

**Kratkaia Evreiskaia Entsiklopediia, Yitskhak Oren (Nadel),  
editor-in-chief, Jerusalem: Keter, 1976–1986. 3 volumes,  
Aaron—Iokhannesburg. ISBN 965-320-000-3.**

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 *Evreiskaia 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 Evreiskaia 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 *Evreiskaia 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.

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**Abramowicz** (Continued from p. 144)  
identified by their accepted folkloristic codes.

An author index is absent from the bibliography. Since the main arrangement is by author, this might appear unnecessary, but the work includes a significant number of addenda (under the incorrect rubric "Appendix"). Thus, all the works of primary authors are not together. Access is provided to joint authors through cross references within the body of the bibliography.

### 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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