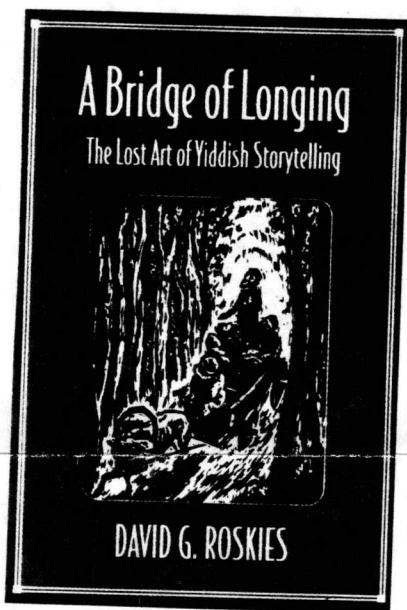


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**A Bridge of Longing:
The Lost Art of
Yiddish Storytelling**
By David G. Roskies
Harvard Univ. Press, 1995.
\$37.50

Reviewed by Terese Loeb Kreuzer

To lovers of Sholom Aleichem's Tevye the Dairyman (and what Jew doesn't love Tevye?), David G. Roskies has a shocking tale to tell. Tevye, the wise, peasant-philosopher, and the shtetl in which he lived were the romantic creations of a sophisticated, well-to-do stockbroker living in the largely non-Jewish city of Kiev.

Like other great Yiddish writers of the end of the 19th century (many of them discussed in this book), Solomon Rabinovitch (aka Aleichem) invented stories that would help Jews to revive their faith and their sense of community.

Roskies calls this process of reshaping the past "creative betrayal." *A Bridge of Longing* is an erudite and fascinating study of why and how certain stories about the Yiddish world came to be widely regarded as authentic and accurate and why the authors of these stories needed to make them up.