

## The Anti-Journalist: Karl Kraus and Jewish Self-Fashioning in Fin-de-Siecle Europe (Studies in German-Jewish Cultural History and Literature, Franz Rosenzweig Miner)

Paul Reitter

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In turn-of-the-century Vienna, Karl Kraus created a bold new style of media criticism, penning incisive satires that elicited both admiration and outrage. Kraus's spectacularly hostile critiques often focused on his fellow Jewish journalists, which brought him a reputation as the quintessential self-hating Jew. *The Anti-Journalist* overturns this view with unprecedented force and sophistication, showing how Kraus's criticisms form the center of a radical model of German-Jewish self-fashioning, and how that model developed in concert with Kraus's modernist journalistic style.

Paul Reitter's study of Kraus's writings situates them in the context of fin-de-siècle German-Jewish intellectual society. He argues that rather than stemming from anti-Semitism, Kraus's attacks constituted an innovative critique of mainstream German-Jewish strategies for assimilation. Marshalling three of the most daring German-Jewish authors—Kafka, Scholem, and Benjamin—Reitter explains their admiration for Kraus's project and demonstrates his influence on their own notions of cultural authenticity.

The Anti-Journalist is at once a new interpretation of a fascinating modernist oeuvre and a heady exploration of an important stage in the history of German-Jewish thinking about identity.



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