Marketing Identities

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By 1914, *Ost und West*’s promotion of Jewish ethnicity had become highly sophisticated. The stereotypes of Jews that Winz and his colleagues developed to appeal to both Jewish intellectuals and middle-class Jewish women showed a thorough understanding of what shaped Jewish identity in Imperial Germany. In their flexible approach to stereotyping, the editors of *Ost und West* played upon the fears and desires associated with the Eastern-traditional and Western-enlightened identities of their audiences. Yet one audience of Jewish readers in Germany seemed to elude *Ost und West* in its first decade or so: middle-class men. The average German-Jewish man was different from his wife, his sisters, and his daughters in terms of socialization and self-image. He was also different from his brothers and sons in the German-Jewish intelligentsia who seemed intent on using their newfound Jewish nationalism to distance themselves from him.

To interest the average German-Jewish *Bildungsbürger* (“educated middle-class man”) or *Besitzbürger* (“property-holding middle-class man”) in Jewish ethnicity, *Ost und West* would be compelled to refine its approach once again. But why were German-Jewish men so difficult to attract during the first years of the journal? Their disinterest had, in fact, many sources. First, these individuals had the most to lose by associating themselves with Jewish nationalism. As status-conscious as some of their wives, these men identified with the German nation and the *Mittelstand* (middle class),1 and
they found it difficult to act demonstratively Jewish. Second, they worked in the public sphere, whereas Jewish women stayed largely at home and the Jewish literati inhabited the coffeehouses. German-Jewish men were also made painfully aware that they were overrepresented in business, banking, and the professions. Third, the quintessential Westjude was uncomfortable, at times even unfriendly, in the presence of Ostjuden. Though there always had been highly acculturated male readers of Ost und West, it would require something special to interest them in Eastern Jewish identity.

It took a cataclysmic event to transform middle-class Jewish men into a significant audience of Ost und West. That event was World War I, an acknowledged watershed both in modern German-Jewish history and in the history of the magazine. For most Jews, the war meant an end to the relative security of the Kaiserreich and the beginning of more open antisemitism. For Jewish men, it meant an unrelenting attack on their fitness (Tauglichkeit) for military service, culminating in attempts by antisemites to deny the extent of Jewish participation in the war. The most infamous of these measures was the October 1916 order for a census of Jewish soldiers in the Prussian military, the so-called Judenzählung. Whereas Ost und West’s primary concern before the war was with intellectuals and middle-class Jewish women, its primary concern between 1914 and 1918 was with older middle-class Jewish men. Knowing how loyal most German-Jewish men were to the liberal, anti-Zionist Centralverein deutscher Staatsbürger jüdischen Glaubens (Central Association of German Citizens of the Jewish Faith), Ost und West likened anti-German sentiment to antisemitism when the war broke out, projecting onto the Entente powers images of cowardice, Germanophobia, and self-hatred that antisemites had repeatedly associated with Jewish men.

German-Jewish Bürger, for all their acculturation, had never completely abandoned the Jewish religion. By no means fully secularized, many of these men retained a modicum of observance into the twentieth century. Since most still had some knowledge of Judaism, their religious allegiances were fair game for an enterprising journal such as Ost und West. For this reason, stereotypes of nonobservant Jews—“religious” self-haters—figured as prominently in wartime as they had previously in the magazine. These “old” images were ingeniously woven into a prowar stance in the magazine’s first series of war-related editorials in the autumn of 1914. Yet, soon thereafter, Ost und West suppressed negative images of the Jew as part of the fight against wartime antisemitism. In its longest-running serialized novella ever, Am Tage des Gerichts [On the Day of Judgment] by Binjamin Segel (December 1915, January–February 1916, March–April 1916, May–June 1916), Ost und West featured a pious Eastern Jew in prewar Poland. Even though he is morally flawed, this Jew’s faults are overshadowed by those of his hostile foil, a rapacious East European antisemite. As we shall see, this non-Jewish villain embodies both charges associated with the Judenzählung:
that Jews profited from the war and that they were unsoldierly. Several of Segel's novellas and editorials, which literally filled the pages of Ost und West during the war, were published in special editions for German-Jewish soldiers at the front. The Eastern Jewish editors of the magazine thus came to the aid of their Western Jewish brethren in their hour of need, as they were under attack from antisemites. In a sense, this reversed the customary West-to-East movement of relief.

Ost und West's ideal of ethnic Jewish identity thus began to look more attractive as Western Jewish identity came to look more illusory. Antidefamation become the magazine's first priority after 1915, as Jew haters attacked all Jews in Germany. The apologetics moved into high gear when Polish Jews were forced to enter the Reich as laborers in the last months of the war. Yet the need to combat Western antisemitism also strengthened the case of Jewish nationalism. By reaching out to German-Jewish males in a wartime atmosphere demanding the utmost conformity, Ost und West was merely appealing to a new market; it was not changing its message of pan-Jewishness. Because World War I eventually signaled the failure of Jewish acculturation in Germany, Jewish middle-class men were ready to take a second look at Ost und West and its message of ethnic Jewish identity.

Prior to 1914, the potential male Jewish audience of Ost und West was about 300,000 (nearly 25 percent of those being in Berlin). In comparison with non-Jewish men, these German Jews were fairly homogeneous in occupation (trade and commerce), age (older), class (overwhelmingly middle), and place of residence (urban). Compared to the Jewish male educated class, most Jewish (propertied) men in Germany were more secure, socially and financially. They were similar to their middle-class female counterparts in this respect; at the same time, gender roles divided bourgeois men from bourgeois women. Thus, even though wealthy Jewish women were periodically caricatured in Simplicissimus and Fliegende Blätter, male German Jews were always the principal targets of ridicule. They were even the butt of criticism in Ost und West since they most closely resembled the parvenus satirized in the journal. Self-conscious about their wealth and status, not to speak of their Jewishness, some of these men strove to escape the stereotype of the Jewish social climber.

This stereotype of the German-Jewish parvenu is so powerful that it continues to slant our perspective in the post-Holocaust era, and historians have labored in vain to redress negative images of middle-class Jewish men. (The cliché of the yekke—the upright, jacket-wearing, foolish German Jew—is alive and well in Israel half a century after World War II.) The Jews of Germany are invariably represented as prototypical assimilators: wealthy, self-satisfied, and self-deluding. As opposed to the honored writers and thinkers—the Einsteins, Kafka, and Benjamins—of German Jewry, the average Jewish Bürger seem best remembered for making money, for
intermarrying, and for passively accepting German culture. In fact, they are typically faulted for not having foreseen the “inevitable” rise of Nazism. These misconceptions demand correction. In the last fifteen years, a number of historians have presented evidence of German-Jewish dissimulation. By no means completely Germanized or self-hating, many German-Jewish men were fairly devout. They also married Jewish women in greater proportion than late-twentieth-century American-Jewish males do. Just because many of them were integrated and well-to-do did not mean that they—consciously or unconsciously—excluded all forms of Jewish culture from their lives. They still socialized, by and large, with other Jews, and many wrote of “feeling” Jewish and of sharing in a community of fate (Schicksalsgemeinschaft).

One example of how Jewish men “assimilated” to German society is cited repeatedly: their willingness to fight for the Kaiserreich in World War I. Jewish support for the war, from pamphlets to poetry, also has led many today to see these Jews as German lackeys. The idea that Jews became even more Germanized through the war experience can be found in one of the most recent overviews of Wilhelminian Jewry:

The war provided a situation in which Jews, too, could work in highly visible positions for the common cause. Like most Germans, Jews believed that their fatherland was in grave danger and that the fight against “czarism” was a righteous one. The war also seemed to offer them the opportunity to feel that they belonged; they seemed to be part of a nation under siege, working together with other Germans for a common cause. Moreover, their labor might also convince the most obdurate antisemite of their honesty and generosity. This standard account suggests that for Jews in the Kaiserreich, the early months of the war symbolized “one brief shining moment” in German-Jewish history. August 1914 seemed to present a window of opportunity in which Jewish Germans might demonstrate that they did not harbor dual allegiances, that they did not collude with the enemy, that they did not profit from wars, and that they did not shirk military service.

If this window of opportunity ever truly existed, however, it was soon closed shut. The charge that Jewish citizens were not contributing their part to the war effort was heard in the highest echelons of the German state and military. This allegation culminated in the 1916 Judenzählung (“Jewish census”). Although this statistical survey confirmed the fact that Jewish males volunteered and died in numbers roughly proportional to their non-Jewish compatriots, it was instigated by anti-Jewish sentiment. For Jewish contemporaries, the Judenzählung came to represent a major break in German-Jewish history, marking a renewal of the antisemitism in Germany that led to National Socialism and the Holocaust. Yet, strangely, some historians in the post-Holocaust era discern an overwhelming pro-German euphoria on the part of Wilhelminian Jews at the outset of the
war. What these historians omit is that the "spirit of 1914" required Jews to conform to a homogenized ideal of Germany identity and thus to repress any competing affiliations. The conventional emphasis on German-Jewish war zeal hides the conscious and unconscious pressures to which Jews were subjected in Imperial Germany and ignores their attempts to resist German monoculturalism. Moreover, Jewish sensitivity to the Germanophobia of the Reich's enemies, far from being a sign of "Jewish antisemitism," points to an emerging "ethnic" Jewish identity among male Jews who lived in and/or served Imperial Germany.

The cliché about German-Jewish war enthusiasm merits reexamination. Despite the fact that most German Jews loyally identified with Imperial war aims in August 1914, the kaiser's declaration of a "civic truce" (or Burgfrieden) was violated almost immediately. As illustrated in diaries, letters, and publications such as Ost und West, World War I was not a time for open displays of Jewishness. According to the few surviving testimonies of military life, Jewish fighting men experienced a range of difficulties linked to their Jewishness. These ranged from physical violence to subtle exclusion and mental harassment. With good reason, many Jewish soldiers preferred to keep their Jewishness a secret. Others, however, showed pride in being Jewish.

Many a Jew considered it a religious duty to defend the fatherland and found ways to reconcile his belief with Jewish values. But for the more Orthodox among the German-Jewish bourgeoisie, life at the front was difficult. Against considerable odds, a number managed to carry out the required rituals. Even among nonobservant soldiers, "the gravity of the war situation seemed to promote religious seriousness and religious conscientiousness." Homesickness and alienation were not uncommon, and many a Jew returned home after the war "more religious and 'more Jewish'" than before. Much of the literature directed at the Jewish soldier sought to ease his separation from family and community.

Whereas Jews had socialized predominantly with other Jews before the war, they were now thrown together for an extended time with non-Jews in the field. Some individuals, such as Julius Marx, censured friendliness between Jewish soldiers in public. His attitude ultimately expressed a preference for respectability, that Jewishness be kept under wraps. At the same time, Marx details in his memoir how Jews distinguished themselves in battle. (His coreligionists are, in fact, so remarkable and courageous in his account that one begins to doubt the existence of less-than-perfect Jewish soldiers.)

For Jewish antidefamation leagues (Abwehrorganisationen) such as the Centralverein, the war represented an opportunity to be proven worthy, to achieve full equality before the law for Jews. Zionists in Germany, by being among the first to volunteer for the war, had more in common with their enemies at the Centralverein than they wished to admit. Like the average
German-Jewish man who had little interest in settling in Palestine, most Western Zionists were financially secure and more or less satisfied with life in the *Kaiserreich.*

But in an unexpected paradox of World War I, antisemitism made German Jews more sensitive to their common ethnic heritage. Before the war, Jewish men in the *Kaiserreich* had more acute fears than being branded ignorant of Jewish learning and culture. In the life-and-death drama of battle, the German-Jewish soldier was more aware of his Jewishness than ever before. In addition, he had to live with the anxiety that his superiors or the troops he commanded might accuse him of cowardice or his family of war profiteering. The situation was similar on the homefront, where the pressure of Jew hatred pointed more and more Jews in the direction of Jewish nationalism. The Orthodox community in Germany, impressed by the ethnic-national sentiments of pious Jews from the East, passed its most Zionist resolution ever at a convention in 1918. Wartime antisemitism was thus an effective goad to Jewish nationalism, and *Ost und West* seized upon the opportunity to attack it. Contrary to most historiography, the outbreak of war did not bring Germans and Jews any nearer to each other than they already were.

One stereotype central to any discussion of Jewish identity in Germany is the image of the Jew as weak and unmanly. The notion that Jews might be physically inferior can be traced back to the Enlightenment. As George Mosse (and others) have argued, the origins of "respectability" were closely linked to a sublimated ideal of male sexuality in which the naked body is interpreted as a symbolic, spiritual vessel. In the nineteenth century, respectability became the prevailing ideology of both the German and the German-Jewish middle classes, providing a pretext for excluding Eastern Jews as unmasculine. As a distancing mechanism, then, Western Jews "re-pudiated[d] the stereotype of the ghetto Jew of the past who through his appearance and behavior seemed to deny that ideal of manliness basic to respectability, and therefore to the process of Jewish assimilation." The male body and force of character played critical roles in *Ost und West*'s appeals to German-Jewish *Bürger.*

By the onset of the twentieth century, virile strength had become the sine qua non of Western-style nationalisms, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Discourse in the Jewish nationalist *Ost und West* could also be rigidly masculinist, a type of verbal combat. Jewish Zionists often felt compelled to prove that they were more martial than Jewish liberals, if only in their rhetoric. In the same period, Jewish nationalist students were demanding *Satisfaktion* in duels and showing prowess in sport. By 1914, Jewish gymnastics (*Turnen*) and and similar activities had become more mainstream. Most of the luminaries of the Democratic Faction and the *jungjudische Bewegung* now had assumed positions of responsibility in the Jewish community. Like their elders, nearly all Jewish young men
went to war or supported Germany’s war aims. In a major political shift, they reconciled with the establishment in the official Jewish communities (Gemeinden) so that Zionists and liberals worked together to some extent during the war.

In response to the prevailing stereotype of the Jew as a faint-hearted weakling, German Jews of all persuasions created fantasies of themselves as manly. The Jewish body once again served as a receptacle of values for both its defenders and its detractors. Among the former, influenced by Max Nordau’s idea of “Jewish muscularity” (Muskeljudentum), a cult of Hebrew prowess evolved:

The cult of the tough Jew as an alternative to Jewish timidity and gentleness rests on ideals of “masculine beauty,” health, and normalcy that are conceived and articulated as if their validity were obvious and natural. They have, in other words, internalized unquestioningly the physical and psychological ideals of their respective dominant cultures. In doing so they forget that, far from being self-evident cultural universals, those ideals are predicated on a series of exclusions and erasures.

At the turn of the century, tough Western Jewish nationalists tended to denigrate the Eastern Jewish body. This does not mean that they were anti-semites or that they—as Paul Breines argues above—“internalized unquestioningly” the Western ideal of masculinity. Yet Ost und West, though it did not denigrate the body of the Ostjude, was not prepared to submit the Eastern Jewish scholar as a masculine ideal based on intellect rather than force.

In fact, any search for new models of Jewish masculinity stopped abruptly in August 1914. At this time, the common element in Ost und West’s defense of Jewish manhood became the denigration of weak men, particularly those who were not Jewish. The magazine did not counter the images of weak Jewish males through stereotypes rooted in traditional Eastern or enlightened Western Judaism. Instead, for the first time after 1914, the journal’s stereotypes of masculinity were based on criteria that were more genuinely ethnic or pan-Jewish.

Prior to World War I, Ost und West consistently had sought to be neutral in scholarship and nonpartisan in politics in its quest to be the leading ethnic Jewish magazine in Europe. This impartiality was in keeping with its self-image as popularized “Science of Judaism,” as pan-Jewish Wissenschaft des Judentums of Eastern Jewish paternity. Such a scholarly approach to religion was brought to bear on Ost und West’s first war editorial, “Der Krieg als Lehrmeister” [The War as Teacher] (September–December 1914). Though unsigned, the essay was written by Binjamin Segel and managed to appeal to the residual Judaism of middle-class Jewish men at the same time as it affirmed the German cause. Since objectivity in nineteenth-century Western Europe had come to be associated with virility, it was important to the men of Ost und West—now more than ever—that they
project a image of being in control. Ost und West presented itself as above the fray to defuse potential conflicts between competing ideals of German and Jewish manhood.

For all its pretensions to impartiality, the journal’s rejoinders to the war mobilization of August 1914 were almost unanimously pro-German. Ost und West presented itself as above the fray to defuse potential conflicts between competing ideals of German and Jewish manhood.

For example, “Der Krieg als Lehrmeister”—which was almost certainly uncensored—made no mention of Winz’s expulsion from the Kaiserreich in the first days of conflict. Winz, like other Russian Jews residing in Germany, had never been granted citizenship and was thus subject to deportation. Because Segel was an Austrian national, he was permitted to stay in Berlin, where, in place of Winz, he presumably helped carry out much of the day-to-day work of publishing Ost und West. Winz, then, spent much of the war in Copenhagen, and the nature of his activities there is shrouded in mystery; he probably worked for the Zionist office and for the German consulate as the Jewish affairs adviser, and possibly even for German intelligence. Winz was also permitted to return to Germany to publish the first wartime issue of Ost und West, a mission having the endorsement of German officials. Wars make strange bedfellows, but neither the Alliance Israelite Universelle nor other anti-German Jews ever forgave Winz for siding officially with the Kaiserreich.

Even though Winz aligned himself with Germany, the Deutschtum of Ost und West diverged in important respects from the nationalism of other German-Jewish periodicals in 1914. The Liberal-Jewish press and the Zionist press called on German-Jewish males—regardless of whether they resided in the Palatinate or in Palestine—to sacrifice their lives for the fatherland. In contrast, Ost und West delivered a relatively muted, if still patriotic, response in December 1914. Four months into the war, Winz and his colleagues were aware of growing antisemitism in the German ranks. But the journal called for objectivity rather than oversensitivity in counteracting the charge of dual loyalty. Anti-Jewish sentiment was to be brushed off and not answered with hatred, lest Jews be viewed as malicious or negative (and thus in violation of the Kaiser’s Burgfrieden). To promote this agenda in “Der Krieg als Lehrmeister,” Segel recycled an old promotional strategy by projecting conventional stereotypes of Jews as spiteful and treacherous onto both Jewish and non-Jewish groups. First and foremost among Segel’s perceived “others” are the hate-filled, pathological enemies of Germany in the war; they embody the stereotype of the vengeful Jew. The second group he singles out is made up of the disloyal men of German ancestry in the enemy camp. These individuals—all non-Jews—are described as self-hating apostates. Segel then turns the tables by projecting the stereotype of the vindictive renegade not onto Eastern Jews but rather onto a third group: Western Jewish apostates.

One stereotype Segel projects onto the “others” is that of the “corrupt and corrupting” discourse of the Jews. If Sander Gilman’s theory is correct,
fin-de-siècle Jews such as Segel who used language to shape their identity internalized this stereotype and saw themselves as flawed. In turn, they sought to rid themselves of the taint of Jewishness in their writing by displaying firm command of the German language and of the rational discourse of Wissenschaft ("science" or "scholarship"). Segel's editorial, while difficult to fit into Gilman's project, does show a preference for objectivity over partisanship and hence a need to demonstrate the fitness not only of the Jewish male body but also of "Jewish discourse." In order to retain control over his Jewish discourse, Segel had to resolve the tension inherent in being both the observer and the observed. Although Segel was a Galician Jewish folklorist and ethnographer, his war editorials revealed his inability "objectively" to master ethnological discourse about the Jew. In striving to be a man of science (a Wissenschaftler), he also distanced himself from a related fiction about the Jews, namely that Jewish journalism was imitative, polemical, and devoid of beauty. To contain this Jewish discourse, a Jewish publicist such as Segel had to avoid extremes of emotion. If he were chauvinistically pro-German, he would be branded as opportunistic; if he were too Eastern Jewish, he would be labeled hysterical or too subjective.

In "Vom grundlosen Haß" (Of Unfounded Hatred), the first of three sections of "Der Krieg als Lehremeister," Segel refutes the myth that Jews are deranged by "Christian hatred." Still, only after six hundred words and a page turn does it emerge who hates whom and whose side Ost und West will be taking in the war. The first sentences are deliberately vague: "A tidal wave of blood-red, fire-scouring, wildly roaring hatred has stunned the world. It seems to have burst out of infernal depths. It is as deep as the ocean, and rolls oppressively like smelt metal over the civilized [gesittete] Earth, destroying all the seeds of refined [edel] culture, smothering all stirrings of humane feeling" (625; emphasis added). While the allusions to "culture" and "civilization" betray Ost und West's pro-German stance, Segel's advocacy of cultured respectability here is implicitly a defense against the image of the vindictive, corrupted Shylockian Jew. As if to compensate for this anti-Jewish image, Segel now takes an ethnological approach to hatred, in effect delivering a popularized lecture on the formation of stereotypes: "Hatred is a natural, human affect. It can be refined if it emanates from anger, the anger over a wrong suffered, an undeserved humiliation... . Hatred is pathological (krankhaft) if it is unfounded (grundlos), hatred for the sake of hatred, barren, subversive, and festering" (626). Here Segel develops a theory of affects and presents himself as a psychoanalyst and physician of the spirit. He thus regards himself as competent to distinguish between pathological and nonpathological hatred. Germany's hatred toward its enemies is seen as rational, even healthy; its foes, by contrast, are unscientific and therefore diseased.

Antisemitism as a form of unjustified hatred is so far missing from the editorial, as if it were a taboo topic. Whereas many German Jews
by December 1914 already were comparing the situation of the outcast Reich to the pariah status of the Jews, Segel makes no explicit analogy between antisemitism and anti-Germanism until another thousand words into the argument. Instead, he begins by deriving the distinction between pathological and nonpathological hatred from the Jewish ethical tradition. So imperative is it to debunk the myth that Jews resent Christians that Segel actually quotes the Hebrew term for “groundless hatred” (sin’at hinnam) in the original Hebrew script and concludes that “the hatred towards Germany is deeply related to antisemitism” (629). Such a strategy, in fact, was calculated to interest German-Jewish men in ethnic Jewish identity. At the same time, it was a response to the growing controversy over the popular “Haßgesang auf England” (Hate-Hymn for England) by Ernst Lissauer (1882–1937), a German Jew. While the antisemite Houston Stewart Chamberlain (1855–1927) maintained that only a Jew could have composed such a song (thereby breaking his promised wartime silence on the so-called Judenfrage), Segel, in a later editorial—“Erziehung zum Haß” (Education in Hatred) (January–May 1915)—summarized interviews with sixty German-Jewish personalities, all of whom rejected Lissauer’s song of hatred as un-Jewish.49

Three pages into “Der Krieg als Lehrmeister,” Segel still has not referred directly to the Jews. He has simply appealed to readers to understand the mechanisms of hatred. By equating anti-Germanism and antisemitism in the last passage, Segel puts off the crucial issue of Jewish masculinity yet again. Since addressing this topic would call his own Jewish masculinity into question, he is careful to focus on anti-German stereotypes as much as possible: (1) the representation of Germans as overly industrious and driven to succeed (626, 628); (2) the representation of Germans as uncivilized and without manners (628); and (3) the representation of Germans as “fetid men” (stinkende Männer), a cliché promulgated by the Belgians (628). Upon reexamination, however, these stereotypes reveal more than coincidental affinities with anti-Jewish stereotypes. The final representation, in fact, evokes the canard of the foetor judaicus, the reputed stench of the Jew.

This pattern, whereby stereotypes of the Germans turn out to be stereotypes of the Jews, continues into the second part of Segel’s editorial, titled “Die Rassenlehre und der Krieg.” Here Segel unmasks the pseudoscience of “race,” especially as practiced by Chamberlain. The war, for Segel, has brought forth little evidence of “Aryan” solidarity. If anything, conflicts are rampant within the ranks of the so-called master race, and Segel singles out disloyal men of German ancestry, rendering these individuals self-haters while continuing to ignore the idea of Jewish self-hatred. To this end, he harps on Germans who must struggle with competing allegiances. Tsar Nicholas, for example, becomes the worst example of self-renunciation. Married to a German and himself a blood relative of German royalty,
he exemplifies pathological hatred that has been transformed into self-hatred. Other self-hating Germans Segel cites include men from the neutral countries as well as British and Russian envoys to the Central Powers.

By delaying any mention of Jewish soldiers until the editorial’s third segment, entitled “Die Juden als Krieger,” Segel rescues Jewish males from the scourge of apostasy. Even though the defense of Jewish masculinity, from swordsmanship to scholarship, forms the rationale for the entire editorial, Segel’s defense of Jewish masculinity is still understated. At first, he argues that peace is the true measure of a people’s moral mettle. This disclaimer involves a view of Jewish manhood that stresses mind over muscle, a view held by the herald of Muskeljudejituvi, Nordau.50 Having repudiated brute force in this way, Segel now can view the war as a unique historical event that tests a people’s capacity for bravery, discipline, organization, sacrifice, and physical performance (635). His catalogue of Jewish war heroes, from the Bible and Bar Kochba to the Befreiungskriege (“Wars of Liberation”) and the Franco-Prussian war, spans an entire page.

It should be noted, however, that these arguments applied to Jews who were fighting on both sides of the conflict. If Jews were also in the enemy armies, how could Segel applaud their heroic attacks on Germans and still be a German (or Austro-Hungarian) patriot? The possibility of Jewish disloyalty is addressed in a fashion appropriate to a Jewish man of the quill. After consistently overlooking Jewish self-hatred, Segel finally lets the self-hating Jews out of the closet, admitting most of the way through his seven-page essay that men of German descent are not alone in being renegades. Instead of citing actual Jewish soldier-traitors, however, he picks on a favorite target, Maximilian Harden (1861–1927), publisher and editor of Die Zukunft. Harden, a convert to Christianity, once declared that no Aryan would ever deign to obey a Jewish soldier. Segel ridicules him as having “never smelled gunpowder” (639).51 But the attack on Harden ultimately fails; Segel is, after all, accusing a fellow journalist of Jewish origin of being self-hating. That all of this is too close for comfort is suggested in Segel’s curious remark that the legend of Jewish physical inferiority found in novels and humor magazines would soon disappear, and he notes optimistically: “Particularly in the East, the traditional humble behavior [Haltung] of lower-class Jews toward the ‘gentleman’ and representative of armed power will give way to a dignified, fearless, more composed demeanor” (640). For Segel, this Jewish attitude of humility (which resembles the Eastern Jewish male style) will be redeemed by the “blood sacrifices” (Blutopfer) of thousands of European Jewish warriors.52

Such a pan-Jewish attitude suggests, quite implausibly, that Jews are incapable of betraying other Jews. Segel anticipates this objection in an earlier comment by suggesting that writers, not warriors, betray themselves and their nations. Arguing that the soldiers of 1914 do not hate in a pathological manner, Segel (like the profoundly un-Jewish Ernst Jünger
a few years later) describes these men of valor as feeling emotion, even respect, for the courage of the enemy. While exonerating the 600,000 Jewish fighters involved in this greater European struggle, the editorial goes on to indict the sneaky civilian snipers of the pen, who are said to be conducting the discursive equivalent of ritual murder. These franc-tireurs are likened to the pogromists who in autumn 1914 were cutting off Jewish “eyes, ears, hands, and legs” (627). Using the same reasoning, Segel, in a signed article following the editorial—“Eine Verirrung (Zangwill als Anwalt Rußlands)” (September–December 1914)—denounces the British-Jewish writer Israel Zangwill, whom he links with the franc-tireurs of the pen. Alleging that Zangwill has never seen a pogrom with his own eyes, Segel also depicts him as a self-hating Western Jew who is unable to read Yiddish and who has no understanding of Jewish history or Jewish thought (646). Worst of all, Zangwill has betrayed his father, the Eastern Jewish proletarian who emigrated from Russia, by siding with the Tsar in World War I. By characterizing his more successful Jewish colleague as a renegade, Segel comes full circle and promotes a stereotype that was familiar to readers of Ost und West: that of the Western Jewish parvenu. By the middle of the first wartime issue of the journal, Segel has thus rendered nearly everyone—the Germans, the English, the Russians, and the Western Jews—as self-hating and duplicitous. Excluded are the Russian Jews, such as Winz, and the Galician Jews, such as Segel himself, who produced Ost und West.

The inner conflicts experienced by warriors of the pen in 1914 were not limited to Jewish war publicists such as Segel, Harden, or Zangwill. But while Segel’s relentless search for the self-hating “other” suggests the psychological pressures to which Jewish writers were subjected during the war, his conscious projection of Germany’s antisemitism onto enemy nations remains a form of political propaganda. It is likewise propaganda when he argues that Ost und West’s rational, objective approach to the war is indebted to the “German scholarly spirit and German method” (647). For, according to Segel, all research on Jews—whether in English, French, or Polish—ultimately draws on the German Wissenschaft des Judentums, which itself derives from German philosophy. In short, Segel’s rhetorical acrobatics in the essay on Zangwill are better explained as the self-assuredness of the propagandist than as the self-consciousness of a Jew who despises himself. Segel thus provides a revisionist historiography—a public attempt at mastering recent German history—for an audience presumed to be German, Jewish, and male. He contends that all Eastern Jews know that Germany is the country where antisemitism originated: “Of course, all of these [East European] Jews know that antisemitism in Germany is far from being extinguished and simply appears to be waiting for the right moment to flare up with renewed violence” (647). But then he presents an antithetical argument that plays down the significance of German antisemitism: “In the public and spiritual life of Germany, antisemitism is a merely dismal
phenomenon if juxtaposed with the thousand other positive ones” (647).
In a final passage, Segel’s justifications for German antisemitism anticipate
the so-called Historikerstreit unleashed in 1986 inasmuch as he diagnoses
Russia as Germany’s wicked Doppelgänger in matters of antisemitism:

As powerful as antisemitism in Germany has been at times and as fateful as it
has affected the situation of the Jews in other countries, especially in Russia, it
still has never achieved predominance here, it has never become the leitmotiv of
all governmental activity; in particular, however, it has never degenerated into
a well-considered, organized, and effectively maintained system of persecution.
As much as the Jews of Germany and, as a result, all other Jews have had to
suffer emotionally [seelisch] due to antisemitism, all of these sufferings are only
a droplet in the sea in comparison to the unspeakable disaster that the Russian
Doppelgänger of German antisemitism has brought upon our people. (647-48)

Turning the Judenfrage into a Tsarenfrage was only the first of Ost und West’s
wartime attempts to deal with increasing antisemitism. Not content to
publish editorials alone, Winz and Segel soon added fiction to their arsenal
of apologies for German-Jewish masculinity.

Segel’s earliest appeals to middle-class German-Jewish men in World
War I subtly played upon their fears of apostasy and excessive emotionality.
These fears were in turn rooted in attachments to traditional and enlight­
ened Jewish identity. Such attachments were the basis for Ost und West’s
ideal of ethnic Jewish identity, and the climate of war promoted Jewish
ethnicity, in part because criticism of German-Jewish men was growing.
Indeed, as the war progressed, Ost und West’s pan-Jewish agenda indirectly
benefited from antisemitic attacks questioning the patriotism of Jewish men
who saw themselves as loyal German citizens. The canard of Jewish male
weakness grew more pervasive in the press, and by the time the war had
descended into the trenches, antisemitic stereotyping of the Jewish male
body had sunk to new lows.

The most significant assault on German-Jewish political and physical
integrity was the 1916 census of Jewish soldiers in the Prussian army. Ost
und West’s response to this challenge was typical: it altered the way it
promoted ethnic Jewishness. Because the Judenzählung seemed designed
to expose Jewish cowardice, the magazine responded with case histories of
Jewish military prowess.56 The journal also phased out most negative Jewish
characters in its fiction and began with heightened resolve to introduce
positive ones. This strategy is evident in one of Ost und West’s longest
novellas, Binjamin Segel’s Am Tage des Gerichts.

Am Tage des Gerichts was, by all standards, a carefully choreographed
success. As though he were anticipating the Judenzählung, Segel created a
strong Jewish male character, perhaps the most believable Eastern Jewish
protagonist in the history of Ost und West.57 And even though the narrative
contained a Jewish parvenu, he was ultimately overshadowed by a weak
MARKETING IDENTITIES

and degenerate Polish antisemite. Furthermore, long passages extolled the traditional and enlightened identity of Polish Jewry and were thus aimed at rejuvenating ethnic Judaism. In addition, the story’s Yom Kippur setting and the presence of a “jazz singer” character (the cantor David Chasan) capitalized on the strong associations most Jews—even the Dreitagejuden\(^8\) of Germany—had with this most sacred of Jewish holy days. Since *Am Tage des Gerichts* appeared sequentially in *Ost und West*, Segel was able to deliver his strongest apologetics in the final segment of May–June 1916, just a few months before the official announcement of the *Judenzählung*. Published separately as a book, the novella sold around 5,000, one of many publications intended for Jewish soldiers at the front.\(^9\) In addition, Segel’s wartime publications—many of which were based on essays in *Ost und West*—went through several printings, in one case reaching 12,000 copies.\(^60\)

*Am Tage des Gerichts* also followed on the heels of Segel’s most successful book, *Die polnische Judenfrage* (completed in December 1915), and his novella is in many ways the fictional realization of arguments in the book, particularly in its proposed synthesis of Western Jewish emancipation and Eastern Jewish tradition.\(^61\) The impetus this time for Segel’s ethnic Jewish standpoint was the need to expose the double standard of Max Bodenheimer’s distinctly Western Jewish “Committee for the East” (*Komitee für den Osten*).\(^62\) Established after the outbreak of the war to secure “national autonomy” for the Jews of Poland, the *Komitee’s* German-interventionist program, Segel argued, was destined to perpetuate Jewish inequality.\(^63\) Bodenheimer’s notions of *Volk* and *völkische Emanzipation* were pure abstractions; only individuals can be genuinely emancipated.\(^64\) Segel thus encouraged the *Komitee*, tongue in cheek, to try out Jewish national autonomy in Germany first, for to maintain separate Jewish cultural and linguistic institutions in Poland would only further isolate the already powerless Jews living there.\(^65\) Lastly, Segel was opposed to treating Eastern Jews as pawns of German war policy and thus demanded an end to propaganda clichés that linked Ostjuden to Deutschtum.\(^66\)

*Am Tage des Gerichts* was a defense of Polish Jewry designed both to influence policy and to bring German-Jewish men into the ethnic Jewish fold. The story thus recapitulates the historical stages of traditional, enlightened, and ethnic Judaism in Poland—all against the backdrop of one man’s life. This Jewish Everyman is Simon Berg, the managing director of a factory.\(^67\) The story documents Berg’s struggle with his conscience on Yom Kippur, three months after embezzling 9,000 gulden from Stefan Gemba, the local antisemite. When Gemba, an abusive drunkard and usurer, accidentally overpays a debt to Berg’s boss, the otherwise pious Jew succumbs to the “evil impulse” (in Hebrew, *yetser hara*) and steals the excess. There is a motive for Berg’s lapse: the thirty-six-year-old\(^68\) widower, with two children and a younger sister to provide for, has little to show for his two decades with the firm. His boss, Heinrich Rebenstein, is recently deceased, and the younger
Rebenstein, who is selling off his deceased father's assets, does not offer Berg severance pay; he is only prepared to excuse his debts. Such behavior is unjustified. For, unlike his patron's son, who is arrogant and dishonorable, Berg is a Jewish version of Gustav Freytag's Anton Wohlfaht, the Horatio Alger of nineteenth-century German literature: he is disciplined, well liked, and respected by all. The new boss's resolve to live the dissolute life in Paris is contrasted with Berg's life of virtue prior to his crime.

What starts out as a critique of Jewish parvenuism is, however, given little room to develop, and the younger Rebenstein harmlessly disappears from the story. Instead, the narrator shows how Berg deals with the Eastern-traditional Jewish implications of his transgression, extensively detailing his reactions to the Yom Kippur liturgy. Like his fellow worshipers at the town synagogue, he is caught up in the drama of the day. Sobbing, wailing, and breast beating express the guilt of the community, and individuals recount numerous tales of how sinners have repented in public on previous Days of Atonement. Because the communal admission of sins is such an integral part of Yom Kippur observance, Berg wishes to feel united with his coreligionists, but this circumstance is dependent on his contrition. Whenever he considers his predicament, he is overcome by a feeling of separation from his community. This separation is analogous to the isolation felt by German-Jewish soldiers, the target audience of the story. Because this audience is made up of Western-enlightened Jews, the narrator must define the status of embezzlement in Jewish law: a thief not only stains his own soul, but he also dismantles God's order, spreading injustice in the world. (It does not matter what the offended party knows, or whether he or she is hurt; the more secretly the larceny takes place, the worse the sin.) Worst of all, however, is sinning against a non-Jew, which is regarded as a transgression against God's name (billul ba-shem) that sullies His teaching and His chosen people.

But religious arguments are not enough to convince Berg to repent. Part II of Am Tage des Gerichts targets the Western-enlightened background of most German-Jewish men. It implicitly censures antisemitism, especially the myth that Jews profited from World War I. For, on top of the misrepresentations of their fitness for military service, Jewish men increasingly had to contend with accusations that they were exploiting the war for personal gain. The story's theme of misappropriated funds was addressed both to German-Jewish civilians and to soldiers, encouraging them to resist the temptation to cheat or disobey non-Jews. Even so, the temptation for Jews to indulge in reverse discrimination was understandable, if not pardonable, and this is reflected in Am Tage des Gerichts. Antisemitism reaches its breaking point for Berg in part II, and for the first of three times in the narrative, he has misgivings about repenting. Even though he is consumed here with self-pity and is worried that his standing in the community will be jeopardized should knowledge of his crime leak out, his nihilistic excuses at the end of
part II are really an angry response to antisemitism. He fears that innocent Jews will be persecuted if his secret is exposed, that his case will be taken as confirmation that Judaism allows Jews to cheat those outside the fold (65). The existence of antisemitism makes God seems unjust, indeed absent. In his delirium, Berg asserts in Karamazovian fashion that everything is allowed, and he threatens to convert, even on Yom Kippur.

But in rejecting Eastern religious Judaism and flirting with nihilism, Berg has allowed the pendulum to swing too far to the West. In the third part of the novella, he regains his composure and contemplates a more Eastern version of enlightened Jewish identity that signals his movement toward atonement. The mechanical repetition of the liturgy is faulted, but with one interesting exception: a prayer that especially moves Berg and resembles the Lord's Prayer (das Vaterunser). In Am Tage des Gerichts, as elsewhere in his oeuvre, Segel adds christological features to heighten the effect.73 The title of the story means “On the Day of Judgment,” and at times it presents an almost Christian notion of unconditional forgiveness (121) that enables Berg to overcome his hatred of antisemites.74 Knowing how easily one can lapse, Berg now pledges to show more consideration for others and to be less prejudicial.

A further, and more significant, critique of Eastern Jewish formalism comes in the fourth and final installment of Am Tage des Gerichts. In this key dramatic scene, Berg leaves the synagogue, resolved to confront Gemba. But as he arrives at home to retrieve the money from the chest, he realizes that he has left the keys with his sister. His only option, short of confessing to her, is to open the chest with a crowbar. Yet Berg hesitates to break the lock, painfully aware that to do so would constitute a horrible transgression on Yom Kippur. This hesitation is all the more conspicuous: up to this point, it has been a manly test of will to fulfill the commandments in the face of obstacle. The Rabbinic principle of marit 'ayin (“what the eye perceives”)—of conveying the appearance of piety—is never mentioned.

The German-Jewish readers of this story were bound to view Berg's hesitation as hair splitting. Segel thus came up with an elaborate justification for making an exception to the commandments, a justification that would appeal to German-Jewish men while still fulfilling Ost and West's pan-Jewish agenda. At first, Berg's literalist obedience to Torah prevails on the basis of religion (the body is the external instrument of Torah) and aesthetics (Torah gives poetry, style, and rhythm to life). But when confronted with the long history of the Jewish people prior to Rabbinic Judaism—essentially an ethnic criterion—he refuses to delay his confession to Gemba any longer: “A hundred proud voices awakened in Simon Berg, a hundred witnesses from the past drew near and stood round his bed. The apparition of piety and learnedness [that had plagued him] became more and more blurred. Soon it had dissolved away into emptiness; its voice had disappeared” (201). This ethnic criterion also persuades Berg to overcome the racism implicit
in the argument that a Jew may be impious on account of a Gentile. By acknowledging the ethnic-historical nature of his identity, he tacitly admits the legitimate rights of other peoples. In addition, since the Jews were once strangers in the land of Egypt, they are now, as a "holy people" (heiliges Volk), obliged to protect the stranger against thievery and other injustices. In finally deciding to break open the chest on a holy day, Berg breaks with the supremacy of religious and aesthetic concepts of Judaism in favor of a pan-Jewish ethnic identity.

Only after having overcome second thoughts on three separate occasions does Berg subject himself to possible humiliation: before the sun sets, he returns the money to Gemba and asks his forgiveness. Yet he strikes a balance between humility and toughness in his meeting with Gemba, illustrating a new synthesis of universalism with ethnic particularism. The Jewish hero is redeemed as masculine and respectable: "He had regained his composure and looked his adversary straight [fest] in the face" (202). At the dramatic high point of the novella, Gemba erupts in a drunken tirade upon hearing Berg's dispassionate confession, "I misappropriated the money" (202), forcing the protagonist to defend himself: "Simon Berg stood there, his hand propped on the edge of the table, and let Gemba's rage pass over him. Gemba, fuming with anger, grabbed his dog whip. Then he lifted his hand to attack Simon Berg. Berg turned pale, seized Gemba forcefully by the wrists, and divested him of the whip with a quick movement. Then, with a shove, he forced his defenseless rival into his chair. Stefan Gemba groaned in pain under his iron-like grip" (202). Insofar as Gemba only respects signs of physical superiority, he virtually compels Berg to respond with force, only to plea for mercy from Berg's "fingers of steel" (202). In successfully subduing Gemba, Berg effectively saves Jewish men as a group from the denunciations of antisemites. At the same time, his righteous example influences Gemba, who (for the time being) stops beating his servant and his dog.

In the conclusion to Am Tage des Gerichts, Segel prefigures how his narrative is to be read. His implied audience is not German-Jewish women but rather their brothers, fathers, and husbands. In fact, Berg desists from telling anything to his beloved sister and confidante. Although he could reveal his experience to her as something that had happened to a third person, he demurs, claiming that her "pure and childlike sensibility" (204) would not grasp the full significance of such a story. One can similarly imagine German-Jewish soldiers sparing women descriptions of their own humiliations at the front. To comprehend the story thus requires a masculine consciousness. No weakling, Berg is characteristically referred to as a "strong-willed man of deeds" (68). Because his tale is inappropriate for a female—or effeminate—audience, he expressly resolves to tell it to his son when he has reached manhood and to recall it frequently to himself.

The language of the novella's closing passages urges an ethnic return to the fold (Umkehr) and underlines the theme of a universalist but particularist
Judaism. In addition, the conclusion ties together earlier evidence of an East-West ethnic reconciliation in the story, most notably the eclectic clique of maskilim in Berg's pluralistic Polish shtetl. This clique includes a humble student of philosophy in Berlin, the author Segel's alter ego. This student, out of love for Yom Kippur, returns every year to the shtetl, demonstrating the power that the Day of Atonement exercises even over the local "Deutsche" (in Yiddish, daytsbe or westernized Jews) and, by extension, over Segel's German-Jewish readers. Although the would-be head of the kehillah, David Schamler, is obsessed with his hunger every Yom Kippur, the Berlin student argues that it is better to be "master in one's own house" (190)—and thus more virile—for twenty-four hours. But Schamler, while he despises the poor Berlin student, is never denounced as a westernized parvenu; Segel renders him with humor, not acerbity. In keeping with this day of reconciliation, the visiting student also draws a parallel between the learned men of the East and the West. The Ostjude Reb Jossele, who wishes that Yom Kippur happened twice a year, shares this attitude with the Westjude Professor Steinthal, confirming a "peculiar affinity" (190) between the wretched scribe from Tarnow and the eminent Berlin scholar of Volkerpsychologie ("ethnic psychology"). One final instance of East-West symbiosis is the common talmudic discourse of two boys from divergent backgrounds. Engaged in a dispute on theodicy (which Segel links to Berg's predicament), the two have been friends since early childhood and remain so despite the fact that the one attends a secular school and the other a heder.

At times, Segel's egalitarian shtetl in Am Tage des Gerichts is so idealized that it virtually becomes a cult of the Ostjuden. Class distinction appears to matter little in this idyllic community: both rich and poor Jews are united by the years spent worshipping and studying Talmud together at the same shul. Even a simple person such as the blind melamed is esteemed; this poor but wise old man is frequently consulted as an expert in questions of Talmud. Non-Jews in Segel's narrative do not fare nearly as well. True, there is the good Polish noblewoman, just as there are a few upright Poles in Segel's Die polnische Judenfrage. But Stefan Gemba is portrayed as a drunken beast in Am Tage des Gerichts, as is Onufry, the pilfering, unrepentant shabbes goy (non-Jewish Sabbath helper). In fact, Berg shouts at Onufry in a scene meant to evoke humor. In a final dig, the narrator suggests that Onufry subscribes to the Polish peasants' proverb: "To rob the nobleman is no crime; to rob the priest is no sin; to rob the Jews is a service" (191). In short, Segel exalts the history of Polish Jewry at the expense of Polish Christians, setting up the divided, colonized culture of the Poles as a foil for a new Jewish ethnicity. As in Ost und West's wartime journalism, negative stereotypes of the Jews re-emerge—in slightly altered form—as negative stereotypes of non-Jewish groups. Only in this way, it appeared, was it possible to imagine an ethnic Judaism that appealed to the broader German-Jewish middle class.
As we have seen, *Am Tage des Gerichts* defended the Jews of Poland by rejecting the religious and enlightened identities of German-Jewish men for a more encompassing idea of Jewish ethnicity. Because antisemitism toward both Eastern and Western Jews intensified in World War I, it was all the more imperative that *Ost und West* promote a viable model of ethnic Jewishness, which meant suspending virtually all negative images of Jews. In response to the *Judenzählung*, then, the journal effectively relegated the Jewish parvenus and other Jewish villains to the closet.

Eliminating pretexts for antisemitism was impossible. Nor was it easy to create models of Jewish ethnic identity with which German-Jewish men (including soldiers) could identify. Understandably, *Ost und West*’s fiction held out greater promise for positive marketing than its editorials. In addition, the careful interweaving of the Yom Kippur liturgy with the protagonist’s tribulations in *Am Tage des Gerichts* was designed to draw in otherwise unreligious readers. Traditional Jewish practices were carefully clarified in the text for *Ost und West*’s Western Jewish audience. In another concession to Jewish males, the story’s defense of Jewish masculinity and integrity surpassed that of the journal’s prewar literature. The unmanly Jewish parvenu was played down in the wartime issues of the magazine in order to make way for positive images. Like his editorials, Segel’s story had few (if any) weak Jews, exploitive Jews, or Jews without some knowledge of Jewish customs.

After 1914, the battle lines were drawn differently in *Ost und West*. Fighting the common enemy was of greater necessity than fighting internal Jewish turf battles. Yet the journal’s message, especially in *Am Tage des Gerichts*, was contradictory. On the one hand, Jews were urged to watch their behavior; on the other, they were exhorted publicly to challenge antisemitism. In Segel’s fiction, embezzlement was condemned and linked to war profiteering, yet it was also understandable—almost justified—since the victim of the crime was a ruthless antisemite. After 1916, contesting antisemitism increasingly took precedence in *Ost und West* over the nascent Western cult of Eastern Jewry. The promoters of this self-styled cult viewed the Eastern Jews as “a genuine national proletariat, authentic embodiments of a proud tradition.” For them, the *Ostjude* became a symbol of community and spirituality in a materialistic world at war. The cult of the *Ostjuden* was also of interest to the average German-Jewish readers of *Ost und West* who were eager to find a way to coopt criticism of their values by Jews and non-Jews.

But Winz and the other contributors were quite suspicious of these newcomers to *Ostjudentum* and Jewish ethnicity. Segel, as we have seen, was less than enthusiastic about the Western-oriented *Komitee für den Osten*. More than ever, *Ost und West* was convinced that East-to-West transmission had to take place cautiously, without blind chauvinism. Thus, Winz and his circle did not blindly idealize the Jews of the East, and after the war, they
grew even more critical of discourse on Eastern Jews and Jewish ethnicity. At the same time, even where Eastern Jews were depicted as having significant faults, such as in *Am Tage des Gerichts*, these faults were usually overshadowed by those of non-Jews.

For all their criticism and ad hominem arguments, Segel’s war stories and essays stand up to comparison to the coffee-table literature of the “cultists” of Eastern Jewry. In the tradition of *Ost und West*, Segel brought the *Ostjuden* to the *Westjuden* and adapted the promotion of Jewish nationalism to the demands of wartime. At the same time, the journal clearly assessed the needs of its German-Jewish male constituency and showed that their needs, as well as those of the Eastern Jews under Russian siege, could not be met by the *Komitee für den Osten* or related groups. Unfortunately, *Ost und West*’s skepticism toward the new friends of the *Ostjuden* also proved prescient. After November 11, 1918, the activist aficionados of Polish Jewry could not prevent verbal and physical assaults on *Ostjuden* living in Germany. The violence reached its peak in the little-known pogrom of November 1923 in Berlin’s Scheunenviertel, just half a year after *Ost und West*’s demise. But having foreseen such events, Winz, Segel, and their associates could not predict the ultimate fate of twentieth-century German—and European—Jewry.