

their problems, fears, frustrations and divided interests compounded by the exigencies of daily life in a new country in which they shall always remain conscious of being foreigners. Elkhadem sensitively and intelligently reveals through their reminiscences the "culture" shocks which immigrants unconsciously encounter as well as what Professor El-Gabalawy describes in his critical introduction as "their confused identities" in their new milieu. If the experiences of these immigrants are authentic, it follows then that what they say and intimate about the Flying Egyptian is also authentic. To them the Flying Egyptian is motivated by dark and contradictory impulses, paranoia, and cynicism. But interspersed with these observations are their unwitting comments—recollections of what the Flying Egyptian had said at some time—on the art of narration and the need of the creative artist to live "in absolute freedom, constant motion and perpetual experimentation" in search of theme and material for his books because the "genuine artist . . . like mercury, never stops in one place, never melts, and never freezes." In this light, whether the Flying Egyptian is "hot-tempered and foul mouthed," or a "poor lost soul," a "naughty boy and a real bastard," or a "schizophrenic" and "sado-masochist" is of little importance and significance when compared to his total absorption and preoccupation with literary creation.

Like the Flying Egyptian, Elkhadem is forever experimenting with narration. Diaries, in part or in *toto*, have been used as narrative devices. Interviews and recollections are today popular tools in the hands of literary biographers who create "composite" portraits from them. Their utilization in a fictional setting seems almost the obvious and inevitable next step—a step which Elkhadem takes with confidence. The accounts of the four interviews constitute the oblique narration of the Chronicle and jolt the reader from his preconceived expectations for the traditional plot and development of character. Elkhadem seems to be deliberately challenging the reader.

The Chronicle provides a novel and enjoyable experience for the reader—in translation, too—and raises expectations of more. El-Gabalawy's lucid critical introduction is useful for an appreciation of the Chronicle. It has almost become a cliché to say that El-Gabalawy's translation does justice to the original for it carefully renders into the English the nuances of the original. He wisely retains in Chapter 3 the French expressions used by the speaker Alex Katakis. Professor El-Gabalawy is an experienced translator but I can safely say that this is his best to date.

George Bishop

Henry James: Life, Work, and Criticism

Fredericton: N.B.: York Press, 1990. Pp. 47 \$6.95

Reviewed by Ileana Orlich

George Bishop's *Henry James: Life, Work, and Criticism* is clearly the product of many years of extensive research and concise, thoughtful analysis. This book, which uses the York Press format to provide the general reader or

specialist with essential information on James's life and literary career, is divided into five proportionally spaced sections—"A Biography of Henry James;" "A Chronological List of James's Major Works;" "A Survey of James's Major Fictions;" "A Critical Overview of James's Work;" and "Annotated Bibliography." It is a worthy addition to the steadily growing number of volumes in York's authoritative *Studies in World Literature*.

The first section records succinctly James's life from his unusual upbringing and childhood travels to Europe with his eminent family to the move to Rye, Sussex, and his death there as a British subject in 1916. In addition, this section examines James's expatriate status as an immediate consequence of his "life-long affinity" for Europe that further materialized in "two immediate results—one personal, the other thematic." This double focus sets the tone for discussion and allows Bishop to incorporate his overview of the Jamesian fiction and criticism within the larger frame of the writer's life and "dual allegiance" to "two great cultures facing each other across the Atlantic."

Due to the prodigious number of James's publications, the useful chronological list of works included in the second section gives the first edition, whether English or American, of James's major publications, lists the short stories under the book wherein they were first collected, with their place and date of original publication noted in parentheses, and omits the original publication data on essays and travel sketches.

Bishop's critical evaluation of the Jamesian canon in the third section focuses on a discerning selection of the major shorter and larger fiction. The individual surveys are quite concise, and even though ideas tend not to be developed very fully, they are thought provoking and contribute to a valuable assessment of James's work.

The next section, which is the core of Bishop's critical exegesis, explores four essential aspects of James's work—"Intellectual and Literary Backgrounds," "Form," "Themes," and "Style." Although brief, these subdivisions adduce useful insights. Bishop establishes convincingly in "Intellectual and Literary Backgrounds" that while James's "inward, abstracted intensity" and penchant for "self-evaluation and self-definition" recommend him as an "American" writer, his exploration of the "stream of consciousness" and commitment to the "primacy of the aesthetic viewpoint" establish him as a precursor of modernists like Pound, Eliot, James, and Woolf. In "Forms" Bishop gives individual attention to the Jamesian genres—the tale, the "nouvelle," and the novel—and comments briefly on James's realism. The most recurrent Jamesian themes, such as "the international theme" and "the perennial entanglements of love" set against the "dialectic of innocence and experience" and the "timeless drama of love and renunciation," are discussed next. Acknowledging "ambiguities, obscurities, undecidable things" which are the "epicenters" of the Jamesian text, Bishop uses in "Style" a passage from "The Beast in the Jungle" both to illustrate James's "labyrinthine" sentences and to reveal through textual analysis the enormous challenge and reward that James's prose can offer.

The last section of the book is an impressive bibliography (more than 100 entries) with capsule characterization and annotations of bibliographies, biographies, and criticism assisting both novice and devoted readers of James.

This slim, sharp-focused, and neatly produced book brings an interpretative contribution as a veritable "reader's guide" to James's life and literary and critical accomplishments. Despite its diminutive size, it contains many insights. It should meet the needs of literature students, graduate and undergraduate, and can appropriately introduce the general reader to the centralities, the intricacies, and the eccentricities of James's major works.

A.S. Byatt

Passions of the Mind

Chatto and Windus, 1991. Pp. 346. \$34.95

Reviewed by Jane Campbell

This collection of essays on nineteenth-and twentieth-century fiction and poetry, appearing after the success of Byatt's *Possession*, will interest not only readers of that novel but those who have followed—or are belatedly catching up with—her progression as a writer of fiction which began in 1964 with *Shadow of a Sun*. Her scholarly and critical work is less well known: she has produced full-length studies of Wordsworth and Coleridge and of Iris Murdoch (whose influence on Byatt's writing is pervasive) and numerous essays, reviews and introductions. Divided into five sections, "As a Writer," "Victorians: Incarnation and Art," "Moderns: Varying Strands," "The Female Voice?" (the question mark indicates Byatt's wariness of feminist assumptions), and "Vision and Reality," the papers in *Passions of the Mind* span the years from 1969 to 1991. After the two essays on Byatt's own work, focusing on *Still Life* and "Sugar," the collection brings together reviews and occasional papers (reviews of, among others, Georgette Heyer, Toni Morrison, Monique Wittig; reflections on judging the TLS poetry competition); more accessible work ("People in Paper Houses," essays on Frazer, Freud and postmodernist fiction, and on D.J. Enright, introductions to George Eliot and Willa Cather); and expanded versions of shorter pieces (on Browning, Ford Madox Ford, Van Gogh) now published for the first time. Linking this apparently disparate material is Byatt's preoccupation with the nature of language and narrative, and especially with the changes in myth and metaphor under the pressures of Victorian skepticism, modernism and postmodernism. Byatt's description of her project in *Possession*, to "explore the continuities and discontinuities between the forms of nineteenth-and twentieth-century art and thought" (6), describes *Passions of the Mind* as well.

Byatt takes it for granted that no boundaries exist between theory and practice. By nature an "agnostic . . . a non-believer and a non-belonger to schools of thought" (2), she shows how writers as diverse as Leavis, Foucault, Pound, and Graham Greene have helped to form her ideas and attitudes. Neither is there a division between her roles as academic and as creative