This course explores the emergence of writing about the self in a culture that traditionally put primacy on collective memory and expression, and does close readings of a selection of Jewish memoirs for what they can tell us about the relationship of self and society.

Fundamental questions in the course are: why did Jewish memoirists write? Who was the intended audience for the memoirist? What is the relationship between personal and collective Jewish experience? How does the larger historical context influence individual Jewish experience and expression? What role do gender, class, age at the time of writing, play in the portrayal of one's life? Is memory necessarily nostalgic? What role do anger, guilt, desire for revenge, self-aggrandizement, play in memoir writing? How do the memoirists perceive their Jewishness; their relationship with non-Jews? How do we read memoirs critically (what can you trust about what a memoirist says, and how do you know?), and how can they be used as sources of Jewish history?

We will read a selection of memoirs from early modernity to the present, not necessarily in chronological order, from Europe and the US. Prior study of Jewish history (JWST 131, 132 or equivalent) is helpful but not required.

This syllabus contains much crucial information, for which students are responsible. It is online at the JWST and HIST websites if you should require another hard copy.

REQUIREMENTS:

**Attendance:** Consistent attendance is expected, will be noted, and will factor in the final grade. If illness or emergency prevents your attendance, please contact me as soon as possible. In the unlikely event that class must be cancelled for any reason, prepare the current and next session on schedule; a makeup class will be arranged.

**Reading; participation:** As an intermediate-level course, class sessions will be a mix of lecture and engaged, informed student participation. Students are required to come to class having done the day's assigned readings and prepared to contribute insights and engage those of others.

To make your reading more effective and to facilitate focused participation and discussion, each student is required to bring a page of observations on the readings to each class and to submit
these to me at the end of class; no late submissions. Observations are to be informed comments about the reading, a blend of reaction and analysis, not a report about or summary of the readings. As we proceed, you will be able to and should make comparative comments. Your observation papers need not be in polished writing—outline form is fine—but they must be comprehensible; typed or legible handwritten is fine. Observations will not be graded individually but consistency of submission and overall quality will count toward your final grade, as will your participation in class discussion. Because your participation contributes to everyone's learning, submission of even very fine observations will not substitute for participation in discussion (see grade breakdown, below).

ALL REQUIRED READING EXCEPT encyclopedia articles is on shelf reserve in Mudd; since we are reading mostly whole works, some but not much is on eres (indicated on the syllabus). If you are not finding a title on either form of reserve, CONSULT RESERVE ROOM STAFF, preferably the supervisor, Ms. Weir; emailing me is not an effective route to help with library issues, though if there is an unresolved issue, please let me know.

Ohio Link is another way to obtain readings but be sure to allot the needed time to receive and do readings. Consult the Hillel Library on campus (in Wilder), as well, much is there; Public Libraries are another option. You can definitely make reading groups to obtain and share access to readings.

If you are having trouble for any reason entering discussion, speak to me; I can help, but only if I know you need it! If illness or emergency prevents you from preparing for class or participating, please let me know, but come to class anyway if you are able. If any circumstances prevents you from meeting any course requirement in an ongoing way, I will do my best to work with you but can only do so if you alert me to the need promptly.

Lead-off presentation: Each student will lead off 1-2 sessions, taking the first 5-10 minutes (enforced; practice pacing yourself) to tell us about the author and her/his time and place, based on encyclopaedia articles/ bibliographical/ web search, and to lay the groundwork for discussion by stating main themes and issues, as you do in your observation papers, but more fleshed out. See above, "fundamental questions," for some approaches to take when you prepare the readings altogether, and for your presentation/s.

Writing: two short papers (6-7 typed, double-spaced pages), one due before Fall break, one after (see due dates on syllabus), based on assigned readings; and one 15-page research paper on a topic chosen by the student in consultation with me, done as the course final project and due on or before the date set for the final exam by the Registrar. Instructors have no discretion with this day and time; request for Incomplete has to be processed with the Dean of Studies.

The short papers will be based on several sets of readings and must be comparative, thematic, and analytical. I will distribute themes from which you will choose; I am also very open to you proposing themes you would like to write on, but I must approve these in advance. No need for a bibliography in the short papers, and abbreviated citation is fine (just cite the author and page number in parentheses, in the body of your text). These papers are to be handed in to me in class on the due date. Unless you have authorization because of illness or emergency, late submission
will result in 1/3 grade reduction per day of lateness (A- becomes B+, etc.), lateness beginning with the end of the class session on the submission due date.

The short and final papers must be typed, double-spaced, and composed in grammatical English, with correct spelling. Clarity of written expression and argumentation count heavily. Your imagined audience in these papers is someone interested and intelligent but uninform ed; audience in these papers is someone interested and intelligent but uninformed, for whom YOU are the sole source of information and analysis about your topic. Definitely see and use one or more of the writing guides listed below, and make use of College writing tutors to read and comment on drafts, which I am also happy to do.

Research paper: You must submit a statement of your preliminary topic and bibliography before spring break and a revised statement after it, dates on syllabus. You must make an appointment with me before Spring break to discuss and receive consent for your topic. This paper will require formal foot or endnotes and a Bibliography, using approved citation conventions as laid out in any of the following:

Diana Hacker, A Pocket Style Manual
May Lynn Rampolla, A Pocket Guide to Writing in History;

HARD COPY ONLY SUBMISSION OF ALL WRITTEN WORK, including observation papers. No electronic submissions. I am happy to read and comment on drafts of your written work; see me to arrange.

Grading: 40% for participation (discussion and observation papers); 60% for written work: 15% and 20% for the first and second short papers; 25% for the research paper.

A one-credit mini course of particular interest to us will be offered this semester, on "Origins of Jewish Secularism," to be taught by Prof. David Biale, March 4-8. I urge you to consider registering for it (easy way to pick up a credit); auditing all or part of it also an option. Attendance at a minimum of one 2-hour block of the course is a requirement, in lieu of one of our class sessions; further details, below. If you are not taking the mini course for credit, you must indicate to me which session of it you have attended in fulfillment of this requirement.

HONOR CODE: This course and all of its requirements is governed by the College Honor Code, familiarity with which is each student’s responsibility. Consult the College website and/or members of the Honor Code committee, a reference librarian, me, with any questions.

REQUIRED TITLES: you should have your own copy of these, whether by purchase or Ohio Link; Public Library borrowing. When titles are in print, I have ordered them in the Bookstore, which will have only a limited number available:

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Zakhor, Jewish History and Jewish Memory

1. Introductory 2/6

On reading Jewish memoirs: self and society


Compare these two pieces of writing. Who are the authors; when and where do they write? Why do you think they write? Whom do you think each is writing for (audience), what is the author's main "message," and what effect do you think they hope to achieve in their readers? How does each piece of writing illuminate a larger issue in Jewish history of its time?

2. Memoir, Memory, and History 2/8

Lucy Dawidowicz, "History as Autobiography: Telling a Life," in Dawidowicz, What is the Use of Jewish History?, pp.20-37; ON ERES

Yosef Hayim Yerushalmi, Zakhor; Jewish History and Jewish Memory, Prologue, chp. 1, pp.xiii-26

3. Conceptual Approaches, continued 2/13

Yerushalmi, chps. 2-4, pp. 29-103

4. Loss and Recovery/ Discovery 2/15

Paul Cowan, An Orphan in History, part one, pp. 3-97

5. Cowan, continued 2/20

Cowan, part two, pp. 101-246

6. Glikl Hamel 2/22

7. Glikl, continued 2/27
Memoirs, books 4-5 (part), pp.90-174

8. Glickl, concluding 3/1
Memoirs, books 5 (rest)-7, pp.174-277

D. Biale mini-course, "Origins of Jewish Secularism," 3/4-8. Attendance at at least one 2-hour session is REQUIRED in lieu of one of our class meetings (4/3); see below. If you are taking the mini-course for credit, tell me; this meets the requirement. If not, tell me which session you attend in fulfillment of this requirement.

9. Solomon Maimon 3/6
Encyclopaedia Judaica (HENCEFORTH, EJ), "Solomon Maimon" volumes are in Reference in Mudd; e version also available, ask in Reference re: access
Solomon Maimon, An Autobiography, ed. Moses Hadas

10. Pauline Wengeroff 3/8
Pauline Wengeroff, Memoirs of a Grandmother, trans. S. Magnus, copies to be made available, pages TBA
Make an office hour appointment to see me about selecting your research paper topic.

11. Wengeroff, continued 3/13
Memoirs, pages TBA

12. Vladimir Medem 3/15
FIRST ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS TODAY
"Valdimir Medem," EJ
The Life and Soul of a Legendary Jewish Socialist, The Memoirs of Vladimir Medem, trans. S. Portnoy, pp.1-93, ON ERES
PRELIMINARY TOPIC FOR YOUR FINAL PAPER, AND BIBLIOGRAPHY, DUE NEXT CLASS

13. Medem, continued 3/20
Preliminary topic and bibliography due in class today; revised statements due the class after Spring break

Memdem, pp.94-179, ON ERES

14. To America: Mary Antin 3/22

Mary Antin, *The Promised Land*, chps. 1-6, pp.1-136 (*pagination as in Houghton Mifflin Sentry ed.*)

SPRING BREAK 3/24-4/1
4/3 NO CLASS (Passover) Biale mini-course session instead of class today; read ahead!

15. Antin, continued 4/5

Revised statement of your topic and bibliography for the research paper due today

Antin, chps. 7-13, pp.137-263

4/10 NO CLASS (Passover) Trip to Maltz Museum on alternate date, details TBA; read ahead!

16. Antin, continued 4/12

Antin, chps. 14-20, pp.264-364

17. Another Journey West: Eva Hoffman 4/17

Eva Hoffman, Lost in Translation, part one, pp.3-95

18 Hoffman, continued 4/19

Hoffman, part two, pp. 99-164

SECOND ESSAY ASSIGNMENT DUE IN CLASS TODAY

19. Hoffman, continued 4/24

Hoffman, part three, pp.167-280

20. Chaim Grade: Memory and Guilt 4/26

"Chaim Grade," EJ

Chaim Grade, My Mother's Sabbath Days, pp.1-87

21. Grade, continued 5/1
22. Grade, continued 5/3

Grade, pp.170-276


Yossi Klein Halevi, Memoirs of a Jewish Extremist, chps. 1-4, pp.1-121

24. Halevy continued, and Conclusion 5/10

Halevy, Memoirs, chps. 5- Epilogue, pp.122-248

Recommended memoirs:

Stephen Dubner, Turbulent Souls: A Catholic Son's Return to His Jewish Family

Helen Epstein, Where She Came From: A Daughter's Search for Her Mother's History

Elizabeth Ehrlich, Miriam's Kitchen, A Memoir

Toby Knobel Flueck, Memories of My Life in a Polish Village, 1930-1949 memoir in drawings

Memoirs of My People Through A Thousand Years, ed. Leo Schwarz

Lucy Dawidowicz, The Golden Tradition

I. J. Singer, Of A World That Is No More


Jewish Life in Germany, Memoirs from Three Centuries, ed. Monika Richarz

Peter Gay, My German Question, Growing Up in Nazi Berlin

Puah Rakowski, My Life as a Radical Jewish Woman: Memoirs of a Zionist Feminist in Poland, ed. Paula Hyman

David Weiss Halivni, The Book and the Sword

Miep Gies, Anne Frank Remembered: The Story of the Woman Who Helped to Hide the Frank Family
Nechama Tec, *Dry Tears: The Story of a Lost Childhood*