

# **Samuel Tobias Lachs Collection**

**ARC MS 58**

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Last updated on January 04, 2017.

University of Pennsylvania, Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies

2016 November 7

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## Summary Information

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<b>Repository</b>	University of Pennsylvania: Library at the Herbert D. Katz Center for Advanced Judaic Studies
<b>Title</b>	Samuel Tobias Lachs Collection
<b>Call number</b>	ARC MS 58
<b>Date [inclusive]</b>	1900-2000
<b>Extent</b>	2.5 linear feet (5 boxes)
<b>Language</b>	English

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## Biography/History

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Samuel Tobias Lachs was born April 8, 1926 in Philadelphia, PA. He attended Central High School in Philadelphia, Gratz College from which he was awarded a teacher's diploma in 1945 and the University of Pennsylvania from which he was granted an A.B. in 1946. He then attended the Jewish Theological Seminary and became an ordained rabbi in 1950 and attained a PhD from Dropsie College in 1958. In 1971 Lachs became an associate professor of the History of Religion Department at Bryn Mawr College in Bryn Mawr, PA. He became a full professor in 1977 and the following year was appointed chair of the department, a position which he held until his retirement. He was named the Leslie Clark Professor Emeritus in the Humanities, Professor Emeritus of History of Religion and the Katherine E. McBride Professor of Judaic Studies in 1992. Dr. Lachs also taught at several other institutions. He was a visiting lecturer at the University of Pennsylvania (summer 1966), Haverford College (1966-1970), Swarthmore College (1966), and Reconstructionist Rabbinical College (Lecturer, 1982-1983) and Acting Core Director (Rabbinics, 1983-1984). In addition, he held several posts at Gratz College, including Associate Professor of Rabbinics and Bible (1960-1962). Dr. Lachs was actively engaged in a variety of professional activities during his career. He served briefly as an assistant rabbi at Congregation Emanu-El and for six years as the Conservative rabbi at

Congregation at Ahavath Israel, both in the Oak Lane section of Philadelphia. He served as Chairman of the Board of License of Greater Philadelphia (1982-1986) and was a member of the Publications Committee of the Jewish Publication Society of America from 1984-1987. He served on the Middle States Evaluation Team for American Programs Abroad (Israel) in 1984 and 1987.

Dr. Lachs published a number of books and articles throughout his career. He co-authored the *Gratz College Anniversary Volume* with I.D. Passow and co-authored *Judaism* with Saul P. Wachs. He published *A Rabbinic Commentary on the New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke* (1987) and *Humanism in the Talmud and Midrash* (1992). His articles were published in a variety of publications including the *Jewish Quarterly Review* and *Harvard Theological Review*.

Dr. Lachs was highly respected by his peers. Fellow scholar, Jeffrey Tigay, Ellis professor of Hebrew and Languages and Literatures in the Department of Near Eastern Languages and Civilizations at the University of Pennsylvania, described him as "'a real master' who drew droves of students and inspired many to pursue careers in scholarship and religion." Adina Potok, and her husband, Chaim Potok, studied with Dr. Lachs every Saturday for many years at Temple Beth Hillel-Beth El in Wynnewood, the synagogue at which all three were members. "When he was teaching Talmud...he brought in material from Greek philosophy, from Roman law and culture, from Christianity..." noted Adina Potok. (2) Dr. Lachs married his wife, Phyllis M. Seltzer in 1950. They had four children, Susanna, Benjamin, Michael and Joshua. Dr. Lachs died in 2000.

#### Bibliography

1. Curriculum vitae, Samuel T. Lachs.
2. Obituary, "Philadelphia Inquirer," 2000 September 19.

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## Scope and Contents

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The Samuel T. Lachs Collection consists almost entirely of drafts of manuscripts for books and articles. Several of the drafts are for articles which were published in the *Jewish Quarterly Review* and for Kol Nidre sermons. The majority, however, are for books which were not published and clearly demonstrate the lengthy process and revisions which Lachs went through. Lachs, in his curriculum vitae of 1996, noted five projects which he had completed but not published and all of these are represented among the drafts in the collection. Lachs also noted five projects which were in progress at that time and at least one of the drafts in the collection comes from this list. It should be noted that tracking Lachs's progress through his project list, and comparing it to the list of items in the Lachs collection, is made more difficult by the fact that the titles of the manuscripts occasionally changed as he worked through his revisions. In addition, most of the drafts are undated or contain the same date, adding to the difficulty in tracking the revisions.

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## Administrative Information

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## Collection Inventory

	Box	Folder
Finding Aid.	1	1
"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Introduction.	1	2
"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Draft, Part I.	1	3
"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Draft, Part II.	1	4
"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Draft, Part I.	1	5
"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Draft, Part II.	1	6

"The Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, Draft, Part II and extra pages.	1	7
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"Beyond the Judeo-Christian Myth," Unpublished manuscript, Draft I, Part I.	1	8
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"Beyond the Judeo-Christian Myth," Unpublished manuscript, Draft II, Part I.	1	9
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"Beyond the Judeo-Christian Myth," Unpublished manuscript, Draft II, Part II.	1	10
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"Goals of Life: Jewish and Christian Perspectives," Unpublished manuscript, draft.	2	1
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"Beyond the Judeo-Christian Myth," Unpublished manuscript, draft in binder.	2	1
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"Beyond the Judeo-Christian Myth," Unpublished manuscript, draft in binder.	2	2
"Biblical Personalities," Unpublished manuscripts, Draft.	3	1
"Biblical Personalities," Unpublished manuscripts, Draft.	3	2
"Biblical Personalities," Unpublished manuscripts, Draft.	3	3
"Biblical Personalities," Unpublished manuscripts, Draft in binder.	3	1
Manuscripts for parts of "Midrashim," notes, proposal and drafts.	4	1
"Midrashim for the Calendar Cycle of the Jewish Year," manuscript in binder.	4	1



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"Midrashim" manuscript, in binder.	4	2
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Rabbi Abbahu of Caesarea: The Man and His Times," Unpublished manuscript, drafts.	5	1
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"Aggudat Bereshit" notes.	5	2
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"Aggudat Bereshit," Unpublished manuscript, chapters 1-21.	5	3
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"Aggudat Bereshit," Unpublished manuscript, chapters 1-21.	5	4
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"Aggudat Bereshit," Unpublished manuscript, chapters 1-10.	5	5
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Miscellaneous unpublished manuscripts, notes, proposals, etc.	5	6
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"Rereading Some Talmudic and Midrashic Passages," published article, 1999.	5	7
"Where Judaism Differed" by A. H. Silver.	5	8
"Semitic Solutions to Problems in the Synoptics and Acts," 2 copies.	5	9
"Acts 5.34-37: A Partial Solution to an Old Crux," 2 copies.	5	10
"Harmonizing the Readings of Matt. 24.20 and Luke 17.34," manuscript.	5	11
Kol Nidre Sermon 5744, 1994.	5	12
Kol Nidre Sermon 5757, 1996.	5	13

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Dropsie College Dissertation lists, 1912-1989.	5	14
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Partial Dissertation, 1976.	5	15
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Curriculum vitae for Dr. Samuel T. Lachs, 1994-1996.	5	16
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