The autobiography of Rabbi Jacob Emden (1697-1776), Megilat Sefer is within the tradition of Rabbinic autobiographies which include notable works like: (1) Eldad ha-Dani (Babylonia, 9th C.), (2) David ha-Reuveni, (3) Abraham Yagel's Gei hizzayon (16th C.), (4) Rabbi Yehudah Areyeh (1571-1643) of Modena's Hayyei Yehudah, (5) Rabbi Yosef Karo's Maggid Meisharim (Safed 16th C.), (6) Shlomo Molkho’s Hayyat Kaneh, Hazon Shelomo Molkho, (7) Renegade Solomon Maimon (1754-1800) and (8) Rabbi Elyahu David Rabinowitz [known as ADERET] three part work: Seder Elayahu, NefeshDavid, Achar Eliyahu.

Autobiographical episodes can also be found in works such as Ramban’s Vikuah, the letters of the Ramhal, & Rabbi Nachman of Brtslav’s last poem on spring that is in allegory for resurrection.

Jewish mystical autobiographies is another genre of autobiography and includes Sefer Hazonot, The Book of visions and Book of secrets, translated and introduced by Morris M.Faierstein ; preface by Moshe Idel, New York : Paulist Press, c1999; This volume collects the autobiographies of two Jewish mystics, Book of Visions by Rabbi Hayyim Vital (1542-1620) and Book of Secrets by Rabbi Yitzak Safrinof Komarno (1806-74). Born in Safed and having studied esoteric subjects with Rabbi Moses Cordovero (1522-70), Rabbi Vital came to see himself as the foremost disciple of Rabbi Isaac Luria (1534-72) and a successor of Rabbi Joseph Karo (1488-1575). In Book of Visions, Rabbi Vital analyzes the sources of his soul ancestry by tracing the genealogy of his own soul spark and its reincarnations via transmigration and unification. Like Rabbi Vital, Rabbi Komarno believes himself to be his generation’s messiah of Joseph, places importance on dream interpretation, and gives an account of a prediction of his destined greatness before birth.

The related genre of Biographies of Rabbis can be found in works such as: (1) J. Heilprin’s Shemot Ba’alei Mehabberim, (2) H.J. D Azulai’s Shem ha-Gedolim, (3) H.J. Michael’s Orh ha-Hayyim, (4) A. Hyman’s Toledot Tanna’im ve-Amora’im, (5) M. Margaliot, Enziklopedyah le-Hakhmei ha-Talmud ve-ha Ge’onim, (6) S.J. Fueen’s Kneset Yisrael, (7) A. Stern’s Melizei Esh, (8) A. Walden’s Sefer Shen ha-Gedolim he-Hadash, (9) B. Eisenstadt’s Dorot ha-Aharonim, (10) I. Lewin’s EllehEzkerah, (11) S. Federbusch’s Hokhmat Yisrael be-Ma’arev Eiropah, (12) M. D. Sherman’s Orthodox Judaism in America. Continuing the tradition of autobiography writing also 19th C. scholarly examples include: (1) Rabbi Judah David Eisenstein (1854-1956) Otsar zikhronotai, (2) Leo Jung’s Path of a Pioneer, (3) Gershom Scholem(From Berlin to Jerusalem), (3) Cyrus Adler, (4) Nahum Goldman, (5) Jacob Katz (1904-1998, With My own Eyes: The autobiography of a Historian), (6) Isac Hirsch Weiss, (7) J.L. Gordon, (8) H.N. Bialik, (9) Chaim Weizmann, (10) to Rabbi Yitzchak Zilber’s Ch'toby ty otaloya evreem, etc. . and many Rabbinic biographies have appeared by JacobNeusner on various legendary Tannaim and Amoraim, Dresner’s The Zaddik on Rabbi Jacob Joseph of Polonnoye, M. Steinberg’s (A Driven Leaf) on the life of Ahir, & Louis Finkelstein’s Akiba. Jewish women’s autobiographies are also being gathered from the historical past in addition to Glueckel of Hameln (1646-1724) by P.S. Nadell, P. Hyman, and D.D. Moore. Yiddish writers have also championed autobiography (see National Yiddish Book Center list (Bi, Biography, Autobiography, Memoirs, over 855 titles).

Secondary works on Jewish autobiography include, Krupnick, Mark, Jewish writing and the deep places of the imagination, Madison, Wis.: University of Wisconsin Press, c2005; Shandler, Jeffrey (ed) Awakening lives : autobiographies of Jewish youth in Poland before the Holocaust, New Haven : Yale University Press, c2002; Cohen, Jocelyn, My future is in America : autobiographies of Eastern European

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