

psychology.—Robin N. Sinn, *Librarian for Science and Engineering, Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, Maryland*

Encyclopedia of Evolution. By Stanley A. Rice. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 469p. acid free \$75 (ISBN 0-8160-5515-7).

Publishers must agonize over how they can handle the development and marketing of a reference work dealing with a topic such as evolution. In the United States it is clearly a hot-button issue, with half of the American people claiming they don't "believe in" evolution, as if evolution were not a set of facts and theories that have been carefully worked through by multitudes of scientists for more than a century. In our culture, scientific appreciation is generally so low that acceptance of evolution as a process is seen as outright rejection of the predominant Christian dogma. It is within this conservative religious and political environment that Facts On File has created the *Encyclopedia of Evolution*. The choice of author Rice, an academic evolutionary ecologist, outspoken opponent of intelligent design, and practicing Christian, was inspired.

Rice manages to make this encyclopedia both scientifically accurate and culturally sensitive. It consists of 215 main entries arranged alphabetically covering the main concepts and issues relating to the evolution of life on earth. Its scope keeps the entries within the domain of science; Rice acknowledges that other types of evolution (art, culture, music, and so forth) are not dealt with in this work. Biographies of fifty important scientists who have contributed to the understanding of evolutionary processes are included. Black-and-white illustrations, maps, and charts are very well-done, appropriate, and plentiful without seeming like filler. Entries tend to be one to three pages in length (sometimes longer), and are written in very clear, accessible language. Each entry is followed by a list of further reading. These lists of suggested references are uniformly excellent, making these sections a considerable strength of this work. Rice includes five feature essays in the encyclopedia, elucidating topics important to the general reader: "How Much Do Genes Control Human Behavior?," "What Are the Ghosts of Evolution?," "Can an Evolutionary Scientist Be Religious?," "Why Do Humans Die?," and "Are Humans Alone in the Universe?" These topics are all accurately discussed, yet Rice does not shy away from viewing the topics through the Christian lens. In fact, that lens is gently and subtly employed in his treatment of many of the encyclopedic entries and thus clearly defines the primary, general market for this work.

The *Encyclopedia* joins three other works of seemingly similar scope. Mark Pagel's *Encyclopedia of Evolution* (Oxford, 2002) is an academically rigorous, two-volume work of evolutionary biology that covers both genetics and population biology in significant detail. Franz Wuketits and Francisco Ayala published the two-volume *Handbook of Evolution* (Wiley-VCH, 2005), which treats all kinds evolution through challenging review articles synthesizing the literature. *Life on Earth: An Encyclopedia of Biodiversity, Ecology, and Evolution* (ABC Clío, 2002), edited by Niles Eldredge, has entries

contributed by numerous experts in the field. It is broader in scope, focusing less on just evolution, and is not as user-friendly as Rice in book-in-hand terms.

Rice's *Encyclopedia of Evolution*, because of its scientifically accurate and culturally sensitive treatment of this controversial topic, is an essential acquisition for all high school, community college, and public libraries. It is useful in the general reference collection of academic libraries, but perhaps less useful in specialized science libraries serving upper-level or graduate students in the sciences.—Deborah Carter Peoples, *Science Librarian, Hobson Science Library, Ohio Wesleyan University, Delaware*

Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies. Ed. by Gaetana Marrone. New York: Routledge, 2007. 2 vols. \$495 (ISBN 1-57958-390-3).

This two-volume reference source ambitiously encompasses the canon of Italian literature while covering a wide range of literary trends and cultural developments. A collaborative work of international scholarly representation, the 591 bio-bibliographical, critical essays address themselves to an English-speaking audience. The signed articles are substantive in describing the rich history and evolution of Italian literary expression and culture. Contributors' expert and diverse perspectives aptly weave historical and cultural backdrops in the treatments, which are so well-woven as to make good and informative reading.

The core of the set constitutes major Italian authors from the thirteenth century to the present and an informed selection of their works. In addition to blending a balance of women's voices, the canon is generously extended to include noteworthy historians, critics, actors and actresses, filmmakers, playwrights, dramatists, mystics, and some re-discovered humanists. Topics go beyond a survey of important movements, schools, genres, and subgenres to include interdisciplinary subjects that are elemental in contemporary and popular Italian culture. For instance, readers will find thematic essays on French and German influences, "Migration Literature," and "Fumetti" (comics) among a multitude of nonliterary threads in such categories as cinema, fashion, animation, and "The Culture of Food."

Although Italian literature and culture is treated in a score of notable dictionaries, historical surveys, and companions, no other source compares in scope to *Italian Literary Studies*. This is a much-needed reference tool. Its extended essays give biographical and critical treatment with historical tracings and enumerative bibliographies. In comparison, Hainsworth and Robey's *The Oxford Companion to Italian Literature* (Oxford Univ. Pr., 2002) is essential as a starting point for students, researchers, and Italianists, with its concise articles, maps, and chronology of Italian literature. Yet now readers can go beyond that base to elaborative contexts that include lesser literary figures, subgenres such as "Romanzo Rosa," and critical treatments of influential works, such as Dario Fo's denounced *Mistero Buffo*. Unequal in quality to the Oxford dictionary, yet useful for its summative articles,

SOURCES

bibliographies, and comparative timeline of Western and Italian literature, is Bondanellas' *Dictionary of Italian Literature* (Greenwood, 1996, 2002). Humanities reference shelves also will have such historical surveys as Panizza and Wood's *A History of Women's Writing in Italian* (Cambridge Univ. Pr., 2000); Brand and Pertile's *The Cambridge History of Italian Literature* (Cambridge Univ. Pr., 1996); and Wood's *Italian Women's Writing, 1860–1994* (Athlone, 1995). Noteworthy are *Italian Women Writers* (Greenwood, 1994), a helpful bi-bibliographical companion focused on women writers, and, of course, alternative sources on the Renaissance, particularly *Encyclopedia of the Renaissance* (Scribner, 1999).

One oddity about *Italian Literary Studies* is that the Catholic Church, papacy, and patristic influences are not thematically represented as a main entry. These topics of major social and cultural consequence are instead treated in the thematic entry of "Religion and Literature." Unfortunately, the index fails to point the reader to the thematic entry, but instead directs to embedded treatments of Catholicism in other topics, writers, and works, thereby diffusing its importance. Similarly, eroticism and pornography, with their close ties to Italian comedy and literary expression, and as represented in many influential classic and traditional works by the likes of Ariosto, Boccaccio, and Belli, are not found by theme or in the index.

The set is nicely structured, following a familiar template used in other Routledge volumes. The arrangement is logical and helpful—readers will benefit from alphabetical and thematic lists and a comprehensive index, duplicated in both volumes. Bibliographies of authors' works are sorted by genre. Author entries are supplemented with biographical sketches; bibliographies of selected works sorted by genre that constitute important editions in Italian, with English translations as available; and a substantial list for further reading. These readings include journal articles and monographs, including, notably, works in English that can be found in most academic libraries. Selected works of early major writers (Dante Alighieri, for example) are sorted by works in vernacular and in Latin. In addition, articles on many major authors are followed by critical, one- or two-page summaries of selected works. These supporting entries are completed by a listing of editions, translations, and further readings.

Encyclopedia of Italian Literary Studies is an appreciable addition to Italian and Renaissance literature reference sources. It is useful both to those beginning their studies and to those who are well-versed in the subject. It is an essential purchase for all academic and large public libraries.—Katharine A. Webb, Librarian, The Ohio State University, Columbus

Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present. Ed. by William R. Keylor and Michael McGuire. New York: Facts On File, 2007. 3 vols. alkaline \$250 (ISBN 0-8160-4872-X).

This set builds on the foundation of its predecessor, John Drexel's *Facts On File Encyclopedia of the 20th Century* (Facts On File, 1991), a single-volume work. An earlier version of *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* was published

in 2005, according to OCLC WorldCat. The database lists the same ISBN for both publication dates, so it's not clear what the differences are between the 2005 and the 2007 versions.

The scope of the set avoids any North American bias you might anticipate by covering a wide variety of entries about people, events, and places outside of the developed world. More than eight thousand entries in this set are not available in similar publications, according to the publisher. Chronically the wide range of changes in the world since 1991 in this new set is a challenge the author discusses at length in the introduction, mentioning, among other topics, the disintegration of the Soviet bloc and the explosion in worldwide communications facilitated by the Internet.

Entries included in these three volumes address cities and other significant geography; country profiles; scientists; technology developments; world political figures; events and movements; descriptions of artists, actors, athletes, musicians, and writers; art movements; and other artifacts of popular culture. This set concentrates on brief entries; very few exceed a half-page (exceptions include the entries for the three most recent United States presidents). The writing is concise enough to appeal to higher grades in high school, but there is enough detail and depth for use by college students. Cross-references for acronyms such as AFL-CIO are included in the text and the index. Topic references in an entry are always capitalized.

The scope of the set is admirable: on the same page as the entry for e-mail, you will learn about an English composer, a river in Germany, a United States jazz musician, a city in Israel, a former president of Iceland, a Middle East diplomat, and a Greek communist resistance movement. Almost all entries for countries include a map, and a timeline of the country's significant twentieth-century events is included on the adjoining page. All illustrations and maps are black-and-white. A one-page bibliography of the twenty sources used to compile entries in the set is included at the end of the third volume, before the index. In the introduction, the author also acknowledges the contributions of several outside specialists for entries in the natural sciences, music, and mental health. The index uses italicized page numbers to note illustrated entries.

My research indicates that *Encyclopedia of the Modern World: 1900 to the Present* has few, if any, competitors. There were several single-volume encyclopedias of modern history published around the turn of the century, but most of these seem more appropriate for the living room table than the collections of an academic or school libraries. Even the most recent of these was published in 2003—Brenda Ralph Lewis's *Modern History: A Sourcebook* (Flame Tree, 2003)—and thus is already four years out of date. In addition, many encyclopedias of modern history are devoted to a specific subtopic, such as politics, or devoted to one particular country or region of the world.

Libraries have an ongoing need for encyclopedias that appeal to a broad audience. This set is a great supplement to larger, multivolume encyclopedias you may only be able to replace every couple of years, and offers excellent value in