

375 Riverside Drive (4D)
New York, NY 10025
July 18, 1986

Prof. Raymond Scheindlin
Office of the Provost

Dear Ray,

It is with a deep sense of gratitude that I submit this brief report on what I accomplished during my leave of absence which was supported by a generous grant from the Abbell Research Fund.

From July until October 1985, I was totally caught up in the research for my new book on the Art of Modern Yiddish Storytelling. By the end of October, when Aryeh was born, the outline of the book had taken shape and I had begun writing the middle chapter on Sholem Aleichem (a preview will appear in my article "On Account of Two Hats" based on my address to the Faculty Assembly on teaching a text in two different ways). When life returned to a semblance of normalcy, my work took a new direction. I was extremely anxious to formulate the central thesis of my research, both for the sake of self-clarification and to go public while it was all still fresh. That is why I accepted an invitation to speak in February at a nationally-sponsored symposium on Jewish culture in America that took place in Houston, Texas. The paper I delivered, "The People of the Lost Book," was a cultural manifesto in which I spelled out my theory of "creative betrayal" as a major strategy of Jewish cultural renewal in the modern period. This paper will appear in the Fall issue of Orim.

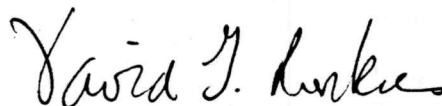
Secondly, I had been contracted a year before by the Jewish Publication Society to compile an anthology of Jewish literary responses to catastrophe as a companion volume to my book Against the Apocalypse. My original plan had been to do this book "on the side," in the late afternoons when I grew tired of writing my book on Yiddish storytelling. Well, to put it simply, with Aryeh around, there were no "late afternoons" anymore. I therefore decided to spend the rest of the year, from February until August 1986, editing this volume. Like all projects, this one, too, grew in complexity, once I realized that it would have to be a free-standing, heavily annotated book covering the entire 2500-year-span of my subject. Two-thirds of the material, in addition, was being translated especially for this volume, which compounded my editorial responsibilities. The entire manuscript -- introductions, texts, annotations, biographies and bibliographies -- all 750 pages of it, will be completed by September 1, 1986.

Finally, I've accepted an invitation to deliver four lectures on the art of modern Yiddish storytelling for a prestigious lecture series at the 92nd Street Y in January and February 1997. Here I

will present the core material that will eventually make up the book.

All-in-all, this year was a godsent, one of the most productive of my entire career. As the publications appear, I shall, of course, acknowledge the Abbell Fund.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "David G. Roskies". The signature is fluid and elegant, with a prominent initial "D".

David G. Roskies

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DEPARTMENT OF JEWISH LITERATURE

WRITER'S DIRECT DIAL NUMBER

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To Whom It May Concern:

This is to acknowledge receipt of a personal check for \$250. from Prof. David G. Roskies. This money was ~~xx~~ earned in my capacity as Prof. Roskies' research assistant during the first two weeks of July, 1986.

Joram Navon

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