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Perceived, Conceived, Biblicised and Personalised Space

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Jan Willem van Henten

Jerusalem in 1 and 2 Maccabees

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Abstract

This contribution on Jerusalem as space in 1 and 2 Maccabees is informed by narratology and theories of space, especially the distinction between perceived and conceived space as developed by Henri Lefebvre (Lefebvre 1974/1991). It focuses in particular on Jerusalem as perceived and conceived space. Jerusalem and Judah as its territory function as the main spatial setting in both narratives. The spatial information about Jerusalem in 2 Maccabees is striking because of its consistent lack of specificity in comparison to 1 Maccabees. Conceived space in 1 Maccabees is apparent from brief poetic sections in the first chapters of the book (1:24–28, 35–40; 2:7–13; 3:45) that offer reflection on the Seleucid capture and destruction of Jerusalem. They include spatial imagery that interprets the oppression and also evokes the sympathy of the narratees (1:27–28, 38–40). Jerusalem is personalised as a widow and depicted in the terms of Jewish Scripture. 2 Maccabees presents Jerusalem as a Greek style city-state, but Jerusalem and Judah together are at the same time a Jewish theocratic state whose fate is dependent on the faithfulness to God and the Jewish laws. Like 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees conceives Jerusalem as a person who has suffered (8:17), but it offers a second form of personalised space by expressing in a series of brief scenes the response of Jerusalem's inhabitants to a threat to the Temple by focusing on their actions and bodily gestures and appearances (3:14–21).

Keywords: Jerusalem, Space (perceived, conceived, biblicised and personalised space), 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees, Jerusalem Temple

1 Introduction

Jerusalem, the famous capital of the Davidic Israelite monarchy and later on the capital of the Kingdom of Judah and the priestly state of Judah after the return from exile,¹ is presented as the central Judean city in the First and Second Book of Maccabees, on which this contribution will focus. These

1 Bieberstein and Bloedhorn 1994; Levine 2002; Bieberstein 2017.



books are named after so-called Maccabean heroes, who are either freedom fighters who developed into a new dynasty of Jewish leaders in the second century BCE, also called the Hasmoneans, or martyrs, Jews who died during the oppression of the Jews by the Seleucid King Antiochus IV (175–164 BCE) in 169–167 BCE.² First Maccabees was originally written in Hebrew but it is only extant in a Greek translation. It is most probably written in Jerusalem by someone close to the Hasmonean rulers. The largest part of 2 Maccabees is, like 1 Maccabees, a historical work, but it is preceded by festal letters (1:1–2:18) and most of it is originally written in Greek. Scholars used to assume that the historical chapters of 2 Maccabees (chs. 3–15) originated in the Diaspora, in line with the book's claim that it is a summary of five books written by an author called Jason of Cyrene (2:23). A Diasporic origin is contested nowadays by scholars who argue that the Jerusalem Temple plays a central role in the composition.³ Both books are mostly dated in the last decades of the second century BCE or the beginning of the first century BCE.⁴ Together with the works of Flavius Josephus, both Maccabean books are the main literary sources for the history of the Jews in the late Hellenistic and early Imperial periods. They have been transmitted by Christians as books of the Septuagint, the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible with expansions, and are part of the Old Testament in Roman-Catholic and Eastern-Orthodox Christian Bibles.

1 and 2 Maccabees do not offer detailed descriptions of Jerusalem as Josephus does (esp. *Jewish War* 5.136–247),⁵ but Jerusalem figures prominently in both books, although in rather different ways. One important difference concerns the depiction of the Jerusalem Temple. So far, scholars mostly focused on the topography of Jerusalem and on historical issues,⁶ but the Maccabean references to Jerusalem are multi-faceted and go far beyond topography and history. In this contribution I intend to analyse the depiction and representation of Jerusalem in 1 and 2 Maccabees by applying insights from narratological approaches to space,⁷ in particular the application of narratology in the *Studies in Ancient Greek Narrative* series.⁸ I will analyse the awareness of space in the narrative, space as setting of the

2 Schürer 1973–1987; Gera 1998; Honigman 2014; Bernhardt 2017 and Grabbe 2020.

3 See, e.g., Doran 1981; van Henten 1997 and Honigman 2014; Honigman (forthcoming); differently: Schwartz (forthcoming).

4 Further introductory information and references in van Henten 2017.

5 Van Henten and Huitink 2012.

6 E.g., Levine 2002; Reich 2017.

7 Overview in Ryan 2009.

8 De Jong 2012.

story and other forms of space (sometimes called ‘frames’),⁹ descriptions of space that interrupt the narrative, and also deal with the presentation and thematisation of space.¹⁰ I will also consider the possible functions of space in the narrative, which can be ornamental, thematic as well as symbolic or concern space as a form of characterisation.¹¹ An additional line of approach will build on theories of space¹² with the distinctions of various types of space, including the now common differentiation between perceptual and imaginary space. This distinction was already made in 1934 by the Czech photographer Josef Ehm in his art work entitled *Imaginary Space I*.¹³ It has been elaborated, among other things, by the differentiation between first, second and third space as developed by Henri Lefebvre in his monograph *The Production of Space* (1974/1991), which was written out of protest against the abstract attitude toward space in the Western industrial world, which is strongly focused on the economy. Lefebvre argues that the mental and sensory aspects of space are as important as space from an economic perspective. His approach has been elaborated by Edmund Soja and other scholars.¹⁴ Lefebvre’s conceptual triad interconnects three spatial dimensions with three fields in which space occurs: physical, mental and social, which go hand in hand with three types of space: ‘space as it is perceived’ by the senses, ‘conceived space’ (space as reflected or imagined in one’s mind), and ‘representational or lived space’. I will follow the lead of Lefebvre’s triad and concentrate on perceived and conceived space. Perceived space comes in our case only indirectly through the medium of the texts, but I will apply it as references in the text to the actual city of Jerusalem as it is presupposed by the story. This should be distinguished from Jerusalem as conceived space, which implies any kind of reflection about Jerusalem. I will argue, among other things, that Jerusalem as conceived space in both Maccabean books is sometimes presented as personified space and/or biblicalised space, i. e., space presented in the terms of Jewish Scripture. The personified space of Jerusalem can also function as a characterisation of space, which may endorse the observation of Jonathan Z. Smith that the relationship to the human body can confer meaning to a place.¹⁵

⁹ Ronen 1986, 423.

¹⁰ Ryan 2009, 420–430.

¹¹ De Jong 2012, 13–17.

¹² E. g., Crang and Thrift 2000.

¹³ <https://arthur.io/art/josef-ehm/imaginary-space-i>, last accessed 24 February 2022.

¹⁴ E. g., Soja 1989; Soja 1996; Soja 2000; Nasrallah 2012.

¹⁵ Smith 1987, 28.

2 Jerusalem in 1 Maccabees

Jerusalem is the spatial setting of the larger part of the narrative in 1 Maccabees, which can be characterised as a diptych that presents a history of the oppression and liberation of Jerusalem and Judah as its territory.¹⁶ The liberation and restoration of Jerusalem and its territory is narrated in chapters 2–13 and each phase in the second part of the diptych is commemorated during a new annual festival.¹⁷ My analysis of Jerusalem as presented in 1 Maccabees will first focus on Jerusalem ‘as it is perceived’, i. e., references to the actual city of Jerusalem in the period of the Seleucid rule and the Maccabean revolt. Jerusalem is the central location that is attacked by the Seleucid king or his commanders in the hundred forty-third year of the Seleucid era (1 Macc 1:20; = 170/169 BCE) and in later interventions (1:20–24; 1:29–35; 2:31; 3:35; 6:48; 7:19, 27, 39; 9:3–4, 50). Jerusalem is the political and military centre for the Maccabean movement. The latter is apparent, among other things, from the fact that copies of important political documents such as the treaty of friendship with the Romans and the honorary decree for Simon and his sons are kept there (8:22; 14:27, 48–29). The Maccabean freedom fighters march out from Jerusalem (6:32; 10:74; 12:25; cf. 10:66, 87; 11:74) and they fortify Mount Zion after the recapture of the Temple (4:60).¹⁸ Judas the Maccabee gathers Israelites from Gilead from elsewhere to return to the Land of Judah (5:45) or to Mount Zion (5:52–54), which seems to be an insider name for Jerusalem. Judah is the *hinterland* that goes together with Jerusalem, as several references to ‘Jerusalem and Judah’ indicate (1:44; 2:6, 18; 3:34).¹⁹ Within the section in which the Hasmonean Simon takes over the power from his brother Jonathan who fell captive (chapters 13–16), there seems to be a spatial shift: the focal point goes beyond Jerusalem and Judah, which could imply that the traditional territory of Israel as territory of the Jewish nation became the new focus, with Jerusalem still being the capital of this territory. The poetic eulogy for Simon does not mention Jerusalem (14:4–15), instead it focuses on ‘the land’ (14:4, 8, 11, 13), but it does refer to the citadel and the sanctuary in Jerusalem (14:7, 15). The decree in honour of Simon and his sons mentions Beth-Zur, Joppa and Gazara as towns where

¹⁶ Martola 1984; Williams 1999.

¹⁷ 1 Macc 4:59; 7:48–49; 13:52: recapture of the Temple in chapter 4; defeat of Nicanor in chapter 7; recapture of the Acra in chapter 13.

¹⁸ 1 Macc 1:60–61: fortification of Mount Zion and garrison stationed there, also 6:7: ‘they had surrounded the sanctuary (τὸ ἁγίασμα) with high walls as before ...’ (Mount Zion = sanctuary). Also 12:35–36; 13:10; 14:37

¹⁹ In line with 2 Chr 20:17; 28:10; Ezra 4:6; 5:1; Joel 3:20; Mal 3:4.

Jews were settled, which were on the border of or outside Judea (14:3334). The decree also tells us that Simon settled Jews in the recaptured citadel and fortified it ‘for the safety of the country and of the city’ (πρὸς ἀσφάλειαν τῆς χώρας καὶ τῆς πόλεως, 14:37). The sanctuary or Temple is self-evidently part of Jerusalem (e. g., 1:20–22, below). In 1 Macc 6:12, the dying Antiochus IV says in a flashback to his friends: ‘But now I remember the wrong I did in Jerusalem. I seized all its vessels of silver and gold ...’²⁰ This is closely connected with the report about the plunder of Jerusalem, which, in fact, first concerns the Temple (1:20–24), as we will see.

The space of Jerusalem is sometimes specified further: the narrator refers not only to Jerusalem or ‘the city’ (2:7; 14:37), but also to ‘the citadel’, i. e., the fortified City of David, south of the Temple Mount, which is until the end of chapter 13 the area for Jewish renegades and a Gentile garrison,²¹ and the Temple Mount, the sanctuary as well as Mount Zion (ὄρος Σιων, 4:37; also 4:60; 5:54; 6:48, 62; 7:33; 10:11; 14:26).²² The first reference to Jerusalem in the story is found in the brief passage about Jewish renegades (1:11–15), the second evil group in the story, besides Antiochus IV and his people (1:10). The narrator tells us that these renegades built a gymnasium in Jerusalem, according to Gentile custom (1:14). What ‘Jerusalem’ means is self-evident for the narrator, the city is neither introduced nor characterised. Within its immediate context verse 14 reads like the beginning of the profanation of the city, which is told more specifically later on in chapter 1, with Antiochus IV as principal instigator (1:20–24; 38; 42–51; 52–58). When the events in Jerusalem in the story unfold, the spatial information is usually elaborate and specific. The narrator provides articulate descriptions of the ruin and restoration of Jerusalem as well as the recapture, restoration and festive rededication of the Temple (1:20–24, 29–35; 4:36–60). A second profanation of Jerusalem after the one narrated in 1:11–15 concerns the first intervention of Antiochus IV, dated in the hundred forty-third year of the Seleucid era (170/169 BCE; 1:20–24). This attack is first described and then interpreted and commented upon in a brief poetic section (1:24–28, below). As already indicated, the attack concerns Jerusalem, but the spatial focus of the description of its consequences is on Antiochus’ plunder of the Temple. The narrator offers an articulate description of the items plundered:

20 Unless indicated otherwise, all translations of passages from 1 and 2 Maccabees and the Bible are from NRSV.

21 See already 1:33–35; also 6:18–27 etc.

22 ‘Zion’ was originally a name for the city of David south of the Temple Mount (2 Sam 5:7; 1 Kgs 8:1), but Mount Zion was later identified with the Temple Mount. The exact location of the citadel is unknown.

He [Antiochus] went up against Israel and came to Jerusalem with a strong force.²¹ He arrogantly entered the sanctuary [τὸ ἁγίασμα] and took the golden altar, the lampstand for the light, and all its utensils.²² He took also the table for the bread of the Presence, the cups for drink offerings, the bowls, the golden censers, the curtain, the crowns, and the gold decoration on the front of the temple; he stripped it all off.²³ He took the silver and the gold, and the costly vessels; he took also the hidden treasures that he found.²⁴ Taking them all, he went into his own land.

The narrator reports a second intervention in Jerusalem by Antiochus, which is dated two years later (1:29–35) and which concerns the plunder and destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the fortification of the City of David (ἡ πόλις Δαυιδ, also 2:31;²³ 7:32; 14:36) as a stronghold (ἄκρᾱ, ‘citadel’) for the Seleucid kingdom:²⁴

Two years later the king sent to the cities of Judah a chief collector of tribute, and he came to Jerusalem with a large force.³⁰ Deceitfully he spoke peaceable words to them, and they believed him; but he suddenly fell upon the city, dealt it a severe blow, and destroyed many people of Israel.³¹ He plundered the city, burned it with fire, and tore down its houses and its surrounding walls.³² They took captive the women and children, and seized the livestock.³³ Then they fortified the city of David with a great strong wall and strong towers, and it became their citadel.³⁴ They stationed there a sinful people, men who were renegades. These strengthened their position;³⁵ they stored up arms and food, and collecting the spoils of Jerusalem they stored them there, and became a great menace, ...

The report of this second intervention too is followed by a brief poetic section which interprets the event (below).

My second section on space in 1 Maccabees connects with ‘perceived space’ in Lefebvre’s conceptual framework, but it can also be called ‘biblicised space’. The passages involved offer reflections on Jerusalem as space on the basis of the experiences of Antiochus IV’s oppression and they do so with vocabulary and motifs that derive from the Jewish Scriptures. The narrative about the Seleucid oppression in Jerusalem is interspersed with brief poetic sections, especially in chapter 1 and the beginning of chapter 2.²⁵ These poetic sections comment upon the events narrated before by giving an impression of the sufferings in dramatic terms and biblical language, evoking in this way the emotions of the readers (1:24–28; 1:35–40; 2:6–

²³ In NRSV and Rahlfs the reference to ‘in Jerusalem the city of David’ is remarkable.

²⁴ The much discussed question whether there were two interventions of Antiochus IV in Jerusalem or just one and chronological issues do not regard us here; see, among others, Schwartz 2001 and Bernhardt 2017.

²⁵ Neuhaus 1974; Endermalm-Ogawa 1987; Tilly 2015. The sections can be identified, among other things, by *parallelismus membrorum*.

14).²⁶ All of these three passages have spatial connotations. Remarkably, their content does not fully match the narrative context and sometimes provides important additional information. The discrepancies between the narrative content and the poetic description of the suffering are striking in the first case. The narrative in 1:20–24 focuses on Antiochus' plundering of the sanctuary (above), but the lamentation in the poetic section in 1:24–28²⁷ does not refer to the cult²⁸ and first briefly mentions killings ('he shed much blood', 1:24) and then focuses on the mourning of the people of Israel in every community by differentiating between several categories of the population (1:24–28):

He [i. e., Antiochus IV] shed much blood (καὶ ἐποίησεν φονοκτονίαν),
and spoke with great arrogance.

²⁵ Israel mourned deeply in every community,

²⁶ rulers and elders groaned,
young women and young men became faint,
the beauty of the women faded.

²⁷ Every bridegroom took up the lament;
she who sat in the bridal chamber was mourning.

²⁸ Even the land trembled (ἐσεισθη ἡ γῆ) for its inhabitants,
and all the house of Jacob was clothed with shame.

The spatial focus in 1:20–28 shifts from Jerusalem with the emphasis on the Temple to the people and the land of Israel (1:25–28). The name 'Israel' has a double meaning in 1 Maccabees. It can refer to persons, as it does here (similarly 1:11, 43, 53, 62), as well as to land, as in 2:46.²⁹ The mourning of Israel in every community is articulated with references to several categories of the population (1:26–27) that are reminiscent of Lamentations 1:4, 18–19; 2:10, 20–21; 5:11–13.³⁰ The mourning is highlighted with spatial imagery in verse 27, where Israel's mourning brides are circumscribed as 'she who sat in the bridal chamber'. By evoking this imagery, the author highlights by contrast, because the bridal chamber should, of course, be a place of excitement and joyful expectation but it is here exactly the opposite of that, which may move the readers to sympathise with those who suffer in the text (see also below).³¹ Verse 27 alludes to Joel 2:16, which is part of a call to repent: '...

²⁶ See also 1 Macc 3:44–45; 3:50–53; 7:17; 14:4–15.

²⁷ Neuhaus 1974, 19; 29–32; 36; 50–52; 77–79; 90–93; 99–100; 103; 105; 112–114; 122; 125–128; 133–137; 165; 174–175; 179–181; 217–219; 237; Edermalm-Ogawa 1987, 14–15; Tilly 2015, 76.

²⁸ Neuhaus 1974, 105.

²⁹ 'The house of Jacob' (1:28) is the equivalent of 'Israel' in 1:25 and both phrases create an *inclusio*, Edermalm-Ogawa 1987, 15.

³⁰ Edermalm-Ogawa 1987, 15; Tilly 2015, 76.

³¹ Tilly 2015, 80.

gather the people. Sanctify the congregation: ... Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her canopy.³² The beginning of verse 28 shows another spatial shift, moving from a location of mourning (v. 27b) to the personalisation of space. The imagery of the trembling of ‘the land’, presumably the land of Israel, expresses the extreme suffering and lament of its population. This phrase too echoes language from the Jewish Scriptures, although the context of the trembling of the land is different: ‘Lord, when you went out from Seir, when you marched from the region of Edom, the earth trembled (γῆ ἐσεισθη) ... (Judg 5:4).’

The poetic section that follows upon the report about Antiochus’ second intervention in Jerusalem (1:35–40) connects better with the immediate context than 1:24–28. The narrative section (1:29–35) reports the occupation, plunder and destruction of the city of Jerusalem and the fortification of the city of David as a citadel (ἡ ἄκρᾱ) for a group of sinful persons who transgress the law (1:34) and had to keep the Jerusalemites under control. They are presented here as members of an *ethnos*, which implies that they are non-Jews (likewise 3:45), but other passages indicate that Jews had joined them (2:44, 48).³³ The spatial focus of this second lament of the fate of Jerusalem is first on the citadel and the sanctuary (1:35–37) and then on the city itself (1:38–40), which would have been deserted (1:38).³⁴ The description only partly matches the narrative report in 1:29–35, but it does anticipate the events described in the next narrative section,³⁵ which reports among other things the profanation of the Temple and the setup of a Gentile cult.

³⁵ ... and [they, i.e., the sinful people in the citadel] became a great menace (καὶ ἐγένοντο εἰς μεγάλην παγίδα)³⁶

³⁶ for it [i.e., the citadel] became an ambush (ἐνεδρον) against the sanctuary (τὸ ἁγίασμα), an evil adversary (διάβολος) of Israel at all times.

³⁷ On every side of the sanctuary they shed innocent blood; they even defiled the sanctuary.

³⁸ Because of them the residents of Jerusalem fled; she became a dwelling of strangers; she became strange to her offspring, and her children forsook her.

³⁹ Her sanctuary became desolate like a desert; her feasts were turned into mourning,

³² Cf. also Jer 7:34; 25:10; Bar 2:23 and Ps 19:5, Enermalm-Ogawa 1987, 15; Tilly 2015, 76.

³³ Sievers 1994, 198–202.

³⁴ Neuhaus 1974, 19–20; 32; 36; 47; 50; 53–55; 77–79; 86; 90–93; 99–100; 103; 105; 111–114; 125–133; 136–141; 179–190; 215–217; 228–237.

³⁵ Enermalm-Ogawa 1987, 16.

³⁶ Cf. 1 Macc 5:4. The phrase μεγάλη παγίς (‘great menace’) is reminiscent of LXX Prov 29:6.

her sabbaths into a reproach,
her honor into contempt.

⁴⁰ Her dishonor now grew as great as her glory;
her exaltation was turned into mourning.

The lament indicates that the crimes by the persons in the citadel had a huge impact on Jerusalem. It starts with the defilement of the sanctuary of the Temple and killings around it and continues with a depiction of the transformation of Jerusalem (1:38b–40b). Jerusalem becomes personalised from verse 38b onward. The city is presented as a woman, more precisely as a mother or grandmother: ‘she became a dwelling of strangers;/she became strange to her offspring (καὶ ἐγένετο ἀλλοτρία τοῖς γενήμασιν αὐτῆς) ...’ The noun *γένημα* usually means (agricultural) ‘product’, ‘produce’ as in 1 Macc 11:34 and 14:8,³⁷ but here it means ‘descendants’ or ‘children’ as the parallel next clause indicates (‘and her children forsook her’).³⁸ We have here an example of the personification of space,³⁹ also called pathetic fallacy, i. e., the attribution of feelings to inanimate natural or material items.⁴⁰ The alienation between Jerusalem and her offspring also explains why the Jerusalemites who remain faithful to the Maccabean cause flee the city (1:38a and below). This lament too echoes vocabulary in the Jewish Scriptures, including Psalm 79:1–3 that laments the defilement of God’s holy Temple by the nations and the shedding of blood all around Jerusalem.⁴¹ Verse 38 ‘she became strange to her offspring,/ and her children forsook her’ echoes Lamentations 5:2–3 and Jeremiah 5:7.⁴² ‘Her sanctuary became desolate like a desert’ (1:39a) may allude to Daniel 9:17 (‘Lord, let your face shine upon your desolated sanctuary’).⁴³ ‘Her feasts were turned into mourning’ (1:39b) alludes to Amos 8:10: ‘I [the Lord God] will turn your feasts into mourning.’⁴⁴ In short, what happened to Jerusalem and its inhabitants because of Antiochus IV’s second intervention is depicted and re-interpreted in a poetic lament that expresses Jerusalem’s grief in the traditional terms of Jewish Scripture.

³⁷ Muraoka 2009, 127.

³⁸ The same meaning is found in 1 Macc 3:45, below.

³⁹ Enermalm-Ogawa 1987, 16; Tilly 2015, 80.

⁴⁰ De Jong 2012, 16–17. This literary device also occurs in the Hebrew Bible, e. g., Jer 49:24 (referring to Damascus).

⁴¹ Neuhaus 1974, 138–141; 171–172; 181–184; Enermalm-Ogawa 1987, 16; Schnocks 2010. Cf. also Ps 106:38; 2 Kgs 21:16; 24:4; Ezech 32:38 and 2 Macc 6:4–5, Tilly 2015, 80.

⁴² Tilly 2015, 80. Lam 5:2–3: ‘Our inheritance has been turned over to strangers,/ our homes to aliens./ We have become orphans, fatherless; our mothers are like widows.’ Jer 5:7: ‘How can I pardon you?/ Your children have forsaken me ...’ Cf. Lam 1:5.

⁴³ Cf. 1 Macc 1:39d, 40a with Dan 9:16. Also: Lev 26:31 and Lam 5:18.

⁴⁴ See also the explicit quotation of Am 8:10 in Tob 2:6.

We find a similar literary device in the individual lament of the priest Mattathias (2:7–13),⁴⁵ who later on gives the go-ahead for the uprising against the Seleucids. Commenting on the outrages being committed in Judah and Jerusalem (2:6), Mattathias as an actor in the narrative expresses his despair in the first-person in the following lament, which takes a panoramic perspective as if he was looking out over Jerusalem from one of the hills nearby:⁴⁶

- ⁷ ‘Alas! Why was I born to see this,
the ruin of my people, the ruin of the holy city,
and to live there when it was given over to the enemy,
the sanctuary (τὸ ἅγίασμα) given over to aliens?⁴⁷
- ⁸ Her sanctuary⁴⁸ (ὁ ναὸς αὐτῆς) has become like a man⁴⁹ without honor
(ὡς ἀνήρ ἄδοξος);
- ⁹ her glorious vessels have been carried into exile.⁵⁰
Her infants (τὰ νήπια αὐτῆς) have been killed in her streets (ἐν ταῖς πλατείαις αὐτῆς), her youths (οἱ νεανίσκοι αὐτῆς) by the sword of the foe (ἐν ῥομφαίᾳ ἐχθροῦ).
- ¹⁰ What nation has not inherited her palaces
and has not seized her spoils?
- ¹¹ All her adornment has been taken away;⁵¹
no longer free, she has become a slave.
- ¹² And see, our sanctuary⁵² (τὰ ἅγια), our beauty,
and our glory have been laid waste;⁵³
the Gentiles have profaned them.⁵⁴
- ¹³ Why should we live any longer?’

The panoramic perspective first focuses on the ruins of the entire city (2:7a–c), then moves on to the sanctuary of the Jerusalem Temple (2:7d–9a), to the streets of the city (2:9bc), to the palaces (2:10ab) and then returns to the sanctuary (2:12a). Mattathias’ lament is followed by mourning rituals by Mattathias and his sons (2:14). The lament depicts the ruin of Jerusalem as

45 Neuhaus 1974, 20; 23; 26–27; 36; 55–57; 86; 95–96; 103; 111–114; 117–118; 125–131; 156; 170; 179; 207–208; 217–220; 236–237.

46 De Jong 2012, 11–12. Cf. Titus observing the ruins of Jerusalem in Josephus, *War* 7.112–113, which may build on the famous scene of Scipio Aemilianus weeping over the ruin of Carthage, destroyed by his command, Polybius 38.22, van Henten 2017, 363 with references.

47 Cf. Jer 51:51.

48 NRSV: ‘temple.’

49 NRSV: ‘person.’

50 Cf. Ezech 7:20–21 and Lam 4:1–2 depicting the fate of the first Jerusalem Temple.

51 Cf. Lam 5:16.

52 NRSV: ‘our holy place.’

53 Cf. Isa 64:10–11; Dan 11:31.

54 Cf. Lam 1:10.

‘the holy city’ (ἡ ἁγία πόλις, 2:7),⁵⁵ which is a unique phrase in 1 Maccabees that matches the presentation of Jerusalem in 2 Maccabees well (below).⁵⁶ The holiness of the city most probably derives from the Temple that was part of it.⁵⁷ The sanctuary of the Temple is twice highlighted in the immediate context (2:7d–9a; 2:12a). The lament personalises the sanctuary as well as the city. Verse 8 mentions ‘her sanctuary’, that is the sanctuary of the holy city, which has become like a man without honour (ὡς ἀνὴρ ἄδοξος). The Greek phrase ὡς ἀνὴρ ἄδοξος is weakly attested and some scholars prefer to emend the text.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the phrase makes sense in the context and is paralleled by passages elsewhere.⁵⁹ It also matches the statements in 1:39d–40a about Jerusalem’s dishonour (above). The city is at the same time presented as a woman (2:8–11) and more specifically as a mother who has lost her children and has become a slave in verse 9bc and 11b:⁶⁰ ‘Her infants (τὰ νήπια αὐτῆς) have been killed in her streets,/her youths by the sword of the foe./ ... no longer free, she has become a slave.’ The first part of this passage echoes two verses in Jeremiah (49:26 [LXX 30:32] and 50:30 [LXX 27:30]), which are part of prophecies of doom for the cities of Damascus and Babylon:⁶¹

Therefore her young men (LXX: νεανίσκοι) shall fall in her squares (LXX: ἐν πλατεαίαις σου), and all her soldiers shall be destroyed in that day, says the LORD of hosts. (Jer 49:26 [LXX 30:32])

Therefore her young men (LXX: οἱ νεανίσκοι αὐτῆς) shall fall in her squares (LXX: ἐν πλατεαίαις αὐτῆς), and all her soldiers shall be destroyed on that day, says the LORD. (Jer 50:30 [LXX 27:30])

The intertextual connection between 1 Macc 2:9 and these prophecies in Jeremiah 49–50 might suggest that God caused the ruin of Jerusalem, but

55 Neuhaus 1974, 79, 129, 156; Zsengellér 2007. ‘Holy city’ also appears in Isa 48:1, Neh 11:1, Sir 36:12, 2 Macc 3:1, Tob 13:9, etc.

56 Cf. 1 Macc 15:7: Ἐρουσαλὴμ καὶ τὰ ἅγια εἶναι ἐλεύθερα (cf. 1:46; 3:43, 51; 58; 4:36, 41, 43; 10:31; 14:36).

57 Schwartz 2022, 183.

58 The main manuscripts read ἔνδοξος (‘honoured’), as in v. 17 and elsewhere, but that makes little sense. Risberg 1915, 7 proposes to read ἔκδοτος (‘[a man] delivered up’; supported by Schwartz 2022, 183) and Abel 1949, 32–33 οὐκ ἔνδοξος. Most scholars read ἄδοξος, which is attested by one minuscule and one MS of the Old Latin version, Kappler 1936 l.c.; Dancy 1954, 85; Tilly 2015, 90. See also Neuhaus 1974, 55 with n. 17 and 156.

59 See esp. Plutarch, *Luc.* 15.2: Πομπώνιος δ’ ἀνὴρ οὐκ ἄδοξος.

60 Tilly 2015, 93. Cf. Lam 1:1–3; 4 Ezra 10:22.

61 Lange 2014, 210–212; Schwartz 2022, 183. Note the similarities in the vocabulary in the LXX version of Jeremiah with 1 Macc. 1:9: νεανίσκοι/ οἱ νεανίσκοι αὐτῆς and ἐν πλατεαίαις σου/ ἐν πλατεαίαις αὐτῆς. Cf. also Lam 2:11, 21.

such a thought is not at all expressed in the context. The role of God as presented in 1 Maccabees is heavily debated in recent scholarship and there are hardly any explicit passages that imply that God intervened in history.⁶² The narrator seems to be keen to show that Mattathias' lament lines up with biblical passages, but that does not mean that he endorses the message of those passages. So once again we can observe the personification of Jerusalem as part of an actorial lament concerning the ruin of the city. The concluding exclamation 'Why should we live any longer?' (2:14; cf. Job 3:3) expresses utter despair, but in the broader context it anticipates the protest and resistance of Mattathias and his sons told in the continuation of the narrative.

I will briefly discuss a third point about Jerusalem in 1 Maccabees that concerns 'conceived space' as 'space not-lived-in'. The narrator highlights several times that Jews faithful to the Maccabean cause leave Jerusalem because of its profanation (2:1; 2:31; cf. 2 Macc 5:27).⁶³ The verse that introduces Mattathias briefly notes that he left Jerusalem and his lament explains why: the city and the sanctuary were in the hands of the Gentiles and the wicked Jews (2:6). This is also the point of Mattathias' lament in 2:7–13. The same point is already made in 1:38, that indicates that the residents of Jerusalem fled the city because of its profanation by Gentiles and wicked Jews. Jerusalem is conceived as a sacred city (2:7, above), which was desecrated by the Seleucids and step by step restored by the Maccabees (above). As long as the sanctuary is defiled, faithful Jews cannot live in the city. This idea is also expressed in the brief prayer of the congregation before battle in 3:45, which includes another personification of Jerusalem:

⁴⁵ Jerusalem was uninhabited like a wilderness (καὶ Ἱερουσαλημ ἦν ἀοίκητος ὡς ἔρημος); not one of her children (ἐκ τῶν γεννημάτων αὐτῆς) went in or out.

The first part of this verse echoes Isaiah 64:10:⁶⁴

Your holy cities have become a wilderness,
Zion has become a wilderness,
Jerusalem a desolation.

LXX:
πόλις τοῦ ἁγίου σου ἐγενήθη ἔρημος,
Σιων ὡς ἔρημος ἐγενήθη,
Ἱερουσαλημ εἰς κατάραν.

Your holy city has become a wilderness;
Sion has become like a wilderness,
Jerusalem a curse. (NETS transl., M. Silva)

⁶² Van Henten (forthcoming) with references.

⁶³ Neuhaus 1974, 129–130.

⁶⁴ See also 2 Esd 12:17; Tob 14:4.

In this situation Mattathias' sons deliberately gather in Mizpah opposite Jerusalem (ca. 10 km north-northwest of Jerusalem), a former place of prayer (3:46).⁶⁵ Jerusalem was obviously a no-go area for the Maccabean freedom fighters according to 1 Macc 1:38; 2:1, 31 and 3:45 as long as it was profaned by the Gentiles.

3 Jerusalem in 2 Maccabees

2 Maccabees is a composite work, existing of two letters of invitation from the Jews of Judea to Egyptian fellow-Jews to participate in a new festival that commemorates the purification and rededication of the Temple (1:1–2:18) and a history of Judea's liberation from the Seleucid oppression (chapters 3–15).⁶⁶ This history is a summary of five books by Jason of Cyrene (2:23), which are lost. 2 Maccabees concerns roughly the period described in 1 Maccabees 1–7, focusing on Judas the Maccabee as main liberator, but it offers additional information about the events preceding the Maccabean revolt (chapters 3–7), including the martyrdoms of Eleazar and the mother with her seven sons (6:18–7:42). The date of 'the year 188' (ca. 124 BCE) for the celebration of the new festival of booths or purification of the Temple in the month Chislev given in the first festal letter (1:1–9) is sometimes taken as the date of the entire work.⁶⁷ The positive description of the Romans implies in any case a date before Pompey's intervention in Jerusalem (63 BCE). The interpretation of the role of Jerusalem and its Temple is a crucial factor in the debate about the book's provenance.⁶⁸

Focusing first on the way Jerusalem is presented as the spatial setting of the main narrative in 2 Maccabees 3–15, I would like to propose that the story of 2 Maccabees offers a history of the *polis* of Jerusalem, i. e., a Greek style city-state with Judah as the territory of the city (2 Macc 13:1, 13). The Jerusalem Temple is part of that city. Many scholars have highlighted the importance of the Temple in 2 Maccabees and there is an ongoing debate whether the Temple or the city is the central institution in the narrative. With Daniel Schwartz I contend that the city has central importance in

⁶⁵ The combination of the verbs εἰσπορεύομαι and ἐκπορεύομαι 'move/go in', 'move/go out' in the second half of the verse is common in the Septuagint and can mean several things (Muraoka 2009, 200 s. v. εἰσπορεύομαι b).

⁶⁶ Habicht 1979; van Henten 1997; Schwartz 2008; Doran 2012; Honigman 2014.

⁶⁷ E. g., Bunge 1971; Momigliano 1975; differently: Schwartz 2008.

⁶⁸ E. g., Bunge 1971; Doran 1981; Honigman 2014; Honigman (forthcoming); Schwartz (forthcoming).

the narrative and that the Temple should be seen as a part of the city.⁶⁹ My argument for this position is based on the following observations. Firstly, the city of Jerusalem is highlighted as the main spatial setting of the narrative. The historical part of 2 Maccabees (chapters 3 to 15) begins and ends with the ideal situation in the city:

¹While the holy city was inhabited in unbroken peace and the laws were strictly observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness, ²it came about that the kings themselves honored the place and glorified the temple with the finest presents, ³even to the extent that King Seleucus of Asia defrayed from his own revenues all the expenses connected with the service of the sacrifices. (2 Macc. 3:1–3)

³⁷This, then, is how matters turned out with Nicanor, and from that time the city has been in the possession of the Hebrews. So I will here end my story.

Secondly, in reporting important actions by the protagonists, the narrator mostly focuses on the city: when Heliodorus attempts to plunder the Temple, ‘there was no little distress throughout the whole city’ (3:14). The wicked high priest Jason makes an attack ‘on the city’ (5:5) and Antiochus IV takes ‘the city’ by storm (5:11). The Temple is part of the city, both are mentioned together several times (e.g., 8:2–3 and 10:1; cf. 13:14; 15:17). An additional observation concerning the Temple is that it is ambiguous as the place of residence of God, since God is often located in heaven, sometimes also in a context that focuses on the Temple (e.g., 3:15; 14:34: the priests appeal heavenward).⁷⁰

Four other points about Jerusalem as space deserve to be discussed: (1) The information about Jerusalem as perceived space is not very specific; there are no elaborate descriptions of Jerusalem and the factual information is scarce and often not very articulate. (2) Jerusalem seems to be conceived as a *polis*. (3) Another aspect of Jerusalem as conceived space is that its fate is dependent on the faithfulness to God and the Jewish laws. (4) What happens to Jerusalem as space is sometimes expressed by highlighting how its inhabitants respond bodily to the events.

The first point becomes already obvious in a flashback in the first festal letter (1:1–9), which briefly mentions that Jason and his fellows (see below)

⁶⁹ Schwartz (forthcoming); Lichtenberger (forthcoming); differently: Honigman 2014; Honigman (forthcoming).

⁷⁰ God is referred to as heaven in 2 Macc 3:20, 34; 7:10; 8:20; 9:4, 20; 14:34; 15:8, 21, 34 and is located in heaven (3:15, 39; 11:10; 15:23), also in situations when the Temple is still functioning. The discussion between Nicanor and Jews about Sabbath in 15:2–5 implies an opposition between heaven and earth, that suggests that God as the living Lord himself is the Master in heaven and Nicanor the master of the earth. Further discussion in Schwartz (forthcoming).

revolted, shed innocent blood and ‘burned the gate’ (1:7–8). This passage must concern Jerusalem because of the context (1:1), but what should be noted is that the spatial information given is very unspecific, it remains totally unclear which gate is mentioned.⁷¹ More importantly, in the work as it has been transmitted to us this verse anticipates the report about Antiochus IV’s interventions in Jerusalem and the calamitous events that preceded them (4:7–7:42). It is remarkable that this section too is unspecific in its spatial information, which is especially striking in comparison with the report in 1 Maccabees 1 about Antiochus’ oppression.⁷² The narrator tells us in rather general terms that Antiochus took the holy vessels from the Temple and swept away the votive offerings from other kings (5:16; cf. 1 Macc. 1:16–20) and that he carried off 1800 talents from the Temple (5:21). He describes the consequences of Antiochus’ measures for the Jerusalemite population in much more detail (5:22–7:42). Antiochus’ profanation of the Jerusalem Temple reported in 6:2–5 is part of this section and the narrator tells us that Antiochus polluted the Temple and that he turned it into a temple of the Olympian Zeus (6:2), and also that the altar was covered with abominable things (6:5; cf. 1 Macc. 1:41–59). The spatial information remains vague but the consequences of the profanation are specifically depicted. The narrator highlights what was done in the Temple by Gentiles and prostitutes (6:3–4):

³ Harsh and utterly grievous was the onslaught of evil. ⁴ For the temple was filled with debauchery and revelling by the Gentiles, who dallied with prostitutes and had intercourse with women within the sacred precincts, and besides brought in things for sacrifice that were unfit. ⁵ The altar was covered with abominable offerings that were forbidden by the laws.

The second point about Jerusalem as a *polis* seems counterintuitive, because the narrator clearly criticises the rise to power and the transformation of Jerusalem by Jason (4:7–22). Jason took possession of the high priesthood by offering a high sum to King Antiochus IV. Because he offered an additional sum, he was allowed to introduce Greek forms of education by founding

71 Doran 2012, 31 connects the reference to the gate in 2 Macc 1:8 with the report in 8:33 that those who set fire to the sacred gates, Callisthenes and some others, were punished by Judas and his companions. But this passage speaks of gates (plural) and the persons referred to are different.

72 2 Macc 10:1–8 about the recapture of Temple and city and the purification and re-dedication of the Temple is more specific, but the parallel report in 1 Macc 4:36–59 is still much more elaborate.

a gymnasium⁷³ and an ephebate (4:9).⁷⁴ This introduction of Greek customs is indirectly confirmed by 1 Maccabees 1:11–15, which reports that a wicked group within ‘Israel’ made a pact with King Antiochus and built a gymnasium in Jerusalem (1:14).⁷⁵ The innovation was probably part of Jason’s policy to change the administrative organisation of Jerusalem into that of a *polis*, a city-state after the example of the Greeks. This may be apparent from another innovation by him, which concerns the registration of the Jerusalemites as citizens of Antioch: ‘to inscribe those in Jerusalem as Antiochenes’ (τοὺς ἐν Ἱεροσολύμοις Ἀντιοχεῖς ἀναγράψαι, 4:9; cf. 4:12, 19).⁷⁶ This registration could have been set up as a basis for conscription of the male population of Jerusalem.⁷⁷ However, the alternative interpretation that the phrase points to the enlisting of the elite section of the population or perhaps the entire population of Jerusalem as citizens of a Greek city (*polis*) called Antioch (after the name of the Seleucid king and several previous Seleucid rulers) is more probable. This view is supported by documentary evidence about the foundation of other cities after a Greek model.⁷⁸ The narrator considers Jason’s innovations a terrible betrayal of the Jewish practices (4:13–17).⁷⁹ He notes that after Jason’s reforms the priests neglected their service in the Temple and eagerly participated in wrestling and discus-

73 Honigman 2014, 211–212; 387. A gymnasium reflected the civic status of a *polis* but its public register also provided the basis for military conscription, Kennell 2005, 15–16; Honigman 2014, 364; 370–371.

74 More recent studies argue that the gymnasium itself did not imply a major transgression of Jewish law and that its goal was the physical training of the ephebes, Doran 2001; Grabbe 2002; Kennell 2005; Doran 2012, 101–103; Honigman 2014, 199–214; 262–266; 361–368.

75 Documentary evidence implies that the king would be responsible for the change into a *polis* configuration, Bernhardt 2017, 197. Cf. Honigman 2014, 364. Ma 2012 argues that the *polis* founded at the request of Jason existed side by side with the Temple state of Jerusalem and that it was re-founded and adapted by Antiochus IV as one of the punishments of the Jerusalemites for their rebellion.

76 Doran 2012, 94, 99–100. The alternative interpretation of 2 Macc 4:9 implies a translation like ‘to inscribe the Antiochenes in Jerusalem’.

77 Kennell 2005, 15–16; Honigman 2014, 364, 370–371.

78 About this much discussed passage, see, e.g., Ma 2012, 75–77, who argues with Bickerman that Jason founded a *politeuma* (i.e., a civic body) within Jerusalem that co-existed with the priestly state; Sartre 2001, 340–341, builds on Tcherikover’s interpretation and argues on the basis of non-Jewish analogies that Jason founded the *polis* of Antiocheia and honoured King Antiochus with this name. See also: Ameling 2003; Kennell 2005; Mittag 2006, 239–241; Strootman 2013; Honigman 2014, 19–20, 277, 367–377.

79 The literary and historical analysis by Honigman 2014, 261–288, 345–377, leads to a very different reading: Jason was appointed by Antiochus IV in order to replace Onias III, who disagreed with the king’s tighter control over the Temple and the tax increases; the arrangement of the gymnasium and the turning of Jerusalem into a *polis* were agreed by the king in return for higher taxes.

throwing, ‘disdaining the honours prized by their ancestors and putting the highest value upon Greek forms of prestige’ (4:15).⁸⁰ Yet, the narrator never tells us that Jason’s administrative change of Jerusalem was undone and his presentation of Jerusalem seems to match what we know about other *poleis* in the Seleucid Empire.

A third point may also be connected with ‘conceived space’: the ideal situation in Jerusalem described in 2 Maccabees 3:1–3 with the high priest Onias III as exemplary administrator (above) implies an important articulation of the spatial presentation of Jerusalem. This situation is dependent on the faithful observance of the Jewish laws by the citizens of Jerusalem: ‘While the holy city was inhabited in unbroken peace and the laws were strictly observed because of the piety of the high priest Onias and his hatred of wickedness ...’ (3:1). The spatial situation is dependent on the right way of life and this nexus reflects at the same time the right relationship between God and the Jewish nation. This idea underlies the main thread of the story, as other passages suggest. The narrator explains in one of his comments (5:17–20) that Antiochus was capable of undertaking his intervention in Jerusalem because God allowed him to do it. The explanation for this is given in 2 Maccabees 5:17: it was because of ‘the sins of those who lived in the city, and this was the reason he [God] was disregarding the holy place’ (5:17).⁸¹

This third point implies that Jerusalem with Judea as its territory is not only a *polis* but also a theocratic state.⁸² This is also apparent from the use of the adjective ἅγιος (‘holy’) in connection with the land (1:7), institutions, entities or other important aspects of this state. The city of Jerusalem and the Temple are often called holy, and sometimes both of them are combined in one phrase, ‘the place’ (ὁ τόπος), which is also called ‘holy.’⁸³ In 2 Maccabees 5:15, the narrator refers to the Temple with the superlative phrase ‘the most holy Temple in all the world’ (τὸ πάσης τῆς γῆς ἁγιώτατον ἱερόν).⁸⁴ From the perspective of space the narrator marks city and Temple as a special sacred area,⁸⁵ which seems to indicate with other markers that the city with the Temple form the most holy circle of space in a system of con-

80 2 Macc 4:15: καὶ τὰς μὲν πατρώους τιμὰς ἐν οὐδενὶ τιθέμενοι, τὰς δὲ Ἑλληνικὰς δόξας καλλίστας ἡγούμενοι.

81 See also 2 Macc 2:22; 4:2.

82 Arenhoevel 1967; van Henten 2016.

83 Jerusalem as the ‘holy city’ (ἡ ἁγία πόλις): 2 Macc 1:12; 3:1; 9:14 and 15:14; ‘the holy Temple’: 5:15; 9:16; 13:10; 14:31 and 15:32; ‘the holy place’ (cf. ὁ ἅγιος τόπος): 1:29 and 8:17.

84 Foreign kings glorify the Temple: 2 Macc 3:2–3; see also 2 Macc 3:12; 13:23.

85 Arenhoevel 1967, 132–163.

centric circles.⁸⁶ The festal letters call for a return of Jews in the Diaspora to the theocratic state in the holy land (e.g., 1:29: ‘plant your people into your holy place ...’).⁸⁷ The holiness of the city and the Temple are directly connected with the holiness of God. The subtext of the passages referring to the holiness of city and Temple is the idea that the citizens of Jerusalem, the Jews, are the chosen people of God, commissioned to be holy because God is holy (cf. Lev 19:2).⁸⁸ One passage explicitly states that the city and the Temple, together with the Jewish laws, are holy because they were given to the chosen people: ‘But the Lord did not single out for himself the nation on account of the place, but the place on account of the nation’ (5:19). The history narrated in 2 Maccabees focuses upon the city and the Temple, but the Temple functions as the main religious symbol because it is the ultimate sacred place directly associated with God. Within the storyline, the condition of the Temple symbolises the state of affairs between God and his chosen people.⁸⁹ When the covenant relation is disturbed as the result of the wicked acts of the High Priests Jason and Menelaus and similar villains, the Temple is desecrated by the Seleucids (6:1–5). When the covenant is intact, the Temple is pure and supported by God, as 2 Maccabees 14:36 and other passages imply: ‘so now, O holy One, Lord of all holiness, keep undefiled forever this house that has been so recently purified.’⁹⁰

My fourth and final point relates again to ‘perceived space’ and may be called personalised or experienced space. It concerns a form of personalised space that is different from what can be observed in 1 Maccabees (above). The most obvious example of this type of Jerusalem as space concerns the attempt by Heliodorus to plunder the Temple, which has already been mentioned (3:14–21). The attempt itself is already narrated in considerable detail (3:4–13), but the narrative slows down and changes into a cluster of brief scenes that depict the horror that Heliodorus’ attempt causes in dramatic terms. After reporting Heliodorus’ arrival in Jerusalem (3:14) the narrator briefly introduces these scenes (3:15–21) marked by the key word *ἀγωνία* (‘anguish’, ‘agony’): ‘There was immense anguish throughout the city (ἦν δὲ οὐ μικρὰ καθ’ ὅλην τὴν πόλιν ἀγωνία)’ (3:14). This key word is repeated in the scene that describes the agony of the High Priest Onias (3:15) and it is echoed in the related verb in the conclusion of this section, which highlights once again Onias’ suffering:

⁸⁶ Van Henten 2016.

⁸⁷ Also 2 Macc 1:27.

⁸⁸ See also the reference to God’s holy people in 2 Macc 15:24; Zsengellér 2007.

⁸⁹ Herr 2009, 27.

⁹⁰ See also 2 Macc 3:1–3; 38–39; 8:2–4; 10:1–8; 14:31–36; 15:18, 31–35.

¹⁴ The agony throughout the entire city (καθ' ὅλην τὴν πόλιν) was not small! ¹⁵ The priests threw themselves down in front of the altar and called to heaven that he who had legislated about the deposits would keep them safe for those who had deposited them. ¹⁶ Who would see (ἦν δὲ ὀρώντα) the outward appearance of the high priest was mentally hurt. For his looks⁹¹ and the change of his colour (ἡ γὰρ ὄψις καὶ τὸ τῆς χροῆς παρηλλαγμένον) showed his mental agony. ¹⁷ A sort of terror and bodily trembling (φρικασμὸς σώματος) had completely come over the man, which made the pain that existed in his heart (τὴν κατὰ ψυχὴν ἀγωνίαν) very clear for the onlookers (τοῖς θεωροῦσιν). ¹⁸ The men emerged from their houses in hordes for a nation-wide supplication because the place (τὸν τόπον) was about to suffer contempt. ¹⁹ The married women wrapped themselves in sackcloth below their breasts and increased in number in the streets. Some of the enclosed unmarried girls assembled near the gates, some on the walls, and others were looking out of the windows. ²⁰ All of them were stretching forth their hands towards heaven and making entreaty. ²¹ One could only have pity for the prostration of the mixed multitude and the anticipation of the high priest, whose agony was terrible. (my transl.)

The passage in between the opening and conclusion of this passage in 3:14, 21 subsequently highlights the feelings of the priests (3:15), the High Priest (3:16–17, 21), the males of Jerusalem (3:18), the married women (3:19) and the unmarried women (3:19). 2 Maccabees 3:21 focuses upon the entire crowd together with the High Priest. These scenes invoke a dramatic picture for the readers and use the body of those involved as a medium to express the drama. The sackcloth under the breasts of the married women (3:19)⁹² is a conventional Jewish sign of mourning, but it is important to note that in Jewish Scripture males usually put on sackcloth in a situation of mourning (cf. 1 Macc 2:14).⁹³ Here it concerns the married women, who fill the streets in sackcloth with bared breasts, which greatly adds to the drama.⁹⁴ The narrator may also emphasise these women's role as mothers in this brief scene, because the focus on the breasts of mothers is highlighted in 2 Maccabees 6:10 about the execution of the women who had their sons circumcised.⁹⁵

The agony about Heliodorus' attempt is shown 'throughout the entire city' and the sequence of brief scenes refers to several locations within the city (v. 15: the altar; v. 18: the houses; v. 19: the streets, the gates and the city-walls). The most dramatic scene in this section depicts the agony of

⁹¹ With Schwartz 2008, 198, who refers to change of facial colour and trembling as visible signs of *agonia*. See also Josephus, *Ant.* 15.236; Philo, *Leg.* 266–267.

⁹² The contrast with the unmarried women, the virgins, mentioned in the second part of the verse, implies that these women are married.

⁹³ Gen 37:34; Isa 15:3; Jon 3:6; Est 4:1. See also 2 Macc 10:25 and cf. Joel 1,8. Doran 2012, 85.

⁹⁴ Schwartz 2008, 198 comments that the emphasis upon the suffering of the women and the exposure of their bodies is a trope of pathetic Hellenistic historiography.

⁹⁵ Schwartz 2008, 281. See also the references to the womb of the mother of the martyrs and her breastfeeding of her youngest son in 2 Macc 7:22, 27.

the High Priest (3:16–17, 21). The narrator invites the narratees to visualise the scene through a double reference to onlookers. The focal point of the scene is Onias' bodily appearance. His change of colour and the frightening shudder of his body illustrate the message the narrator is conveying: the body expresses what Onias is thinking and feeling, the man is in shock and great pain because of the threat to the Jerusalem Temple.⁹⁶ The narrator highlights here a main point of his story and he illustrates it by a brief but vivid description, which comes close to the purpose of *ἐνάργεια* (vividness, vivid description) that is prominent in ancient reflections about rhetoric and the recommendable way of writing history.⁹⁷ Rutger Allan, Irene de Jong and Casper de Jonge contend that the central idea of *ἐνάργεια* is that the story world appears so clearly to the readers and the listeners that they experience the illusion of being present at the events reported in the narrative. The effects of seeing or hearing the events can even result in the emotional involvement of the narratees.⁹⁸ Luuk Huitink and Jonas Grethlein have recently connected *ἐνάργεια* with embodiment by building on insights from cognitive studies. They argue for an enactivist approach, which implies that such vivid descriptions often focus on what happens with the bodies of the characters in the story. Such descriptions go beyond evoking the emotions of the narratees and also appeal to them to be not only a spectator of the narrated events but also to act upon them, for example, by siding with a protagonist or sharing the disgust for the enemy.⁹⁹ A character's body can show the agony about a disastrous event in such a way that one may feel to commiserate with him or her and this is, as a matter of fact, exactly what the narrator says: 'One could only have pity for the prostration of the mixed multitude ...' (3:21).

Another case of personalised space concerns the punishment of the Seleucid commander Nicanor in 2 Maccabees 15:30–35. Nicanor's head has a symbolic meaning that points to the theological message of the story that those who oppose God and his chosen people will be punished by God. The head is hung opposite the sanctuary as a sign to every one of the help of God (15:35). This sign is closely connected with the ending of the story in 15:37, noting that with Nicanor's punishment the city was again in the possession of the Hebrews (above).

⁹⁶ Verse 16 refers to Onias' heart or mind (*ψυχῆ*) and verse 17 to his body, which suggests that his body reflects the state of his feelings.

⁹⁷ Lausberg 1998, 359–361; Walker 1993; Webb 2009; Allan, de Jong and de Jonge 2017. See also below.

⁹⁸ Allan, de Jong and de Jonge 2017.

⁹⁹ Grethlein and Huitink 2017, 85–88; Huitink 2018; Huitink 2019; Huitink 2020.

Finally, the city of Jerusalem itself is briefly presented as a person in 2 Maccabees 8:17, which is part of the chapter that describes the beginning of the liberation combat of Judas the Maccabee and his soldiers. Judas' encouragement of his soldiers in indirect speech (8:16–20) includes the following points:

¹⁷ keeping before their eyes the lawless outrage that the Gentiles had committed against the holy place, and *the torture of the derided city* (τὸν τῆς ἐμπαιγμένης πόλεως αἰκισμὸν), and besides, the overthrow of their ancestral way of life. (8:17; NRSV, my emphasis)

This brief presentation of the city of Jerusalem as a person who had been derided or mocked and tortured by the Gentiles recalls the martyrdoms told in 2 Maccabees 6:18–7:42. The interconnection is supported by the repetitions of some of the vocabulary of the martyrdoms (ἐμπαίζω ‘sport jestfully’, ‘mock’, 7:10;¹⁰⁰ cf. αἰκισμός with αἰκίζομαι ‘torture’, 7:1, 13, 15 and αἰκία ‘act of torture’, 7:42). This personification of the city strengthens the cohesion of the narrative and it suggests through the intratextual connection with the martyrdoms that the city deserves to be delivered analogous to the vindication of the martyrs (2 Macc 7:6, 9, 11, 14, 23, 29).¹⁰¹

4 Conclusion

My analysis of Jerusalem as space in 1 and 2 Maccabees informed by narratology and theories of space, especially the distinction between perceived and conceived space as developed by Henri Lefebvre,¹⁰² results in a complex outcome. Jerusalem and Judah as its territory obviously function as the main spatial setting in both narratives. Jerusalem is the main target of the attack by the Seleucid oppressors and the main goal of the liberation struggle. Both Maccabean books perceive the Temple as being part of the space of the city of Jerusalem (1 Macc 1:20–22; 2:7–13; 2 Macc 8:2–3 and 10:1). Several locations within the main spatial setting are referred to, but the spatial information about Jerusalem in 2 Maccabees is striking because of its consistent lack of specificity in comparison to 1 Maccabees. Conceived space in 1 Maccabees is apparent from brief poetic sections in the first chapters of the book (1:24–28, 35–40; 2:7–13; 3:45) that offer reflection on the Seleucid capture and destruction of Jerusalem. They include spatial imagery that

¹⁰⁰ Muraoka 2009, 227. Cf. ἐμπαιγμός, ‘mockery’, 7:7; Muraoka 2009, 226.

¹⁰¹ Van Henten 1997, 172–186.

¹⁰² Lefebvre 1974/1991.

interprets the oppression and also evokes the sympathy of the narratees (1:27–28, 38–40). Jerusalem is, among other things, depicted as a mother who was alienated from her offspring with motifs and vocabulary deriving from the Jewish Scriptures (1:38–40). The sanctuary is compared to a man without honour (2:8) and the city to a mother who had lost her children in the streets (2:9). The narrator further highlights Jerusalem being occupied by the Gentiles as ‘space not-lived-in’ (2:1; 2:31; cf. 2 Macc 5:27), implying that Jews who were faithful to the Jewish cause had to flee the city in this situation. 2 Maccabees presents Jerusalem as a Greek style city-state. Jerusalem and Judah are at the same time a theocratic state whose fate is dependent on the faithfulness to God and the Jewish laws. Like 1 Maccabees, 2 Maccabees conceives Jerusalem as a person who had suffered (8:17), but it offers a second form of personalised space by expressing in a series of brief scenes the response of Jerusalem’s inhabitants to a threat to the Temple by focusing on their actions and bodily gestures and appearances (2:14–21).

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