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Gender, War, and Josephus

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Abstract

In accordance with traditional Greco-Roman constructions of gender, the Roman victory in the First Jewish Revolt left the Jews emasculated. In *Jewish War*, Josephus reconstructs the masculinity of the Jews through descriptions of their daring raids, courageous fighting, and the choice of death over surrender; by depicting the loyal Herodian rulers as undeniably masculine, the Jewish women as unquestionably feminine, and the rebel leaders as dishonorably effeminate; and finally, by exploiting the inherent contradictions in Roman military masculinity. According to *Jewish War*, the Jews as a whole can be honorably masculine despite the failure of the revolt, a conclusion supported by the further development of Jewish masculinity in Josephus's later writings.

Keywords

Josephus's *Jewish War* – gender – warfare in antiquity

πόλεμος δ' ἀνδρεσι μελήσει (Aristophanes, *Lys.* 520): Throughout Greco-Roman antiquity, gender and war were intertwined, a connection which influenced the interpretation of the First Jewish Revolt in Josephus's *Jewish War*. Josephus would have been familiar with the interrelationship of warfare and constructions of masculinity and femininity from Homer, Thucydides, Polybius, and other writers.¹ He would have seen depictions of conquered territories and

¹ A. M. Eckstein, "Josephus and Polybius: A Reconsideration," *Classical Antiquity* 9 (1990): 175-208, esp. 176-78, 199-200; Louis H. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation of the Bible* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 171-79; Erich S. Gruen, "Polybius and Josephus on Rome,"

peoples—including his own—as captive women on monuments and coins.² He may well have heard (or seen, in graffiti or on missiles) insults against Jewish manliness during and after the failed revolt.³ In *Jewish War*, Josephus engages with this tradition to offer his own version of the masculinity, femininity, and effeminacy of the Jews, the Romans, and the rebels.⁴

in *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History* (ed. Jack Pastor, Pnina Stern, and Menahem Mor; JSJSup 146; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 149–62, esp. 149–50.

- 2 On the gendered commemoration of victory in Roman art, see I. M. Ferris, *Enemies of Rome: Barbarians Through Roman Eyes* (Stroud: Sutton, 2000), 27–50; Myles McDonnell, *Roman Manliness: Virtus and the Roman Republic* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 147–52; Sara Elise Phang, *Roman Military Service: Ideologies of Discipline in the Late Republic and Early Principate* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 93. For monuments and coins celebrating Roman victories over the Jews, see Douglas R. Edwards, “Religion, Power and Politics: Jewish Defeats by the Romans in Iconography and Josephus,” in *Diaspora Jews and Judaism* (ed. J. Andrew Overman and Robert S. MacLennan; South Florida Studies in the History of Judaism 41; Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1992), 293–310, esp. 295–96, 299–304; Jane M. Cody, “Conquerors and Conquered on Flavian Coins,” in *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text* (ed. A. J. Boyle and W. J. Dominik; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 103–23; Fergus Millar, “Last Year in Jerusalem: Monuments of the Jewish War in Rome,” in *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome* (ed. Jonathan Edmondson, Steve Mason, and James Rives; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 101–28.
- 3 For examples of gendered insults, see Homer, *Il.* 2.200–202; Thucydides 4.40; Livy 25.37.10; Appian, *Gall.* 4.7–8; Edith Hall, “Asia Unmanned: Images of Victory in Classical Athens,” in *War and Society in the Greek World* (ed. John Rich and Graham Shipley; London: Routledge, 1993), 108–33, esp. 111. On inscribed bullets and missiles, see Barbara Kellum, “The Phallus as Signifier: The Forum of Augustus and Rituals of Masculinity,” in *Sexuality in Ancient Art: Near East, Egypt, Greece, and Italy* (ed. Natalie Boymel Kampen; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 170–83, esp. 174; Angelos Chaniotis, *War in the Hellenistic World: A Social and Cultural History* (Ancient World at War; Oxford: Blackwell, 2005), 102.
- 4 Gender and warfare are also interrelated in biblical tradition; e.g., Harold C. Washington, “Violence and the Construction of Gender in the Hebrew Bible: A New Historicist Approach,” *Biblical Interpretation* 5 (1997): 324–63; Cynthia R. Chapman, *The Gendered Language of Warfare in the Israelite-Assyrian Encounter* (HSM 62; Winona Lake: Eisenbrauns, 2004); T. M. Lemos, “‘They Have Become Women’: Judean Diaspora and Postcolonial Theories of Gender and Migration,” in *Social Theory and the Study of Israelite Religion* (ed. Saul M. Olyan; SBLRBS 71; Atlanta: SBL, 2012), 81–109, esp. 99–100. On this issue, Josephus’s *Jewish War* shows stronger influence from Greco-Roman tradition. Cf. Jason von Ehrenkrook, “Effeminacy in the Shadow of Empire: the Politics of Transgressive Gender in Josephus’s *Bellum Judaicum*,” *JQR* 101 (2011): 145–63, esp. 161; and on the Second Temple and early rabbinic periods in general, Michael L. Satlow, “‘Try to Be a Man’: The Rabbinic Construction of Masculinity,” *HTR* 89 (1996): 19–40; Stephen D. Moore and Janice Capel Anderson, “Taking It Like a Man: Masculinity in 4 Maccabees,” *JBL* 117 (1998): 249–73, esp. 252–53.

On the surface, Josephus seems to accept the association of masculinity with victory: The Romans won the war because of their manliness (ἀνδραγαθία; *J. W.* 7.2), while the rebels' failure in masculinity (and their outright effeminacy) weakened their defense (e.g., 4.561, 6.349). However, as Steve Mason has also noted, the gendering of *Jewish War* is more complex than a simple dichotomy of victorious manly men (the Romans) and defeated women and womanish men (the Jews).⁵ By exposing the contradictory nature of Roman masculinity and concentrating the emasculation of defeat on the rebel leaders and their followers, Josephus makes space to assert the masculinity of the Jews in general. To be sure, the gendering of the Jews, Romans, and rebels in *Jewish War* is complicated and internally conflicted, a state of affairs attributable to the difficulties of Josephus's social and political position in Flavian Rome.⁶ Nonetheless, the end result is the affirmation of Jewish masculinity against the Roman rhetoric of victory.

1 Masculinity, Femininity, and Warfare in Greco-Roman Antiquity

A particularly influential construction of masculinity, and thus also femininity, in the Greco-Roman world was shaped by warfare.⁷ From Homer to Polybius to Tacitus and beyond, to be a man meant to face the enemy and fight with

5 Steve Mason, "Essenes and Lurking Spartans in Josephus' *Judean War*: From Story to History," in *Making History: Josephus and Historical Method* (ed. Zuleika Rodgers; JSJsup 110; Leiden: Brill, 2007), 219-61, esp. 229-30. Several studies have examined Josephus's characterization of women and emasculation of the followers of John of Gischala; e.g., Tal Ilan, "Josephus and Nicolaus on Women," in *Geschichte—Tradition—Reflexion: Festschrift für Martin Hengel zum 70. Geburtstag* (ed. Hubert Cancik, Hermann Lichtenberger, and Peter Schäfer; 2 vols.; Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 1996), 1:221-62; von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 146, 150-63. Explorations of the broader question of masculinities in *Jewish War* are largely limited to Mason's work on Josephus's presentation of the Essenes according to a Spartan model of manliness, and the effects of this characterization on the Jews as a whole ("Essenes and Lurking Spartans," 229-41).

6 For anti-Jewish sentiment in post-revolt Rome, see Josephus, *J. W.* 1.2, 7; Mason, "Essenes and Lurking Spartans," 223-25, 229; von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 146, 161-63. Alternatively, John Curran, "Flavius Josephus in Rome," in Pastor et al., eds., *Flavius Josephus: Interpretation and History*, 65-86, among others, argues that Flavian Rome was not excessively anti-Jewish (esp. 69-76). Apart from the general sentiment towards the Jews, however, as defeated enemies the Jews were feminized in imperial rhetoric and most likely in popular culture.

7 The two most significant constructions of masculinity in Greco-Roman antiquity centered on warfare and the household (patriarchy). While the two were distinct (cf. McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 167-72), they did sometimes intersect: the Romans displayed weapons and

courage.⁸ Alternatively, being a woman (or womanish) was equated with inactivity and cowardice. Men fought while women remained in the home, weaving, weeping, and waiting for the men to return.⁹ This conception of masculinity and femininity reflected the broader gender dichotomies of the Greco-Roman world.¹⁰ Men had the power, and thus enacted the violence of war; women and womanish men were powerless victims of that violence. As a result of this construction of gender, warfare itself became gendered.¹¹ The victors won recognition as real men—but the defeated were emasculated, denigrated to the level of “women.”

This general understanding of gender and warfare was consistent through antiquity, but there were significant shifts in the constructions of Roman manliness in the late Republic and Principate. The professionalization of the Roman army and the relaxation of the requirements for military service among the aristocracy in the first century B.C.E. encouraged the development of new arenas of masculinity, including rhetoric, politics, wealth, and (more controversially) music and theater.¹² In addition, the Greek concepts of ἀνδρεία

armor on the walls of their homes, and soldiers or commanders who personally saved someone in battle were honored as “fathers” (Polybius 6.39.6-8, 10.38.1-2; Livy 22.29.10-11).

- 8 Homer, *Il.* 5.529; Thucydides 2.43.6; Polybius 15.13.3-5; Livy 7.16.4; Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.36; Appian, *Hist. Rom.* preface 9-11. See further Brooke Holmes, *Gender: Antiquity and Its Legacy* (Ancients and Moderns; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 111-12.
- 9 Homer, *Il.* 6.490-493; Vergil, *Aen.* 8.407-413; Livy 3.68.8; Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.36; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 4.16.123.
- 10 In general, to be masculine was to be in a position of power over self and others, while to be feminine was to be the object of power, domination, and penetration. Cf. Vergil, *Aen.* 11.768-782; Livy 3.48.8, 6.34.6-7; Emma Dench, “Austerity, Excess, Success, and Failure in Hellenistic and Early Imperial Italy,” in *Parchments of Gender: Deciphering the Bodies of Antiquity* (ed. Maria Wyke; Oxford: Clarendon, 1998), 121-46, esp. 121; Chaniotis, *War in the Hellenistic World*, 102; Holmes, *Gender*, 79, 97-98.
- 11 Aristophanes, *Lys.* 519-520; Vergil, *Aen.* 7.444; Hall, “Asia Unmanned,” 108-12; J. E. Lendon, “The Rhetoric of Combat: Greek Military Theory and Roman Culture in Julius Caesar’s Battle Descriptions,” *Classical Antiquity* 18 (1999): 273-329, esp. 310-12; Lendon, “War and Society,” in *Greece, the Hellenistic World and the Rise of Rome* (vol. 1 of *The Cambridge History of Greek and Roman Warfare*, ed. Philip Sabin, Hans van Wees, and Michael Whitby; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 498-516, esp. 510-11; Sheila Dillon, “Women on the Columns of Trajan and Marcus Aurelius and the Visual Language of Roman Victory,” in *Representations of War in Ancient Rome* (ed. Sheila Dillon and Katherine E. Welch; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 244-71, esp. 262; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 161.
- 12 Tacitus, *Ann.* 13.2; Richard Alston, “Arms and the Man: Soldiers, Masculinity, and Power in Republican and Imperial Rome,” in *When Men Were Men: Masculinity, Power and Identity*

and ἀρετή were melded so that *virtus*, formerly referring to military manliness, could also mean virtuous.¹³ Military manliness did, however, remain a primary expression of Roman masculinity, so much so that it was identified as the source of national power.¹⁴

In the Rome of Josephus's day, military masculinity was associated with courage in battle; cowardice and surrender in battle were unmanly (and thus un-Roman).¹⁵ However, the civil wars of the late Republic and the Year of the Four Emperors had proved the dangers of unrestrained military "manliness" for civilians and rulers (cf. Livy 1.19.1-2).¹⁶ In response, military manliness became emphatically, strictly disciplined in terms of physical hardihood and obedience.¹⁷ The necessary balance of courage with discipline left soldiers in a somewhat equivocal position, expected to display extreme manliness on the battlefield but at the same time to be subordinate to their commanding officers.¹⁸

According to Tacitus, the first century witnessed an alarming corruption of Roman *virtus* in the military, and above all among the emperors.¹⁹ He argued that by the civil wars of 68-69 C.E., precisely the time of the First Jewish Revolt, Roman *virtus* was nothing but a memory.²⁰ That Tacitus's opinions were shared

in *Classical Antiquity* (ed. Lin Foxhall and John Salmon; London: Routledge, 1998), 205-23, esp. 211; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 259, 385-88.

- 13 Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 2.7, *Bell. Jug.* 3.1; Livy 3.19.5; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.73, *Agr.* 9.5, *Dial.* 31; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 9, 385-88; Amanda Wilcox, "Exemplary Grief: Gender and Virtue in Seneca's Consolations to Women," *Helios* 33 (2006): 73-100, esp. 76.
- 14 Polybius 1.6.4; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 3.19.3; Livy 1.16.7, 26.41.12. See also Sara Elise Phang, *The Marriage of Roman Soldiers* (13 B.C.-A.D. 235): *Law and Family in the Imperial Army* (Columbia Studies in the Classical Tradition 24; Leiden: Brill, 2001), 355-56; Mark Masterson, "Statius' 'Thebaid' and the Realization of Roman Manhood," *Phoenix* 59 (2005): 288-315, esp. 288-89; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 2-3.
- 15 Livy 5.38.5, 22.60.13-14; Tacitus, *Hist.* 3.66; Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 316, 323.
- 16 E.g., Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 51.42, 52.22; Caesar, *Bell. civ.* 2.13; Tacitus, *Hist.* 1.63, 83-84; 2.12, 69; 3.11, 33.
- 17 See Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 7.4-5, 9.1-4; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 5.8.4, 7.52.4; Livy 5.6.4-5, 38.17.18; Appian, *Hist. Rom.* preface 11; *Gall.* 4.7-8; *Bell. civ.* 3.8.56; Phang, *Marriage*, 354-55, and *Roman Military Service*, 92-93, 95.
- 18 Cf. Alston, "Arms and the Man," 211-17; Phang, *Marriage*, 345-46; J. E. Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts: A History of Battle in Classical Antiquity* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2005), 312.
- 19 On the failure of military *virtus*, see Tacitus, *Ann.* 4.4; *Hist.* 2.17-19, 69; 3.40, 57; on the depravity of the emperors, *Ann.* 1.75, 6.32, 14.15, 16.21; *Hist.* 1.22, 30, 38; 2.62, 3.54, 3.66; 4.2; etc. (cf. Suetonius, *Lives of the Twelve Caesars*).
- 20 *Hist.* 1.38, 43, 72; 2.62, 69.

by many in Rome is supported by the Flavians' self-presentation as military manly men in public monuments and coins. Their justification of their rule incorporated the development of their own masculinity in contrast to the questionable gender of Caligula, Nero, and other emperors.²¹ Josephus would have known of the corruptions of Nero and the Year of the Four Emperors, and of the Flavian rehabilitation of *virtus*. In *Jewish War*, Josephus both participates in the Flavian self-definition and subtly critiques Roman military manliness as he develops his own construction of Jewish masculinity.

2 Constructions of Manliness in *Jewish War*

Josephus does not use the vocabulary of manliness extensively: *ἀνδρεία* twenty-one times, *ἀνὴρ ἀγαθός* eight times, *ἀνδρείος* and *ἀνδρείως* four times, *ἀνδρίζομαι* four times, *ἀνδραγαθία* three times, *ἀνδρώδης* once.²² Of these instances, nineteen refer to Roman manliness, thirteen to Jewish manliness, four to Antipater, his sons, and their armies (occupying a transitional place between Roman and Jewish identities), and four to other peoples. In addition, *ἀρετή* and *γενναῖος* sometimes indicate brave acts in battle (thirty-one times and twenty-three times respectively; twenty-eight times of the Romans, twenty of the Jews, and six times of Herod and his family). Roman manliness outweighs Jewish manliness in terms of statistics, and also in clarity. References to Jewish manliness are largely ambiguous, negative (highlighting a lack in manliness), or rhetorical (used to motivate the Romans in battle).

Overall, then, in *Jewish War* Jewish manliness is less secure than Roman manliness, reflecting the difficulty of asserting Jewish manliness in the late first century. The Jews were from the east, associated in Greek and Roman tradition with luxurious living that weakened military manliness.²³ Moreover, the Jews had long accepted Roman rule. A manly desire for independence could have been expressed in 63 B.C.E., but not more than a century later (note

21 Suetonius, *Vesp.* 8.3; A. J. Boyle, "Introduction: Reading Flavian Rome," in Boyle and Dominik, eds., *Flavian Rome: Culture, Image, Text*, 1-67, esp. 15-16, 24-25; Masterson, "Statius' 'Thebiad,'" 290; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 387-88; von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 160; von Ehrenkrook, *Sculpting Idolatry in Flavian Rome: (An)Iconic Rhetoric in the Writings of Flavius Josephus* (SBLJL 33; Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2011), 130, 178-79.

22 In contrast to Josephus's near contemporaries Livy and Tacitus, the vocabulary of manliness is significantly less common in *Jewish War*, more comparable with Polybius (cf. Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 316).

23 E.g., Herodotus 5.49.3-8; Xenophon, *Anab.* 3.2.25; Polybius 3.6.12, 36.15.1; Livy 38.17.17-18; Appian, *Hist. rom.*, preface 9, *Gall.* 4.7-8; Hall, "Asia Unmanned," 110-26.

J. W. 2.356-357, 6.42).²⁴ While rebellion against Roman rule might be perceived as manly by the rebels themselves, the Romans rather ascribed manliness to the faithfulness of their subjects.²⁵ Finally, if war is a contest in masculinity, the Jews lost.²⁶ The defeat of the revolt provided a clear indication of the inferiority of Jewish manliness.

Against these odds, in *Jewish War* Josephus presents the Jews as a whole as manly even in battle, ascribing the effeminacy of defeat to the rebel leaders alone. Josephus supports his construction of Jewish manliness by characterizing Antipater and his sons as praiseworthy manly men and by emphasizing the internal inconsistencies of Roman masculinity. The different tactics taken to rehabilitate Jewish manliness in *Jewish War* result in a confused, confusing argument. Josephus continues to (re)construct Jewish masculinity in the *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*; adding these later works to the witness of *Jewish War* allows the Jews of Josephus's day to stand as true heirs of ancestral manliness.

2.1 *The Manliness of Antipater and Sons*

Before the beginning of the revolt in *Jewish War*, Jewish manliness is exemplified by Antipater, his sons, and Herod's army of Jews and Romans.²⁷ Antipater and his sons are Jews, but they are thoroughly romanized and they rule faithfully on behalf of the Romans.²⁸ As such, they can be presented as unquestionable exemplars of manliness. Josephus's analysis of their characters in *Jewish*

24 Cf. Thucydides 2.61.1, 2.63.1; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 5.54.5; Tacitus, *Hist.* 5.25. Note also the association of "peace" with emasculation in, e.g., Livy 38.17.7, 17, and Tacitus, *Agr.* 11.5; the enslavement represented by accepting foreign rule is itself emasculating.

25 Thucydides 1.122.4; Polybius 16.22a.3, 38.12.9; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 2.15.4-5, 4.21.7; and Tacitus, *Ann.* 3.62, 13.37, 13.54, 15.2; Boyle, "Introduction," 15-16; Cody, "Conquerors and Conquered," 105-16.

26 Cf. Thucydides 4.126.5-6, 4.127.1-2; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 1.2.2, 2.8.1-2, 6.24.1; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.44; Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 310-11; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 303; von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 161.

27 Mason, "Essenes and Lurking Spartans," 229, suggests the early Hasmonians are also examples of Jewish manliness. While this may be true of the general characterization of the Hasmonians in *J. W.*, however, the vocabulary of manliness is absent (in contrast with, e.g., *Ant.* 12.302, 433-434; 14.192-193). Instead, John Hyrcanus is unmanned in battle against Ptolemy, and Hyrcanus II is unfavorably compared with the manly Phasael (*J. W.* 1.59, 271).

28 Julia Wilker, "Josephus, the Herodians, and the Jewish War," in *The Jewish Revolt Against Rome: Interdisciplinary Perspectives* (ed. Mladen Popović; JSJSup 154; Leiden: Brill, 2011), 271-89, esp. 286-87 (see also 282-83).

War offers an initial definition of manliness that provides a model and counterpoint for the manliness of the Jews during and after the revolt.

Antipater's manliness is embodied in his battle scars, signs of his bravery and loyalty to the Romans that are praised by Caesar (*J. W.* 1.193, 197, 200).²⁹ Herod's ἀνδρεία likewise takes him to war in support of the Roman cause, and his ἀρετή in battle wins him Antony's respect (1.282, 321-322).³⁰ For Antipater and Herod, loyalty to the Romans in battle proves their manliness. Josephus can also show a certain disloyalty as manly: when he shifts his support from Antony to Octavian, Herod does so in an honorable fashion. Herod's behavior in *J. W.* 1.387 contrasts sharply with the famously slavish effeminacy of King Prusias before the Roman Senate in similar circumstances.³¹

Josephus presents Herod the Great as a manly man from his youth, strong and capable in the hunt and at war (*J. W.* 1.203-204, 429-430).³² His pre-battle exhortation in *J. W.* 1.373-379 follows Greek and Roman models in inspiring the manliness of his soldiers (cf. 3.472-479).³³ Herod also maintains the Roman ideal of disciplined, obedient soldiers (though the soldiers do not always live up to the ideal; *J. W.* 1.347-351, 367-369).³⁴ Herod's Roman approach to the military provides a foretaste of the celebration of Roman military order and discipline in Josephus's narrative of the revolt, as well as of General Josephus's own attempt to romanize his Galilean soldiers (*J. W.* 2.577-582, 3.70-109).

Finally, Herod's brother Phasael displays his own manliness by committing suicide when he is captured by Antigonus (1.271).³⁵ For the Romans, death is preferable to surrender.³⁶ Phasael's honorable suicide contrasts with the behavior of Hyrcanus, captured at the same time, who begs for his life. Antigonus himself does the same at his defeat, surrendering by falling at the feet of Sossius. Sossius in turn mocks Antigonus, calling him

29 Cf. Wilcox, "Exemplary Grief," 79-80.

30 Imperial recognition of manliness was important during the Principate; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 387.

31 Polybius 30.18.3-5; Livy 45.44.19-20; Appian, *Mith.* 12.1.2.

32 Cf. Polybius, 31.29.1, 11-12; Livy 28.35.6-7. See McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 183, on hunting, warfare, and manliness.

33 Thucydides 2.87.3, 5.9.9; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 1.40.4, 2.21.2, 7.62.2, etc.; Livy 4.33.5; Tacitus, *Ann.* 14.36; Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 313.

34 Cf. 1 Macc 5:61, 67; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 7.47.3, 7.52.4; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 303-4; Phang, *Roman Military Service*, 99.

35 Joseph, the third brother, also lived and died with manly γενναίος (*J. W.* 1.324).

36 Polybius 6.37.10-13; Tacitus, *Hist.* 2.47-50, 3.66, 4.58; Lendon, "War and Society," 510. Cf. Josephus, *J. W.* 5.483.

“Antigone” (1.353).³⁷ While the mockery follows a long tradition of emasculating defeated enemies (cf. Thucydides 4.40.2), within Josephus’s narrative it also indicates the character of the early rebels against Roman rule. They are unmanly in their battle tactics, disloyalty to Rome, and dishonorable surrenders (*J. W.* 1.282, 332). They are forerunners of the effeminate rebels of the First Jewish Revolt.

Josephus’s references to Herodian manliness end when the narrative turns to the disaster of Herod the Great’s family life. The limitation of the manliness of Antipater and his sons to *J. W.* 1.189–430 connects their masculinity with their loyalty to the Romans; undisputed faithfulness to their political overlords makes them safe examples of manliness.³⁸ The masculinity of Antipater and sons early in *Jewish War* sends an important message: Jews can be manly and accept Roman rule at the same time (a message made explicit in the speech of a later Herodian, Agrippa; *J. W.* 2.373).

2.2 *The Manliness of the Jews in the First Jewish Revolt*

Despite the difficulty of ascribing masculinity to the Jews following the Roman victory, Josephus shows their manliness in their courageous fighting in the face of defeat and their choice of honorable death over surrender. As with Polybius’s Carthaginians, Caesar’s Gauls, and Tacitus’s Germans, the manliness of the Jews identifies them as worthy opponents for the Romans (*J. W.* 1.7–8).³⁹ The Romans could (and did, according to Josephus’s narrative) honor the Jews for these examples of military masculinity.

At Jotapata, the defenders of the city prove their manliness by daring raids, by racing out of the city across the Roman siege planks to meet the enemy, and by vigorous fighting despite the certainty of loss (3.204–205, 267–268). It is precisely the despair of victory that makes the defenders’ manliness evident (3.183, 204). Josephus’s narrative of the siege of Jotapata implies that the Jews and Romans were at the least equals in military masculinity; indeed, General Vespasian honors General Josephus for the manliness he displayed during the siege (347–348). The Romans triumph at Jotapata only because of their superior numbers (270).⁴⁰

37 The effeminacy of Antigonus’s surrender is comparable with Polybius 30.18.3–5, 38.20.5 (cf. 38.8.10).

38 Cf. Polybius 16.22a.3–6.

39 Cf. Polybius 1.31.8, 11.2.1; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 1.1.3–4, 2.27.2–5, 5.34.2; Tacitus, *Germ.* 3.1, 13.4, 29.1, etc.; Lendon, “Rhetoric of Combat,” 310; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 161, 303.

40 The same argument is made on behalf of the Romans in Sallust, *Bell. Jug.* 97.5, and Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 7.53.1. Cf. Thucydides 2.87.3–4; Polybius 1.31.1; Tacitus, *Agr.* 27.3; *Hist.* 2.44.

Josephus's characterization of the defenders of Jotapata draws on a long tradition of manliness in the face of almost certain defeat: the Spartans at Thermopylae, the Senate's defense of Rome against imminent Carthaginian attack, Germanicus and Agricola in desperate straits in Germany and Britain.⁴¹ According to Thucydides, true manliness is to understand the dangers of battle, and to fight anyway (2.40.3). Likewise for Polybius, Hasdrubal displays superior manliness when he enters his final battle knowing he would either conquer or die (11.1-2). Josephus attributes precisely this masculinity to the Jews of Jotapata, allowing them to be honored even in defeat.⁴²

A second type of manliness is present in the siege of Jotapata: the choice to die rather than surrender. When the city is taken, a number of the defenders commit suicide to avoid capture; others "cheerfully" offer their necks to Roman swords when the city is overwhelmed (*J. W.* 3.331-332). Moreover, when General Josephus decides to surrender, his co-defenders threaten to kill him. True manliness (and national honor), they assert, is expressed by death in defeat, not acceptance of cowardly slavery (355-360). They choose to commit suicide (384, 387-390). Like Phasaël, their manliness is proved by their refusal to be taken captive and enslaved by the Romans (cf. 1.271, 6.42)—a choice the Romans themselves would value.⁴³

The connection of manliness and honorable death is even more explicit in the story of Masada. References to masculinity and effeminacy weave through Eleazar's speeches (*J. W.* 7.322-326, 339-341, 352, 389). He argues that it is unmanly to live while Jerusalem is destroyed (378). The Jews revolted in the first place because of their ἀνδρεία, and now that the war is lost, a man can only take up sword against children, wife, and self, saving them from rape and slavery and proving his own courage (383, 385-386, 388). Manliness here goes beyond suicide to demand the murder of women and children, a twisted (or perhaps logical?) outcome of the association of war with the male protection of the "helpless." In the face of the dishonorable violence of capture and captivity, a man can only protect his family with his own violence.

41 Herodotus 7.223-224; Polybius 3.118.7; Diodorus Siculus 11.11.1-5; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.25; *Agr.* 37.4.

42 Cf. Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 306-8; Mason, "Essenes and Lurking Spartans," 233-34.

43 Polybius 1.31.8, 38.8.10, 38.20.5; Tacitus, *Hist.* 3.66; Lendon, "War and Society," 510. Cf. 1 Macc 9:10. The manliness of suicide makes General Josephus's own masculinity suspect, which Josephus as author counters with Vespasian's praise (*J. W.* 3.347-348).

The slaughter of women and children and the battle death or suicide of men in defeat is not uncommon in Greco-Roman historiography.⁴⁴ While Polybius and Tacitus honor this choice, Livy condemns it as a mad, barbarous crime.⁴⁵ Josephus claims that the Romans admire the courage and nobility of the murder-suicide at Masada (*J. W.* 7.405-406). However, his own arguments against suicide for the sake of honor and “freedom” in 3.361-382 undermine his presentation of the events at Masada. The critique is strengthened by the woman who saves herself, another woman, and five children from the mass violence (7.399). If the murder-suicide was the truly manly choice, would this woman, described by Josephus as more wise and disciplined than other women, have hidden herself and her companions?⁴⁶

The courageous manliness displayed by the defenders of Jotapata is also evident in various daring raids and battles during the siege of Jerusalem (*J. W.* 5.72-81, 6.79-80, and 6.152-155). These scenes reflect the general audacity, passion, and courage of the Jews in *Jewish War*.⁴⁷ Notably, however, in each case, the manliness of the Jews is less than the manliness of the Romans: Titus rallies his troops in the first, shaming them for their unmanly flight (5.81-82); in the second, the Roman loss is blamed on exhaustion (nor does Jewish manliness compare with the one centurion who nearly single-handedly pushes the Jews back; 6.81-90); in the third, Titus blames the Jews’ success on Roman negligence rather than Jewish manliness (6.154-155).⁴⁸ The contrast with the disciplined, orderly, military masculinity of the Romans undermines the reckless, daring manliness of the Jews even as it is asserted.⁴⁹

The defenders of Jotapata provide the least ambiguous example of Jewish manliness during the revolt in *Jewish War*. The “manliness” of the Jews’ daring, reckless raids and willingness to die in battle at Jerusalem and Masada falls apart on closer analysis; the Romans’ discipline, skill, and courage prove their superiority in masculinity. The ambiguous masculinity of the Jews can

44 See Herodotus 1.176; Polybius 16.30.3-8, 32.1-6, 34.8-10; Livy 28.22.5-23.2; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 4.10.80; Shaye J. D. Cohen, “Masada: Literary Tradition, Archaeological Remains, and the Credibility of Josephus,” *JJS* 33 (1982): 385-405, esp. 387-92.

45 Polybius 16.32.1, 34.11-12; Livy 21.14.3-4, 28.22.5, 28.23.1-3, 31.17.5-9; Tacitus, *Hist.* 4.58.

46 So also Honora Howell Chapman, “Masada in the 1st and 21st Centuries,” in Rodgers, ed., *Making History: Josephus and Historical Method*, 82-102, esp. 99. Cf. Cohen, “Masada,” 393, 404-5, on the tension between the honor of suicide at Masada and Josephus’s critique of the Sicarii.

47 Cf. Mason, “Essenes and Lurking Spartans,” 230-31.

48 Cf. Josephus, *J. W.* 3.2, 4.43.

49 See also Josephus, *J. W.* 3.13-15, 3.479, 5.285-287, etc., and McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 303-4, on a similar theme in Caesar’s *Gallie War*.

be attributed to Josephus's context. As a Jew in Rome writing about the failed revolt under the aegis of the imperial household, Josephus must walk a careful line between presenting the Jews as honorable enemies (something Roman authors are willing to do) and praising the Jews for the insolence of revolting against the superiority of Rome (which a Roman author would not do).

2.3 *Femininity and Effeminacy in Jewish War*

Rather than presenting the Jews as thoroughly manly men, Josephus supports Jewish masculinity by depicting the women as walking, talking clichés of femininity and the rebel leaders and their men as effeminate. The extreme “womanishness” of the Jewish women in the revolt demands correspondingly masculine men. If the women so thoroughly meet Greco-Roman expectations for women in war, surely the men must as well. The rebel leaders and their men in turn provide a focus for Roman wrath. Slurs against Jewish masculinity in the aftermath of defeat can be localized on them, leaving the remaining Jews free from charges of weak, slavish effeminacy.

Standard Greco-Roman depictions of warfare relegate women to the home, waiting for their men to return from war; they scream from fear, and weep for the war dead; they are raped, killed, and enslaved.⁵⁰ Women can appropriately defend the city during an invasion, as long as they remain within the confines of their proper sphere (the home); nonetheless, they are said to act “beyond their nature.”⁵¹ Women who fight alongside men in battle are *de facto* barbarian.⁵² The use of the image of a captive woman to represent a subjugated people in Roman monuments and coins expresses the militarized construction of femininity: women are passive objects of warfare, potential victims of violence to protect—or to attack.⁵³

Tacitus claims that women fought alongside the male rebels in the First Jewish Revolt (*Hist.* 5.13), and there are hints of women's involvement in *J. W.* 4.505, 538–539.⁵⁴ However, these hints are elusive. Josephus largely omits women's contribution to the revolt, forestalling any critiques of unnatural barbarianism. Instead, the few women who appear in *Jewish War*, even the rebel

50 E.g., Homer, *Il.* 1.29–31; Herodotus 8.32–33; Vergil, *Aen.* 3.320–324; Livy 5.21.11, 22.55.3, 26.13.14–15; Appian, *Hann.* 7.9.58.

51 Thucydides 2.4.2, 3.74.1; Livy 2.13.6, 28.19.13–14; Tacitus, *Ann.* 2.55, *Hist.* 2.63; etc.

52 Herodotus 7.99; Thucydides 2.4.2; Polybius 15.30.9–10; Livy 5.21.10; Tacitus, *Agr.* 16, *Ann.* 14.35–36, *Germ.* 18; Appian, *Hisp.* 6.12.72; etc. Cf. Phang, *Marriage*, 366–68.

53 Dillon, “Women on the Columns,” 262; Iain Ferris, *Hate and War: The Column of Marcus Aurelius* (Stroud: History Press, 2009), 123–24.

54 See further Ilan, “Josephus and Nicolaus,” 225, 228.

women, are limited to screaming, weeping, begging their men for help, and suffering (3.248, 4.70-83, 4.106-110). They are womanish in the extreme, helpless objects to protect with manly fighting (3.112, 261; 4.191). General Josephus even has the women of Jotapata shut up in their homes to prevent them from “unmanning” the fighters with their panic (3.263); their womanishness endangers military masculinity.⁵⁵

Only two stories break away from the general characterization of women in *Jewish War*. First, the women of Japha throw tiles and other household objects at the invading Romans from their roofs (3.303). As a common *topos* of Greco-Roman siege narratives, however, this display of violence does not challenge the overall womanishness of Jewish women.⁵⁶ Second, Berenice intercedes for the Jews before Florus (2.309-314). Peacemaking is a woman’s business, appropriate for Berenice as the king’s sister.⁵⁷ Josephus emphasizes her powerless femininity by depicting her as a humble, barefoot suppliant (her appearance is attributed to a religious vow in 313-314). Her womanishness is evident in her emotion; she is an object of the Romans’ violence, and like any helpless woman, she hides behind men for protection.

Josephus’s Jewish women embody Greco-Roman militarized femininity, which in turn suggests that Jewish men must also be real men.⁵⁸ The masculinity of the men is further implied by the ascription of the effeminacy of defeat to the rebel leaders and their men. According to the Greco-Roman rhetoric of masculinity, soldiers who surrender are mocked by the enemy (and punished by their own people).⁵⁹ Defeated enemies are called slavish, with a consequent loss of masculinity.⁶⁰ Josephus was certainly aware of the charge of slavish effeminacy (cf. *J. W.* 2.357, 6.42). Instead of arguing against it, he redirects it

55 Cf. Josephus, *Ant.* 3.5; Dench, “Austerity,” 121; Phang, *Marriage*, 355-59; Holmes, *Gender*, 77-79.

56 Thucydides 2.4.2; Diodorus Siculus 13.56.7; Livy 5.21.10; William D. Barry, “Roof Tiles and Urban Violence in the Ancient World,” *GRBS* 37 (1996): 55-74, esp. 60-68; Pasi Loman, “No Woman No War: Women’s Participation in Ancient Greek Warfare,” *GR* 51 (2004): 34-54, esp. 42.

57 Cf. Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 2.13; Livy 1.13.1-5, 2.40.1-5; Appian, *Ital.* 2.3-5.

58 E.g., Homer, *Il.* 6.482-493, 15.661-666; Polybius 6.52.7; Livy 3.47.2, 21.41.16. The manliness of women also correlates with the femininity of men: Herodotus 2.35, 8.87-88; Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.69, 3.33, 14.36; Appian, *Pun.* 8.19.131; Phang, *Marriage*, 368.

59 Herodotus 9.20; Thucydides 2.42.2, 2.43.6, 4.40.2; Polybius 6.37.10-11; Diodorus Siculus 12.16.1-2; Livy 5.38.5, 22.60.13-14, 23.25.7-8, 27.13.10; etc.; Lendon, “War and Society,” 510.

60 Herodotus 7.107; Thucydides 1.122.2-3, 5.9.9; Polybius 38.12.9; Vergil, *Aen.* 9.598-620; Livy 36.17.5-7; Tacitus, *Agr.* 31; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 159-61.

onto the rebel leaders and their men—his scapegoats for the guilt and horror of the revolt.⁶¹

Several scenes in *Jewish War* implicitly indict the rebels for effeminacy. First, when the Romans approach Jerusalem, the rebels are more concerned with fighting each other than with defending the city (5.72-74). While they do eventually attack the Romans, they are initially depicted as women, sitting idly behind the walls, watching rather than fighting.⁶² Second, the rebels fail to protect women and children like manly men should: John of Gischala and his rebels abandon their women and children in their flight to Jerusalem (4.107); the rebels in Jerusalem actually harm women and children (5.433; cf. 4.191)⁶³; and they refuse General Josephus's pleas to surrender for the sake of the women and children (5.418).⁶⁴ Third, the rebels in Jerusalem assassinate manly men to protect their own lives and power (4.357-360).⁶⁵ The Zealots' actions against men of true ἀνδρεία show that they themselves, like Tiberius and Nero, lack ἀνδρεία.⁶⁶ Finally, when the Romans see the rebels apparently jumping to their deaths during the burning of the temple, they praise this manly suicide. Josephus reports, however, that the rebels are actually jumping to safety; they are not so manly after all (5.330).

Josephus makes the charge of effeminacy explicit in *J. W.* 4.559-562. Along with looting, murdering, and raping, the followers of John of Gischala adorn themselves with women's dress, hairstyle, and makeup, and they act like women in their uncontrolled sexual depravity (by implication, taking on the role of the passive, penetrated partner).⁶⁷ This depiction of John's men is part

61 Cf. Josephus, *J. W.* 1.10-11; Eckstein, "Josephus and Polybius," 189; Jonathan J. Price, *Jerusalem Under Siege: The Collapse of the Jewish State 66-70 C. E.* (Brill's Series in Jewish Studies 3; Leiden: Brill, 1992), 180-81; Gruen, "Polybius and Josephus," 150.

62 Cf. Livy 3.67.11; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 4.16.123. Note also the connection of stasis with unmanliness in Thucydides 3.82.4.

63 Note also *J. W.* 6.211, in which Mary, the cannibal mother, accuses the rebels of womanish weakness.

64 Of course, if the rebels had surrendered, they would be equally unmanly; in *J. W.* 2.237, 400; 5.418, Josephus's attempt to associate the manly protection of women and children with surrender is suspect (not to mention untraditional; see, e.g., Herodotus 7.107, Polybius 1.31.8).

65 The rebels' assassination of manly men contrasts explicitly with Antony, who (despite his enslavement) refused to kill manly men for Cleopatra (*J. W.* 1.361). The rebels are thus likened to Cleopatra, the paragon of womanish wickedness and illicit rule. Cf. Josephus, *J. W.* 1.243; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 5.1-8; Cassius Dio 50.5.1-4, 50.27.1-7.

66 Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.52, 16.21; *Agr.* 31.4, 39.3. Cf. Cassius Dio 49.23.3-4.

67 Michael L. Satlow, " 'They Abused Him Like a Woman': Homoeroticism, Gender Blurring, and the Rabbis in Late Antiquity," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 5 (1994): 1-25, esp. 7-8; von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 146, 155.

of Josephus's general indictment of the lawlessness of the various rebel groups in Jerusalem. More precisely, the effeminacy of John's men should make them unfit for war. In Greco-Roman thought, soft clothing, perfume, and unmanly sexual indulgence turn men into cowards who lack the discipline and endurance demanded by battle.⁶⁸

Josephus's narrative disrupts the expected conclusion. Rather than being unmanned by effeminacy, John's men use their womanish attire and behavior as a disguise to commit murder (*J. W.* 4.563). By the standards of Greco-Roman warfare, the cross-dressing could be identified as simple stratagem for battle (though in this case, the enemy is not the Romans, but other Jews).⁶⁹ For Josephus's Jewish audience, however, cross-dressing is an offense against Deut 22:5, which Josephus incorporates into the laws of war in *Ant.* 4.301.⁷⁰ The rebels essentially break this law twice, first by dressing as women and then, as "women," by taking up the weapons of war.⁷¹

In Greco-Roman warfare, the defeated lose not only their independence, but their manliness. By depicting the rebels in Jerusalem as implicitly and overtly womanish, Josephus focuses the charge of effeminacy on them alone (a strategy he may have borrowed from Polybius 38.3.10). Their undisciplined indulgence, assassination of truly manly men, and failure to protect women and children separate the rebels from manly Jews like Antipater and sons or the defenders of Jotapata. Josephus maintains the manliness of the Jews as a whole at the expense of the emasculation of the rebels (who are, after all, conveniently dead or otherwise disappeared by the time of Josephus's writing).⁷²

68 So Herodotus 1.155; Polybius 8.9.1-12, 11.9.7, 36.15.1-5; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 1.1, 2.15; Livy 39.16.1; Cassius Dio 50.5, 27; Phang, *Roman Military Service*, 95. Polybius claimed the Romans executed (mature) soldiers who took on the passive, penetrated role in sex (6.37.9).

69 Aeneas Tacticus 24.7, 40.4-5; Caesar, *Bell. civ.* 3.9; Frontinus, *Strat.* 3.2.7. Aeneas Tacticus and Frontinus approved of effective trickery (cf. Polybius 4.8.1-4), but others disparaged it as unmanly or dishonorable (Polybius 8.9.2; Livy 5.27.1-8, 7.17.3-5), a judgment claimed by Josephus in *J. W.* 6.20 (cf. *Ant.* 13.108).

70 לָבָשׁ in Deut 22:5 (and the LXX's σκεῦος) could refer to either clothing or weapons. The law is associated with warfare in *Sifre Deut.* 226 and *Tg. Neof.* Deut 22:5.

71 Josephus's effeminate rebels (ἐνθηλυπαθέω; *J. W.* 4.562) also could be condemned under his law against eunuchs (θηλύνω; *Ant.* 4.290-291). Cf. Satlow, "They Abused Him," 8.

72 Von Ehrenkrook, "Effeminacy," 153-57, identifies the emasculation of the rebels in *J. W.* 4.559-563 as an adoption of Roman political invective. The comparison is helpful, though perhaps not as precise as von Ehrenkrook suggests.

2.4 Roman Masculinity in Jewish War

In *J. W.* 7.2, Josephus attributes the defeat of the Jews to Roman ἀνδραγαθία, a result which was never in doubt (cf. 2.380-381).⁷³ But while Josephus does not dispute the superiority of Roman manliness, he does introduce doubts concerning its reality, first by placing military discipline, the primary expression of Roman military masculinity, in tension with acts of reckless bravery; and second, by insinuating that the Romans are unmanly in their treatment of captives and prisoners of war. In effect, these questions concerning Roman manliness advance the masculinity of the recklessly brave Jews, who manfully choose to kill their wives and children rather than allow them to fall into Roman hands.

Discipline is the hallmark of Roman military manliness in *Jewish War* (3.70-109; cf. 2.577-582). The identification of manliness with military discipline reflects Roman tradition.⁷⁴ Discipline included physical hardihood and endurance, along with the avoidance of luxuries like fashionable clothing, wine, and prostitutes.⁷⁵ It also included absolute obedience, a value supported in part by harsh punishment, even execution, for disobedience.⁷⁶ According to Josephus, the organization, training, and obedience of the Roman army repeatedly defeat the inexperience, disorder, and passion of the Jews (3.13-16, 24, 475-479; 5.305-311): a victory of disciplined manliness over reckless courage.

Roman discipline does fail at several points in *Jewish War*.⁷⁷ Three such stories show the importance of obedience over courageous fighting.⁷⁸ In one attack on Gamla, the Romans are pushed back because their courage outpaces

73 Roman dominance in the war of masculinity is a theme of the *gentes devictae*: *J. W.* 2.358, 373, 377, 379, etc.

74 Polybius 1.6.4; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 3.19.3, 5.43.4; Sallus, *Bell. Cat.* 9.1-4; etc. Apart from the Spartans (e.g., Thucydides 2.39.1, 5.9.9), the Greeks did not exult discipline to the extent that the Romans did. See further Eckstein, "Josephus and Polybius," 199-200; Lendon, "Rhetoric of Combat," 306, 308-9; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 195-96; Phang, *Roman Military Service*, 3-5, 92-96.

75 Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 5.8.4; Livy 4.32.3, 5.6.4-5, 30.14.1-3, 40.1.4-5; Onasander, *General* 1.2-8; Tacitus, *Ann.* 3.33; Suetonius, *Aug.* 24.1, *Vesp.* 8.3; Appian, *Bell. civ.* 1.13.113; *Hisp.* 6.14.84-85; etc. The Gauls, Germans, and Britons are also praised for their physical discipline (e.g., Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 1.1, 2.15, 4.1-2; Tacitus, *Agr.* 11.5).

76 Polybius 1.17.11, 6.21.1-3, 6.34.12, 6.37-38; Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 9.4; Livy 4.29.5-6, 8.7.15-19. The demand for obedience conflicted with the identification of manliness with independence from the power of others, an inherent tension in the construction of Roman military manliness; cf. Alston, "Arms and the Man," 209-12, 216-17; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 195-96.

77 See also Mason, "Essenes and Lurking Spartans," 230-32.

78 Cf. Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 7.47.3, 7.52.4.

their discipline. Vespasian himself is nearly captured, saving himself and his men only by resuming military discipline (4.31-35, 43-45). At Jerusalem, a Jewish ruse endangers the Romans who respond despite Titus's orders. Titus threatens to kill his men for their action—even if they had won, they would deserve death for disobeying orders (5.114-120, 123-126). Later in the siege of Jerusalem, Longinus leaves his legion to engage in individual battle with the Jews, an act of bravery that inspires others to do the same; Titus rebukes these men, telling them to “be men” without endangering their lives (5.311-316).

Titus's rebuke reaffirms disciplined obedience as the mark of Roman manliness, but this association proves problematic in *Jewish War*. The manliness of the Romans, who fight from a superior position, is by implication inferior to Jewish displays of manliness in spite of danger at Jotapata (3.268). Josephus's tendentious explanation of the Romans' refusal to accept one Jew's challenge to individual combat makes careful manliness seem more like cowardice (6.169-171). Furthermore, Josephus repeatedly identifies reckless Roman bravery as manly (e.g., 5.41, 287, 340). Titus, in fact, has an un-Roman habit of manly fighting in the front lines (3.483-484, 497-504; 5.340).⁷⁹ Finally, Titus's call for volunteers to attack the wall around Antonia explicitly identifies manliness with reckless, dangerous courage, thus undermining his own exhortation to careful manliness (6.34-50).⁸⁰

The same tension between military discipline and courage in battle is present in Roman historiography.⁸¹ In *Jewish War*, Josephus exploits this tension. First, acts of reckless daring, especially following the example and encouragement of the commander, question the manliness of Roman military discipline. Second, these acts of bravery look more like the manliness of the daring raids

79 Roman generals command from places of safety rather than endangering themselves (and their armies) by fighting: Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 6.8.4; Livy 26.44.8; Onasander, *General* 33.1-3 (though note also Polybius 10.3.5-7). See further Steve Mason, “Figured Speech and Irony in T. Flavius Josephus,” in Edmonsdon et al., eds., *Flavius Josephus and Flavian Rome*, 243-88, esp. 260-66; James S. McLaren, “Josephus on Titus: The Vanquished Writing About the Victor,” in *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond* (ed. Joseph Sievers and Gaia Lembi; JSJSup 104; Leiden: Brill, 2005), 279-95, esp. 285-87.

80 The distinction between *J. W.* 5.311-316 and 6.34-50 in part rests on Titus's own orders; cf. McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 204.

81 E.g., Polybius 3.1-6.11, 10.3.7; Caesar, *Bell. Gall.* 3.5.2-3, 3.19.3, 6.40.5-8, 7.47.3-52.4; Livy 8.7.15-19; Lendon, “Rhetoric of Combat,” 308-9; Lendon, *Soldiers and Ghosts*, 235; Simon James, “Soldiers and Civilians: Identity and Interaction in Roman Britain,” in *Britons and Romans: Advancing an Archaeological Agenda* (ed. Simon James and Martin Millett; CBA Research Report 125; York: Council for British Archaeology, 2001), 77-89, esp. 78-79; McDonnell, *Roman Manliness*, 303-4.

and vigorous fighting of the Jews. By presenting the Romans' reckless courage as manly, Josephus legitimates this form of manliness for the Jews.

In addition to complicating the identification of manliness with military discipline, Josephus also critiques Roman masculinity by questioning their treatment of their subjects and captives. Before the revolt, the mistreatment and abuse of the Jews by Pilate, Florus, and other officials mark Roman rule as brutal and inhuman (*J. W.* 2.169-177, 224-227, 277-279, 307, etc.). The injustices of Roman rule do offer some justification to the revolt (a conclusion which is carefully not drawn by Josephus; cf. 2.349-354).⁸² Adding to this critique, various Roman victories are accompanied by the merciless slaughter of women, children, and men (3.110, 132-134; 6.404-406), and captives can anticipate torture, painful deaths for the victors' entertainment, rape, and enslavement (7.23-24, 118, 373-385, etc.). The "manliness" of surrender for the sake of women and children and of murder and suicide at Masada indicts the Roman treatment of captives as un-masculine (2.237; 5.418; 7.323, 326, 389).⁸³

3 Josephus's Recovery of Jewish Manliness

Among other difficulties, following the First Jewish Revolt the Jews would be perceived by the Romans as effeminate and slavish for rebelling in the first place, and even more for being defeated. In *Jewish War*, Josephus addresses this particular problem by presenting the Jews as a whole as honorably masculine and feminine.⁸⁴ The women remain in their proper sphere (the home), displaying excessively womanish cowardice and relying on the protection of their men. The men in turn prove themselves manly by daring raids, courageous fighting, and willingness to die rather than suffer defeat.

82 Cf. Thucydides 1.122.4; Sallust, *Bell. Cat.* 20.2; Tacitus, *Agr.* 15.1-3, 31.4; *Ann.* 14.35; Eric Adler, "Boudica's Speeches in Tacitus and Dio," *Classical World* 101 (2008): 173-95, esp. 180-83; Gruen, "Polybius and Josephus," 152-56; Greg Woolf, "Provincial Revolts in the Roman Empire," in Popović, ed., *The Jewish Revolt Against Rome*, 27-44, esp. 35-38.

83 Cf. Polybius 1.31.8; Tacitus, *Agr.* 32.1; Gruen, "Polybius and Josephus," 157-58. Manliness at Masada may not be true manliness in Josephus's estimation, but this ambiguity does not make the unmanliness of the Romans any less.

84 If Josephus's audience included Romans (so, e.g., Steve Mason, "Of Audience and Meaning: Reading Josephus' *Bellum Judaicum* in the Context of a Flavian Audience," in Sievers and Lembi, eds., *Josephus and Jewish History in Flavian Rome and Beyond*, 71-100, esp. 73, 91-96), this characterization could redeem the Jews in Roman opinion; if the audience was limited to other Jews (e.g., Curran, "Flavius Josephus," 75-83), this characterization could restore their own self-respect.

Josephus claims that the Jewish manliness of passionate fighting is inferior to the Roman manliness of military discipline. However, he undermines his own insistence on disciplined Roman masculinity with examples of reckless bravery exhibited by the soldiers and their commander, Titus. The Romans' reckless daring both legitimates Jewish displays of masculinity and makes Roman masculinity ambiguous and internally conflicted. The implication of unmanliness in the Roman treatment of their subjects and captives further affirms the masculine courage of the Jews who choose death over the dishonor of captivity.

In the first book of *Jewish War*, the manliness of the Jews is represented by Antipater and his sons who are, as loyal supporters of Roman rule, unproblematic examples of Jewish masculinity. Their manliness is echoed throughout *Jewish War*. Like Antipater and Herod the Great, General Josephus is praised by the (future) emperor for his manliness (1.193, 200, 322; 3.347-348); like Antipater, Niger of Perea bears the signs of manliness in the battle scars on his body (1.193, 197; 4.360); like Phasael and Joseph, the defenders of Jotapata and Masada die with honor rather than accepting an ignominious captivity (1.271, 324; 3.355-360, 384-390; 7.383-388). By means of these comparisons, Josephus infuses his narrative of the revolt with the honorable manliness of Antipater and sons.

The manly loyalty of Antipater and sons and the manly (albeit reckless) courage of the Jews as a whole contrast sharply with the effeminacy of the rebels. Their failure to protect women and children, their cowardice, and their cross-dressing and sexual transgression make them exemplars of effeminacy. Josephus's characterization of the rebels makes them scapegoats for the emasculation of defeat. The Jews as a whole can be honorably masculine despite their defeat because of the overt effeminacy of the rebel leaders and their followers.

Josephus develops a fuller picture of Jewish masculinity in his later writings. In *Jewish Antiquities*, the Jews are thoroughly manly in battle (3.58, 5.300, 6.80, 7.9, 12.339, etc.); the stories of their courageous, vigorous fighting identify the manly Jews of *Jewish War* as true heirs of ancestral masculinity. Reflecting the association of manliness with virtue in the Septuagint and in Roman tradition, military manliness in *Antiquities* incorporates virtue and piety (e.g., 7.338, 390; 8.315).⁸⁵ Josephus places a particularly Jewish twist on this virtuous masculinity by attributing it to the influence of the law of Moses (cf. 4.143-154). Obedience to the law, in fact, makes the Jews more manly than the warriors of

85 Cf. Prov 10:4, 21:30 LXX; Wis 8:7; 1 Macc 2:64; and above, note 13. See also Moore and Anderson, "Taking It Like a Man," 252-53.

other nations because the law teaches self-control (*Ag. Ap.* 2.234-235)—thus likening Jewish masculinity to Roman military discipline (and incidentally deepening the divide of the effeminate rebels from true Jewish manliness).⁸⁶

According to *Ant.* 4.290-291 and 301, the law prohibits the effeminacy of men and the masculinity of women. With respect to the vocabulary of gender, the only womanish men and masculine women in *Antiquities* are, in fact, Roman: Gaius, Chaerea, and Quintilia (*Ant.* 19.29-30, 34-35).⁸⁷ Quintilia's manly courage is unusual, but not wrong by Roman standards.⁸⁸ Her manliness provides an effective contrast to Gaius's dishonorable effeminacy. The emperor's assumption of women's clothing and a womanish appearance links him with the effeminate followers of John of Gischala, a reminder to Josephus's readers that the Jews are not the only ones who can be accused of gender transgression.

The conclusion of the story of Gaius and Chaerea offers a second connection with the rebellious Jews. Despite being emasculated in an imperial bullying campaign (*Ant.* 19.29-30), Chaerea proves himself to be manly by assassinating Gaius. The injustices perpetuated by Gaius make the overthrow of his reign an act of virtuous masculinity (17, 38-43, 57; cf. 167-184).⁸⁹ Revolutionaries, it seems, are not always slavish and effeminate (a conclusion also allowed by Tacitus's narratives of the rebellions in Britain; *Agr.* 15, 31-32; *Ann.* 14.35).⁹⁰ By extension, perhaps the Jews who rebelled against Roman rule in Palestine, a rule marked according to *Jewish War* by injustice and violence, were enacting manliness after all.

In *Jewish War*, the Jews are manly by inference, through comparison with the Romans and contrast with the women and effeminate rebels. Rereading *Jewish War* through the lens of *Jewish Antiquities* emphasizes the courageous

86 Cf. John M. G. Barclay, *Flavius Josephus: Translation and Commentary, Volume 10: Against Apion* (Leiden: Brill, 2007), 366.

87 See also *Ant.* 13.108. Josephus's version of the story of Deborah and Barak in *Ant.* 5.189-209, where we might expect reference to womanish men and masculine women, omits the vocabulary of gender (despite the presence of this language in the immediate context; 5.184, 188, and 300).

88 Livy 2.13.6-11; Tacitus, *Ann.* 1.57, 69; *Germ.* 18; Appian, *Hann.* 7.5.29. See further Jeremy McInerney, "Plutarch's Manly Women," in *Andreia: Studies in Manliness and Courage in Classical Antiquity* (ed. Ralph M. Rosen and Ineke Sluiter; Mnemosyne Supplements 238; Leiden: Brill, 2003), 319-44, esp. 320-23; Wilcox, "Exemplary Grief," 73-74.

89 It is largely agreed that Josephus is dependent on Roman sources for this story, though the precise source is unknown (cf. Feldman, *Josephus's Interpretation*, 172). Whether the references to manliness and effeminacy come from Josephus's sources or not, their presence in *Ant.* 19 allows comparison with the presentation of the revolt in *Jewish War*.

90 Cf. Adler, "Boudica's Speeches," 177, 180-83.

manliness of the Jews in battle and in their willingness to die rather than surrender or suffer defeat. Moreover, according to *Antiquities* and *Against Apion*, the Jews' obedience to the law in everyday life provides a training in manliness that equals the Roman military discipline so praised in *Jewish War*. Finally, the manliness of the overthrow of Gaius admits the possibility of manliness to the Jewish revolt against Roman injustices. The Jews can be manly despite their defeated rebellion.