In the case of those things which they, in their wisdom, wanted to designate [*δεικνύναι*], the Egyptian sages did not use written characters [*γραμμάτων*], literally representing [*διεξοδεύουσι*] arguments and premises and imitating [*μιμουμένος*] meaningful sounds and utterances of axioms. Rather, they wrote in pictures [*ἀγάλματα...γράψαντες*], and engraved [*ἐντυπώσαντες*] on their temples one picture [*ἄγαλμα*] corresponding to each reality [τὴν ἐκεῖ οὗ διεξόδον ἐμφήναι].... Thus, each picture [*ἄγαλμα*] is a knowledge [*ἐπιστήμη*], wisdom [*σοφία*]...perceived all at once [*ὑποκείμενον...ἀθρόον*], and not discursive thought [*διανόησις*] nor deliberation [*βούλευσις*]... (Plotinus, *Enn.* 5.8.6.1-9; quoted in Hadot 1998: 40; original Greek in Armstrong 1984: 256)

The ἄγαλματα which Apollonius says are fashioned in Greece in the “most honourable” (κάλλιστον) and “most pious” (θεοφιλέστατον) way, then, would be revealed to be like *hieroglyphs* written by anagraphy in the imagination—a sign, ironically, of the “Egyptian” which the philosopher would banish. And as the ἄγαλματα of the gods in Philostratus so the ἄγαλμα in 4 Macc 17.7-10: the ἀντίψυχος as *hieroglyph*, a word in pictures or a picture in words—the vicarious substitute and sacrifice “perceived all at once” in the imagination as the Greek (or Egyptian) “Memnon bird of ashes” and the Jewish “bird of sand” (section [3.1.2] of Chapter 1 above).
3. From the undecidable in anagraphy to the “shudder”

The work we have done up to this point of this thesis on the binary oppositions and undecidable concepts which the author of 4 Macc uses to describe the ἀντίψυχος in his text can be represented diagrammatically in the following manner:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jew</th>
<th>Greek</th>
<th>“Egyptian”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sacrifice</td>
<td>Economy</td>
<td>“Impossible gift”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aion</td>
<td>Chronos</td>
<td>Kairos</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Masculine</td>
<td>Feminine</td>
<td>Androgynous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Object</td>
<td>Abject</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Same</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>Psyche</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democracy</td>
<td>Tyranny</td>
<td>Antipolitical</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Where, then, would the ἀντίψυχος in itself appear in such a schema—especially if it cannot be any simple sum of the terms of the third column? To answer this question—a very important one for our purposes here, as we shall see—we could compare our diagram with artwork by the French artist Henri Maccheroni that Jean-François Lyotard has used to reflect on the unrepresentable in art and, ultimately, on the sublime. As is evident at first glance, our cutaway of the ἀντίψυχος and Maccheroni’s “matrix” (not designed for display) for his series L’Archéologie du signe share more than a passing resemblance. Accidental similarities apart, however—seeming appearance of the table, or grid, with rows, columns and cells—how can Maccheroni help us to draw closer to the elusive ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc? To begin with, we must consider the effect of his series on display and in its totality:

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13 The problems with such a formulaic move as simply totalling up these undecidables would be grave indeed: not only can we not, in fact, even properly isolate or represent them so as to “add” them up—the ἀντίψυχος as “Egyptian” Memnon bird, for example, takes the value in 4 Macc of both the “Greek” phoenix and the “Jewish” ḫol, the bird of sand (or ashes; see Chapter 1 above)—but also we must reckon with the fact that the undecidables already reflect the irreducible difference, or différence, between signified and signifier such that “adding” them up would only multiply, to infinity, the distance between the “reality” of the ἀντίψυχος and the words we might use to describe it.
In 1976, the painter [Maccheroni]…produced a series of paintings which works according to the title and the following constraints:

*L’Archéologie du signe* (title) is composed of 21 canvases in the “30 figure” format (92 x 73cm).

The “geometric” forms given (or revealed [(se) donne] in the painting are known: cross, circle, cross (+ O X).

The forms are (or make [*font]*) (a) surface(s). They accommodate colour in such a way that this colour is standardised. There are 7 (industrial) colours: *ecru; denim; red; leopard skin; metal; white; black.*

Each of these colours is given monochrome to the autonomous form.

It is therefore a question of seven colours in three different forms.

The canvases are signs and they sign the “before” and the “after” (they are *poiesis* and poetic). The sign displaces time through its permutation. The signs are juxtaposed. They show themselves (*se montrent*) in this way without being able to be demonstrated (*sans pouvoir se démontrer*).… (Roesz 2008: 15; trans. author)
“A question...of seven colours in three different forms,” then—an écru +, a denim O, a red X, and so on, cycling through the 21 possible permutations of colour and form. But what would such a series “mean”? Lyotard (2012: 283) observes, in the first place, that Maccheroni’s painting “does not show, does not even suggest, or does so as little as possible, what it presents of symbols”—thereby achieving a “neutralisation of sensible elements [that] stimulates discourse and makes the mouth water for intelligible words”14—but none of this will stop him venturing an opinion about it. In effect, Lyotard suggests, if each of Maccheroni’s canvases can be thought of as a phrase—if, for example, their particular colour, form and order in the series could be thought of as corresponding to the bare minimum of syntactical elements required for a grammar—in setting forth this unique phrase each canvas would, at the same time, show up the deficiencies of this “language” as matrix:

Look at each [canvas] separately and, so to say, absolutely. Under such a gaze, its value, which consists in...the lexical, syntactic and pragmatic network of a known language that relates one phrase to other possible phrases [i.e., the unseen matrix]...can be erased if you hold this phrase right at the moment in the right way so that the universe, or the universes, that it presents unfold their time, their space, their referents, and their meanings, even though they already sink into nothingness [i.e., consumed by the matrix]...

This snapshot has no place in the time of the universe that is presented by the phrase itself. If it could be, then it is in the time of another phrase that presents this (first) presentation. In itself, this instant is not in any time. Time is made there. (Lyotard 2012: 297; my emphasis)

Two points from Lyotard’s analysis of Maccheroni’s series may be extracted for our purposes here with regard to the series of the ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc that we have developed in this thesis. In the first place: if each of our undecidable concepts is expressed as a phrase—“the ἀντίψυχος is an “Egyptian” Memnon bird, or bird of ashes,” and so on—and each of these undecidable phrases is then situated in a series, in subsequent chapters, as is inevitable in a study of this type—each of these phrases

14 I.e., achieves a shudder—convulsive trembling, “typically as a result of fear of revulsion”; unsteady breathing, “especially as a result of emotional disturbance” (OED)—as we shall see in more detail in section [4] below.
will be revealed to be a mere *reiteration*, or *representation*, of some unrepresentable *master phrase*, according to the permutations permitted by the logic of whatever interpretative, representational matrix we would (inevitably) impose on them. And indeed, this much makes sense: each of our undecidables, as phrase, has attempted to respond to—reiterate or represent—the *unrepresentable* phrase found in the text—“...they having become, as it were, an ἀντίψυχος for the sin of our nation…” (4 Macc 17.21; cf. 6.29). But here is the revelation: in the second place, Lyotard’s comments on Maccheroni orient us, or *reorient* us\(^{15}\), to the question of the *time* of the master phrase of the ἀντίψυχος: the vicarious substitute and sacrifice of 4 Macc would be unrepresentable *because outside of the time it takes to develop a series of phrases, or a matrix, by which to make sense of the initial, master phrase*. Or to put this point a slightly different way: to represent, to capture, the unrepresentable ἀντίψυχος of 4 Macc—both the task we have set ourselves in this thesis and the task the author of the work set himself in the imagined painting of 4 Macc 17.7-10—would be to represent the unrepresentable *in time*—that is, the “snapshot,” the “instant,” the moment in which Lyotard says that “*[t]ime is made.*” How viable might this revelation, this suggestion, prove as we seek to conclude this thesis and offer, once and for all, our interpretation of how the mechanisms of vicarious substitution and atonement in 4 Macc function? It is to questions such as this that we now turn.

4. From the shudder to the sublime

What is the meaning of the *shudder* (*ἔφριττον*; φρίκη) occasioned by the (word-)painting of the ἀντίψυχος in 4 Macc 17.7? Can this sensation, only *hinted* at in the register of ζωγραφέω, find an analogue in that of ἀναγράφω—as we have seen, the writing practice the author of 4 Macc finally lands upon in order to write the ἀντίψυχος in 17.9-10? As it turns out, the only other occurrence of this “shudder” in 4 Macc comes in 14.9, where again, as in 17.7, our author links the sensation to the sufferings of the martyrs as ἀντίψυχος in the elastic, unrepresentable “now” of this figure:

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\(^{15}\) In the light, of course, of our chapter on the Aion, Chronos and Kairos in 4 Macc (Chapter 3 above)—a connection that will be explored more thoroughly in the following section of this Conclusion below.
Even now [νῦν], we ourselves shudder [ἡμεῖς...φρίττομεν] as we hear [ἀκούοντες] of the suffering [θλίψιν] of these young men; [they] not only saw [ὁρώντες] what was happening, not only heard [ἀκούοντες] the direct word of threat [τὸν παραχρήμα ἀπειλής λόγον], but also bore the sufferings [πάσχοντες] patiently [ἐνεκαρτέρουν], and in agonies of fire [πυρὸς δύναμις] at that. What could be more excruciatingly painful [ἐπαλγέστερον] than this? For the power of fire [ἡ τοῦ πυρὸς δύναμις] is intense [σύντομος] and swift [ὁξία], and it consumed [διέλυσεν] [their] bodies [τὰ σώματα] quickly [ταχέως]… (14.9-10)

It is astonishing that here in the Greek of these two verses there should be nothing—apart from the (very late) introduction of ἐνεκαρτέρουν in 14.9b in the third person plural—that indicates more concretely the subject of the verbs in 14.9a. Indeed, looking only at these participles, it could well be said that through the shudder, in the elastic “now,” the auditors of 4 Macc have privileged access to the trials and tribulations of the martyrs: in the exact same way in which “we…shudder as we hear (ἀκούοντες) of the suffering of these young men,” we see (ὁρώντες) what is happening, we hear (ἀκούοντες) “the direct word of threat,” we bear (πάσχοντες) their sufferings. And it is not as if this visceral immediacy of the listeners of 4 Macc to the martyrs is adulterated in any way in 14.9-10 as text: here we are “thrown headlong” (ταχέως) into seeing them, hearing them, enduring their pains; it is “excruciating” (ἐπαλγέστερον), “intense” (σύντομος) and “piercing” (ὁξιῶ), happening “on the spot” (παραχρήμα). What is true for these two verses, though, and what is more important for us here in this conclusion: the vicarious visual, auditory and full bodily “virtual reality” of the ἀντίπνοος in 14.9-10—in the “now” of the shudder and the shudder of the “now”—is only heightened in 17.7-8 through our author’s shift from a graphic (textual) representation of this “now” to a painterly one. To understand in more depth why this should be so, we return now again to Lyotard and his explorations in the paintings of Maccheroni and other artists of the “sublime.”

The series of paintings by Maccheroni that we mentioned above (in section [3]) is, on one aspect of Lyotard’s reading of it, a series that depicts the unrepresentable “now.” The fundamental uncertainty that the proximity of the moment provokes—“…une excitation de la parole qui met à la bouche l’eau des mots intelligibles…,” says
Lyotard (2012: 282), as we have seen—is known in the aesthetic tradition by the name of the *sublime*:

This [the “sublime”] is probably a contradictory feeling. It is at the very least a sign, the question mark itself, the way in which *it happens* is withheld and announced: *Is it happening?* The question can be modulated in any tone. But the mark of the question is ‘now,’ *now* like the feeling that nothing might happen: the nothingness now…. (Lyotard 1992b: 197-99 [198]; emphasis original)

But the feeling of the sublime is not just the pain that accompanies the “neutralisation of sensible elements,” on the part of the bystander, in the face of the “now”: i.e., it is not just the uncertainty, or anxiety, of not knowing what to say, what to do, how to react, etc. Lyotard, following Burke\(^\text{16}\), also finds the place in the sublime of pleasure or *delight*:

Here then is an account of the sublime feeling: a very big, very powerful object threatens to deprive the soul of any ‘it happens’ [i.e., any “*now*”], strikes it with ‘astonishment’ (at lower intensities the soul is seized with admiration, veneration, respect). The soul is thus dumb, immobilized, as good as dead [i.e., pained or terror-stricken]. Art, by distancing this menace, procures a pleasure of relief, of delight. Thanks to art, the soul is returned to the agitated\(^\text{17}\) zone between life and death, and this agitation is its health and life. (Lyotard 1992b: 205; gloss in round brackets original)

It is *art*, then, on this train of thought that is the proper vehicle for the sublime apprehension of the “now” with its “contradictory” sensations of terror and delight, and this point Lyotard illustrates with reference to the “zip” paintings of the American artist Barnett Newman. Lyotard writes of the “wonderful surprise” that the works of Newman provide, “that there should be something rather than nothing”: “…Chaos

\(^{16}\) In his *Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful* (1757).

\(^{17}\) Lyotard comments earlier on in this essay (“The Sublime and the Avant-Garde”) that “agitation [Gemüthsbewegung] is the word Kant gives to the activity of the mind that has judgement and exercises it…” (1992b: 197).
threatens [in Newman’s paintings], but the flash of the tzimtzum\textsuperscript{18}...takes places, divides the shadows, breaks down the light into colours like a prism, and arranges them across the surface like a universe...” (1992a: 246). This “flash of lightning in the darkness” in Newman’s art thus appears for Lyotard as a new beginning on the way, in the face of the awesome and the terrible, that keeps pain, uncertainty and anxiety at bay:

What is sublime is the feeling that something will happen, despite everything, within this threatening void, that something will take ‘place’ and will announce that everything is not over. That place is mere ‘here,’ the most minimal occurrence. (1992a: 243, 245)

![Figure 2: Newman, Adam, 1951-2. Oil paint on canvas, 2.43 x 2.03m.](http://www.tate.org.uk)

\textit{Taken from the website of the Tate Gallery, London (http://www.tate.org.uk)}

\textsuperscript{18} Battersby (2007: 190) writes that \textit{tzimtzum} “is Newman’s name for the rough stripe of colour that so frequently runs down his...canvases, allowing the eye to successfully divide and draw together the colour planes into wholes and parts.” More than that, though: \textit{tzimtzum} also names the Kabbalistic idea of “the contraction by God whereby creation was begun,” as Froman rightly points out (2002: 219).
But what does all of this on Lyotard, Maccheroni and Newman have to do with 4 Macc? Simply put, our assertion is that the painting of the ἀντίψυχος in 17.7-10 can be understood precisely in these terms of the sublime, with the figure of the vicarious substitute and sacrifice lighting up the stifling darkness of the “now” (νῦν)—terror of the shudder (ἐφρηττον; φρίκη: 14.9; 17.7)—and working to distance the threat of annihilation that it presents. Or better, perhaps: in the same way that Maccheroni and Newman depict an “impossible now”—indecipherable symbols divorced of a matrix or the “tzimtzum”—the author of 4 Macc, in the painting of 17.7-10, depicts an instant, a “now,” in which the ἀντίψυχος takes “place”—“here”—and announces “that everything is not over.” This suspending of the threat or feeling of relief can also be factored into the experience of the shudder—which up until this point we have reserved solely for the terror of the moment—since a frisson (ἐφρηττον; φρίκη) can also be a pleasurable sensation and not just an augury of pain and privation. The ἀντίψυχος appears on the scene in 4 Macc 17.7 in a way analogous to the “angels on horseback” which come to defend the temple treasury in 4 Macc 4.10:

[…] While the priests together with women and children were imploring God…and while Apollonius was going up with his armed forces to seize the money, angels on horseback with lightning flashing [περιαστράπτοντες] from their weapons appeared [προυφάνησαν] from heaven, instilling in them great fear and trembling…. (4.9-10)

Like these angels – other important models of efficacious intercession in 4 Macc—the ἀντίψυχος would be the light (φῶς; φῶς) of what appears in the moment, of what appears to the mind’s eye in the “now” (φαν-τάζω; φαν-ερός; φαν-τασία). And the ethics she brings in her wake—that “ethics after language” at the end of writing (anagrammaticality) and the beginning of painting (anagraphy)—would have, as its only demand, to give up one’s tongue to be cut out and one’s eyes to be pierced (cf. 4

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19 Here pace Lyotard himself, who writes that “[t]he occurrence, the Ereignis ["event"], has nothing to do with the petit frisson, the cheap thrill, the profitable pathos, that accompanies an innovation” (1992b: 210). Or only seemingly so: in this sentence Lyotard in fact takes aim at artists, dealers and aficionados who confuse the ideal of the avant-garde with cynical, cheap and empty “amalgamations, quotations, ornamentations, pastiche” simply for the sake of attempting something “new,” of providing an “original” product. The petit frisson here, therefore, is nothing more than a “minor tingling” (Groys 2012: 153) compared to the fear of the numinous connoted by φρίκη (LSJ: s.v.).
Macc 18.21): to shudder at the sense of the ellipsis after one has stopped talking (σιωπώντων, ἀπο-σιώπη-σις, 10.18)...

5. Epilogue

Our work in this thesis has suggested that the ἄντιψυχος of 4 Macc represents, above and beyond the “ransom”, the “life for a life” or the “substitute life” that scholars of the work have discovered to date, the very possibility of “life” itself beyond its betrayal in language (γράφω)—or beyond, more precisely, its betrayal in religious, philosophical, political and economic discourse. When no author-ity in heaven or on earth—the Law of religion, the law of the land, even literature itself—can assuage the guilt of one for the death of another (e.g. 4 Macc 4.24-26)—or when the L/law or literature can only take me so far, make me “shudder” (ζωγραφέω), as I try and carry out my responsibility to and for the other—the ἄντιψυχος is a pledge that life can go on in the face of such unbearable disappointment and such insufferable guilt. Another chance, another life, a counterlife: a counter-inscription (ἀνα-γράφω) of “responsibility” after my in-ability—and the inability of language—to answer for the death of the Other. The ἄντιψυχος, the infinitely re spons-ible one—though not now as re-spond-ent but, as counter-written, the infinitely de-spond-ent, infinitely ex-(s)pend-able one: a libation (spondē) poured out (spendein) for the Other, at the end of language, “as an offering to God” (4 Macc 3.16).
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