Reviewed by:
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"The Shorter Encyclopedia Judaica in Russia" (as this work's title is translated on the copyright page) is the first Jewish encyclopedia to appear in the Russian language since the classic Evreiska Entsiklopediia of 1906–1913. Three of an envisioned six volumes have been published to date, under the guidance of a distinguished group of scholars, including professors Mikhail Zand (chief scientific consultant) and Shmuel Ettinger (chairman of the editorial board).

The Kratkaia Evreiska Entsiklopediia (henceforth KEE) is an abridged and adapted Russian version of the Encyclopaedia Judaica (Jerusalem: Keter, 1972), designed to meet the specific Jewish needs and interests of Soviet-born readers. EJ entries have been re-written so as to include explanations of basic Jewish religious concepts and historical facts which are frequently unfamiliar to Jews raised and educated in the USSR. New entries composed especially for the KEE fall into three general categories: (a) those providing definitions and semantic clarifications of fundamental terms such as "Jews," "Israel," etc., (b) those dealing with Russian and Soviet Jewish topics, whether it be specific communities (e.g., Bukhara), Yiddish literature in the USSR, or Jews who contributed to Soviet politics, science and culture, (c) those covering other subjects considered to be of particular interest to Soviet Jews living in the USSR, Israel and the West (e.g., "Land of Israel" and "State of Israel," which together comprise more than half of volume three).

Unlike the EJ and the original Evreiska Entsiklopediia, the KEE does not include bibliographies at the conclusion of its entries. It therefore cannot be used as a springboard for further reading or research. Author signatures are also absent, although a full list of contributors and an index of names and subjects are promised for the final volume. The KEE is a landmark event in Jewish publishing, testifying to the national and religious revival among Soviet Jews during the last generation.

Dr. David E. Fishman is a Professor at the Jewish Theological Seminary of America in New York and is also on the faculty of the Max Weinreich Center for Advanced Jewish Studies of YIVO Institute for Jewish Research.

Conclusions
Prof. Yassif's most important accomplishments are the identification of over thirteen hundred significant contributions to Jewish folklore, their evaluation through extensive annotations, and the provision of access to the literature on specific subjects in the field through the index. This bibliography is, however, as the author himself points out, "the first stage" (p. xi) in an effort which should provide more comprehensive, as well as more analytical coverage of the field.

Dina Abramowicz is the former Head Librarian and currently serves as Reference Librarian of YIVO Institute for Jewish Research in New York City.
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