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Towards a better definition of ‘audience’: Hans Robert Jauss’s rezeptionsästhetik theory

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TOWARDS A BETTER DEFINITION OF 'AUDIENCE':
HANS ROBERT JAUSS'S REZEPTIONSÄSTHETIK THEORY

BY

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ABSTRACT

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In this thesis, I consider the structure and nature of Hans Robert Jauss's notion of the audience and the role this notion plays in literary criticism. In light of the fact that Jauss's conception of the reader is unique and complicated (in that he does not fall neatly into any of the larger categories of the reader such as Riffaterre's "superreader" or Wolff's "intended reader"), I seek to provide a fuller explanation of the features of the audience for each reading stage. In order to flush out the characteristics of the three reading stages described by Jauss, I utilize Alfred Schutz's notions of type, typification, and finite provinces of meaning. Schutz's conception of the "finite provinces of meaning" is a helpful one when seeking to unpack the "types" which implicitly compose the activities of each reading stage. Therefore, I attempt to unravel the implicit typifications which make up Jauss's "stages of reading" as well as motivate the reasons why such a project bears some significance for our understanding of the notion of the reader as subject.
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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
SETTING THE STAGE FOR READER-RESPONSE CRITICISM

One of the most persistent polarities which has informed literary criticism during the past few decades has been the tension between views stressing either the autonomy of the text or the experience of the reader. On the one hand, critics intent on stabilizing meaning through an objective analysis of the formal correlates within the text have viewed the literary work as a permanent form or structure whose signification is a function of its intrinsic configuration. This gesture, typical of the New Criticism, confers a high degree of autonomy upon the text, defining meaning as a property belonging to the spatially conceivable work. On the other hand, proponents of subjective criticism ascribe meaning to the experience of the reading subject who, through the progressive assimilation of the text, generates a signification which is always radically personal.¹ This approach deprives the texts of both its autonomy and its spatiality. Here, the text does not possess any single, stable, intrinsic configuration.

A general overview of the tendencies in literary criticism over the past twenty years reveals a shift towards the latter approach which emphasizes the experience of the reader. There has been an increasing appeal to the reader and the reading act, evident in theorists such as Stanley Fish, and Hans Robert Jauss.² Although both Fish and Jauss
appeal to the reader for significantly different reasons, they each concentrate on the importance of the role of the reader and/or audience for interpretation theory. The position of Stanley Fish, examined in this section, can best be understood when contrasted with positions exemplified by critics who stress the role of the text over that of the audience, exemplified in the position of William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley.

The debate between critics such as Wimsatt/Beardsley and Fish centers around the question of primacy which, simply stated, is: "What accounts for 'objective' truth and meaning in interpretation---the reader or the text?" In The Verbal Icon, 3 William Wimsatt and Monroe Beardsley argue against what they term the "affective" and "intentional" fallacies associated with interpreting the text. For them, the true intentions of the author are not available; to assume that one can reconstruct the meaning of a text based upon the author's intentions is fallacious. Further, it is an affective fallacy to delegate any "objective" meaning to the reader because the responses of the reader may vary both from reader to reader as well as for one given reader over a period of time. The outcome of either the intentional or the affective fallacy for Wimsatt and Beardsley is that the work itself (as a specifically critical basis for judgment) disappears. Instead, they argue that the text itself is the self-sufficient repository of meaning. Wimsatt and Beardsley suggest that nothing contributes to any true interpretation except for the text. Consequently, resorting to either the intentions of the author or the audiences' reading of the text reduces objectivity to impressionism and relativism.
Several critics have responded to the position illustrated by the Wimsatt and Beardsley example. American critics Stanley Fish and Susan Suleiman, as well as Continental critics Wolfgang Iser and Hans-Robert Jauss, have each contributed to a type of criticism known respectively as either "reader-response" criticism or Rezeptionsästhetik.

Stanley Fish is probably one of the best examples of an American response to the Wimsatt/Beardsley position. Challenging positions which emphasize the self-sufficiency of the text, Fish aligns himself with "reader-response" criticism by stressing the importance of the reader's experience of the work. The "meaning experience" of the reader functions for Fish (especially in his earlier work) on two levels. First, there is a basic reader competency level (comparable, in a sense, to Chomsky's linguistic competence). This level is common to all readers and functions as Fish's response to the contention that there are as many interpretive experiences as there are readers. The second level is the act of interpretation: what is said, thought, or felt about the work in retrospect. Fish displaces the burden of significance from the information content of the language in a given work to the activity which that language provokes in its reader. Simply put, Fish redefines "meaning" as that experience which the reader undergoes during the progressive apprehension and comprehension of the text. By stressing that the critical account must concentrate on the shape of the experience to which a specific work gives rise, Fish avoids locating the significance of a work in the eventual knowledge we can derive through assimilating the work's reference field or identifying the signified that corresponds
to every signifier. For Fish, the fact that no certain signified can be assigned to the signifiers of the text is less an obstacle than it is a catalyst. Instead, when we encounter a resistant or ambiguous passage, we simply, I "...make it signify; first by regarding it as evidence of an experience and then by specifying for that experience a meaning."6

The thrust of Fish's method lies in its radical elevation of the temporal dimension of the reader's literary experience. "The basis," he states, "of the method is a consideration of the temporal flow of the reading experience, and it is assumed that the reader responds in terms of that flow and not to the whole utterance."7 Here, the final retrospective evaluation which follows the reading of a text is displaced in favor of the perpetually flowing, constantly developing experience of the reader. Rather than a chronicle, the affective stylistician produces a diary. According to Fish, "...the report of what happens to the reader is always a report of what has happened to that point."8 In addition, the temporal movement of reading is overseen by the reader's competences. Fish observes, "the temporal flow is monitored and structured by everything the reader brings with him, by his competences; and it is by taking these into account as they interact with the temporal left to right reception of the verbal string, that I am able to chart and project the developing response."9

Fish's "revolutionary" relocation of meaning into the developing response of the reader is, however, somewhat deceptive. For instance, meaning occurs for Fish only when the reading flow is modulated by "something other than itself, something outside its frame of reference." Meaning is still found in experience, but experience is understood as the
cumulative residue of one's past moments which, as an overarching configuration of possibilities, are permanently present.

While Fish's basic formulation combines a subjective view of meaning with an essentially autonomous view of the text, the notion of pretextual competence tends to attribute both form and signification to an extratextual, intersubjective order. While it is theoretically possible that the increased responsibility which Fish grants to the framework of the text could lead to a decrease in the importance of the temporal aspect of reading and literature, such a theoretical shift is not immediately apparent in the practical application of Fish's method. For Fish, meaning not only appears inextricably bound up with sequence; in addition, the final moment of the sequence inevitably assumes a determinative role. In a progression where succession is the key term, the final moment subsumes all others which, whatever their primacy at the instant of their apprehension, eventually assume the color of an intermediate stage in the progression: "...the interpretive crux...concerns the final line." 10

Fish reduces the activity of reading to the progressive illumination which recipients undergo as each successive segment or moment of the text advances a further proposition while superseding its forerunners. His highly personified characterization of the text clearly implies that this progression is a function of the work's propositionality, and consequently of an objective, attestable linguistic entity. There are, for Fish, "moments" in the progression of the reading of the text. Such "moments" are the products of pauses in the reading activity which themselves postulate a retrospective summation at a given point; a
closure without which the text could not reopen the question. In this sense, propositionality is less a formal attribute of the text than it is a posture of the reader. Fish states, "My unit of analysis is interpretive or perceptual, and rather than proceeding directly from formal units of language, it determines what those units are...[it] is formed (or forms itself) at the moment when the reader hazards interpretive closure, when he enters into a relationship...with a proposition."\textsuperscript{11} While avoiding the step which would ascribe the proposition entirely to the reader, this formulation neatly states the suspension of the progression, which belongs no more to "the text" than it does to "the reader." "Advancement" in knowledge (which the reader undergoes) does not need to correspond to the proposition attributed to the surface argument of the text. In Fish's system, the meaning of the work is literally our experience of it; it does not matter what particular conclusion we reach. In different terms, Fish's primary strategy is to subscribe ostensibly to the propositional paradigm while, at the same time, undermining it by consistently maintaining that the problems which his preferred texts advance have no single solution: "they are not," he states, "meant to be solved, but to be experienced."\textsuperscript{12}

In addition, Fish rejects the entire notion of a pure propositional language which could refer directly to reality. The "positivist assumption of a 'brute fact' world and a language answerable to it,"\textsuperscript{13} seems to him to both trivialize and degrade language and reality by depriving them of the human content which grants them value. Instead, he argues from the point of view of speech act theory that "utterances are regarded as instances of purposeful human behavior; that is to say,
they refer not to a state of affairs in the real world, but to the commitments and attitudes of those who produce them in the context of specific situations."14 As a result, Fish rejects the possibility of "ordinary" language which has been purged of "matters of purpose, value, intention, obligation, etc., everything in short that can be characterized as human."15 In this way, the propositional paradigm espoused by a given text is ultimately a delusion. Although the delusional quality can always be demonstrated (because we cannot refer to our use of the propositional paradigm), the real promise of the text, cannot be broken. This is because the situation towards which we ultimately advance in reading is not coincident with some external state of affairs; rather, it coincides with our own developing cognition.

There are, however, several drawbacks to Fish's approach. First, by raising the question of the proposition to a level of preeminence, Fish unavoidably eclipses a number of fascinating issues, particularly regarding the reading of fictional texts. For example, Fish claims that one of the virtues of his method is its ability to account for even the most "transparent" kind of language in interesting ways. Since "every linguistic experience is affecting and pressuring," even a banal phrase like "there is a chair" can be expected to yield fascinating results if we pose the question, "what does this do?"16 But, unlike phenomenological critics such as Roman Ingarden who problematize the process by which such a sentence brings an intentional objectivity into "givenness" for its reader, Fish passes immediately to the consideration of the phrases propositional import, glossing over the operations of concretization
which it might provoke in its recipient. He states, "thus the utterance (written or spoken) 'there is a chair' is at once understood as the report either of an existing state of affairs or of an act of perception (I see a chair). In either frame of reference, it makes immediate sense." The implication here is that "sense making" is a function of an easy referentiality; any sentence which refers us to a familiar object is unproblematic at the experiential level. Aside from the fact that such a view subordinates reading to "message content", the "information" contained in the sentence neglects what the sentence does to the reader, in favor of considering its epistemological implications for the sophisticated critic. Here, one of the initial benefits of affective stylistics--its ability to transcend the referential paradigm--is negated by a subscription to a dichotomy which reintroduces referentiality in the guise of the ultimate referent: all sentences are recuperated by reading them as either reinforcements or denials of the individual's ability to make sense of the world, of language's cooperation in the direct transmission of knowledge.

Unlike the formalist spatializations which Fish criticizes, the proposition (as it appears in the given text) is perceived as part of the reader's developing knowledge which cannot be grasped in a single schema in which all elements retain equal status. Since the proposition has as its impetus a permanent condition of possibility, it carries with it a curious sort of spatiality. While each successive stage may advance our knowledge, the goal of this quest is always total congruence with the state of affairs which originated the propositional gesture (i.e. the
sentence in the text). In short, the proposition ultimately encloses spatiality as well as temporality and succession. The reality to which it leads us is permanent and everywhere, both before and after our reading. Since this reality is posited to be our own meaning (as activity), the subject is not left behind or transcended, he or she is changed. "The motion of the rational consciousness is stilled, for it has become indistinguishable from the object of its inquiry." 18 As beginning and end coincide, spatial differentiation is no longer possible. Beyond the categories of space and time which our rational linguistic activity spins out to orient itself, there is only one point (always and everywhere), and this point both subsumes and is immanent in us.

Although it is not thematized in theological terms in the works which Fish studies, this transcendence remains for our purposes permanently operative in his project on a meta-literary level, bringing us back to the question of language. To the extent that they devolve from the differentiation of reality on the basis of assigned boundaries, units, and properties, the categories of space and time both reflect and derive from the structure of language: "language serves us by putting things (words, concepts, persons, actions) in their (that is, our) place". In this sense, transcendence to which reading leads the reader is as much a transcendence of language as of their other marks of mortality.

MOTIVATING THE NEED FOR REZEPTIONSÄSTHETIK CRITICISM

There are both similarities and differences between the philosophies of Stanley Fish and Hans-Robert Jauss. For the purposes of
our discussion, both Fish and Jauss share an interest in the reader's role in interpretation. For Fish, the reader's experience of the text is fundamental and transcendent. For Jauss, the interaction between the text and the reader is crucial. Neither the text nor the reader possess an ontological status exclusive of the other. On a continuum, Jauss's approach falls between Stanley Fish (who elevates the reader's role in criticism over the role of the text) and Hans-Georg Gadamer (who gives an ontological status to the text). Fish provides an interesting contrast to Jauss because he understands the reader's role as transcendent. It is, I believe, accurate to say that Jauss proposes a more realistic account of the way in which interpretation occurs.

On the one hand, Jauss would agree with Fish's claim that utterances within a given text refer to the commitments and attitudes of the individuals who produce them. [See pages 5-7, above.] In addition, he would accept Fish's rejection of a pure propositional language which could refer directly to reality. Although the differences between Fish and Jauss are subtle, they are very significant. First, unlike Fish, Jauss (relying on the work of his teacher, Hans Georg Gadamer) approaches the reader's importance to the text from a historical standpoint. He does not, like Fish, attempt to counter formalist theories suggesting that the reader is the source of objective meaning for the text. Instead, Jauss admits the value of formalist contributions for interpretation theory. In light of the formalist contributions which taught that the work of art cannot be seen apart from literary historical genres and forms, Jauss attempts to bridge the "gap between literature and history." 20 It is a failure, he suggests, for formalism to view the reader as a merely
perceiving subject following the directions of the text in order to distinguish the literary form or procedure.

Instead, Jauss suggests that the reader, listener, and spectator are each very important for any adequate interpretation theory. In light of this, Jauss introduces Gadamer's model of dialogue to reader-reception theory. For Jauss, the history of literature is a dialogue between work and audience. Here, it is significant that in the triad between author, work, and audience, the role of the audience is not passive, but, as Jauss notes, "itself and energy formative of history."\textsuperscript{21} In this way,

The historical life of a literary work is unthinkable without the active participation of its addressees. For it is only through the process of its mediation that the work enters into the changing horizon-of-experience of a continuity in which the perpetual inversion occurs from simple reception to critical understanding, from passive to active reception, from recognized aesthetic to a new production that surpasses them.\textsuperscript{22}

For Jauss, the history of literature involves a process-like relationship between work, audience, and new work which has a dialogical nature comparable, in one sense, to the process of question and answer or message and receiver. Interpretation is, in this sense, best characterized as a give and take between work and audience. In addition, the audience's reception of the given work is not passive; there is an active dialectic between the text and its addressees. The burden, however, upon any methodology which engages in a dialectical approach is that each side of the to-and-fro motion must be carefully delineated and defined. Thanks to much of the work done throughout this century, both by structuralists and formalists, linguists and philosophers, the notion not only of what a text is, but its structure, has been greatly
reinforced. Much of this work is utilized and incorporated by Jauss in his application of Rezeptionsästhetik criticism to specific works. What stands out as one is immersed in Jauss's methodology is that, due to the extensive, relatively recent work on the structure of sounds, words, phrases, and literary works, we have clearly delineated many of the basic features of the text, while the exploration of characteristics of the audience remain virtually non-existent.

In this essay, I will attempt to motivate and respond to Hans Robert Jauss's notion of Rezeptionsästhetik. In Chapter Two, I take up the influence of Gadamer's hermeneutics, specifically the model of play and the fusion of horizons, for Jauss's interpretation theory. It is hoped that an analysis of Gadamer's contribution will convincingly demonstrate the ways in which Jauss's approach goes beyond theorists such as Stanley Fish who, likewise, stresses the reader's role in interpretation. Unlike Fish, Jauss's interpretation theory is motivated by a desire to deal with both poetics and hermeneutics.

For Jauss, neither the reader nor the text possess an ontological status prior to the other. Instead, there is a necessary relationship between the two; a give-and-take, grounded in historical understanding. In Chapter Three, I will consider Jauss's methodology in light of his attempt to retranslate the poetic structure of the text back into the actual experience of the work itself. Here, I will discuss both the theoretical and pragmatic features of the actual application of his interpretation theory. Although Jauss accurately describes the way in which any adequate interpretation theory accounts for both the
structural features of the text and the historical reception of its audience, he fails to provide an explicit formulation of the nature of the "audience". It is my intention to provide a characterization of audience suitable for Jauss's understanding of reader-reception theory. Consequently, in Chapter Four I suggest an apt model for Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* theory, proposed by Alfred Schutz in his development of the notion of the finite provinces of meaning.²³
CHAPTER II
HANS GEORG GADAMER'S CONTRIBUTION TO REZEPTIONSÄSTHETIK CRITICISM

The literary theory of Hans-Robert Jauss is an attempt to develop a methodology for textual criticism which includes the author, the work, and the audience as interconnected factors in the interpretive event. Specifically, Jauss stresses that the role of audience reception is a crucial aspect of interpretation. Consequently, Jauss's literary-critical methodology strives both to understand and interpret the meaning of the text in its historical/sociological and structural rootedness. In seeking to introduce the importance of aesthetic reception for interpretation, Jauss draws upon Gadamer's formulation of the "horizon of expectations" for literary texts.

Jauss employs notions in his theory of aesthetic reception which assume a familiarity with both hermeneutic and linguistic terminology, especially as it has developed during the last century. It is not my intention, however, to trace either the history of hermeneutics or linguistics. Instead, I will attempt to provide the reader with a short background into some of the concepts employed by Gadamer which are used frequently by Jauss both explicitly and implicitly in his theory of aesthetic reception. In this chapter, I will first motivate Gadamer's approach by looking at the contrasting position offered by E.D. Hirsch. I will then look at three key features of Gadamer's hermeneutics which relate specifically to Jauss's understanding of the audience's relation to
work itself. Here, I will identify and define certain related terms which appear in Gadamer's work.

The three terms (or notions) which will be examined include Gadamer's notion of "game-playing," the theory of play [Spiel], and, finally, the "horizon of expectations." In each instance, it is hoped that identifying these notions in context will clarify the reader's understanding of the significance of Jauss's theory of aesthetic reception. First, however, we must examine one aspect of Hirsch's argument, intentionalism, which is particularly instructive for assessing Gadamer's account of textual understanding and aesthetic experience.

HIRSCH'S INTENTIONALISM

Why should our understanding of a text change because of our historical understanding? Why should understanding be contingent on our place in history? Is it not possible with regard to textual understanding at least to identify an understanding of meaning with an understanding of intentions? Are texts truly "creative products" (such as Schleiermacher suggests) and, if they are, does understanding them amount to recreating the creative process that engendered them? If a text is not to be understood in light of its author's intentions, then how should it be understood?

These questions are similar to those raised by E.D. Hirsch in his attempt to defend a Schleiermacherian notion of textual understanding. In this section I shall therefore look briefly at his work in order to illuminate Gadamer's contrasting position. Of course, the Schleiermacherian equation of textual understanding with an understanding of an author's original intentions has been under attack for many years from such different perspectives as the New Criticism, reader-response
theory and deconstruction. Gadamer's hermeneutics agrees with these alternative perspectives in some ways and differs in others. My aim in this section is not to display the similarities and differences in recent developments in literary theory; rather, I will examine the cogency of Gadamer's own view.

Therefore, I shall take up only one aspect of Hirsch's argument which is particularly instructive for assessing Gadamer's analysis; I shall then turn to Gadamer's account of textual understanding, "play", and the horizon of expectations. In so doing, I shall also specify more concretely what Gadamer means in opposing the understanding of truth to that of intentions.

Many critics have pointed to the ambiguity in Hirsch's identification of textual meaning with an author's intentions: while Hirsch directs his argument against the anti-intentionalism he associates with the New Criticism, he also seems to agree with the New Criticism in rejecting an overtly psychologistic conception of intentional meaning. In equating textual meaning with an author's intentions, Hirsch does not follow nineteenth century approaches (demonstrated by Schleiermacher) in identifying that meaning with the mental acts and experiences that occurred in the author's mind at the time the text was written. Instead, he appeals to the phenomenological concept of "intentionality" to formulate a notion of a "verbal meaning" that is the self-identical object of various mental acts. Verbal meaning, in other words, is the meaning the author intends through certain mental acts, not those acts themselves. Hirsch, however, does not think that authors can intend whatever they like with their intentional acts; they are, rather,
constrained in what their words can mean by the linguistic conventions of their culture. His preliminary definition of verbal meaning is thus: "whatever someone has willed to convey by a particular sequence of linguistic signs and which can be conveyed by means of those linguistic signs."\(^2\)

This preliminary definition of verbal meaning needs to be further clarified to deal with meanings of which an author may not have been consciously aware but that are still part of a correct interpretation of his or her intention. Therefore, after discussing the notion of type Hirsch makes the following claim: an author’s meaning can include more than that of which the author is explicitly aware because the author’s intended meaning specifies a certain type of thing as opposed to a particular mental content. Thus, for example, if I say, "Nothing pleases me so much as the Ninth Symphony of Beethoven," I mean that nothing of a certain type or nothing aesthetic pleases me so much. I exclude such pleasures as swimming while including such pleasures that I am not consciously considering (such as reading Schiller’s Ode to Joy). Verbal meaning is therefore a "willed type" that both prevents interpreters from reading into a text any meaning they desire, but also may encompass more than that upon which the author has directly focused.

This definition of verbal meaning has been criticized for many reasons. Although Hirsch’s use of phenomenology distinguishes his account of meaning from a psychologistic conception, in delineating the consequences of his account for literary criticism Hirsch often seems to vacillate between the two.\(^3\) Moreover, since he also distinguishes between the "subjectivity of the author" and the "speaking subject", claiming that only the latter is relevant to textual meaning, it is unclear
how far he differs from the New Critics he attacks. Nevertheless, the peculiarity in Hirsch's analysis of verbal meaning that concerns us involves his conception of "shareability". We have seen that Hirsch no longer defines meaning as a private act but claims rather that it is embodied in language and limited by linguistic conventions. Verbal meaning is therefore accessible to other speaking subjects and can be shared by them. Hirsch argues further, however, that if verbal meaning is to be shareable it must be "determinate"; that is, it must be self-identical and unchanging (otherwise, it would be impossible for other subjects to reproduce for themselves the meaning an author intends). Hence, if I say "close the door," on Hirsch's view, I can communicate this order only because "door" has a single, public meaning that the people I am addressing can recreate for themselves through their own intentional acts.

For Hirsch, the shareability of verbal meaning appears to refer to two circumstances: first, that the words of a text can be used to convey the sense that an author wants to convey and second, that interpreters can discover that this is in fact the sense he or she wants to convey. It seems, however, that they need not discover this fact about the author by comprehending the meaning of his or her text. All that is required for the shareability of verbal meaning is that somehow they do discover what the author intended and read the text in terms of this intention. The intention need not be immediately discernible in the text. Thus, despite his critique of psychologism, Hirsch sees the communication of meaning as a process of somehow uncovering the meanings another person has intended and in this regard he even agrees with Schlegelmecher; some form of divination or "genial guess" may be
needed.  

The narrowness of this definition of the shareability of verbal meaning is also indicated by the example of Beethoven's symphony to which I have already referred. Hirsch writes:

The hyperbolic uses of "nothing" to stand for "no work of art" is a common sort of linguistic extension and can constitute verbal meaning in any context in which it is communicable. My friend could have understood me. He misunderstands for the sake of the example.

Here, by "a common sort of linguistic extension," Hirsch means that I can mean what I intend to mean given prevailing linguistic conventions and you could have shared my meaning although you did not. But what sense of sharing is this? How does it clarify the problem of textual interpretation to claim that "my friend could have understood me" if he or she did not? My friend knows what I intended and perhaps he can even see how I thought my words would convey the meaning I intended. But he does not "share" my meaning; he simply recognizes that this is what I intended and only recognizes this after I have explained myself more fully.

For Hirsch, then, an author's meaning is what he or she consciously or unconsciously intends as part of a willed type; by its "shareability" he means that an interpreter can unearth what an author "willed." By hermeneutic methods such as genial guesses and subsequent comparisons with prevailing linguistic usage he may signal appropriate processes of disinterment. To this extent, Hirsch's account of the shareability of verbal meaning conforms to a view of traditional hermeneutics whereby one shares an author's meaning when one intuits it, reexperiences the author's intentions within oneself, or simply knows what the original
intention was. If one shares a common linguistic context with an author, then sharing verbal meaning will also be fairly easy. One will know, for instance, that "nothing" can mean "no work of art" and will be able simply to move from the meanings typical of the linguistic practice of the culture to the author's probable intention. Where a common linguistic context and hence knowledge of typical meanings does not exist, understanding will be more difficult. In this case, one will have to reconstruct the relevant cultural, historical, and biographical situation before one can know or share what the author meant.

Nothing separates Gadamer and Hirsch so much as their views on sharing verbal meaning. As I shall explain below, for Gadamer, if the meaning of a text is shared then such sharing involves more than either a knowledge of what an author's intentions were or a capacity to reconstruct them; it means rather that readers share the text's understanding of its subject-matter. The interpreter does not know merely that a poet intended to convey a sense of desolation, for instance; if the poem is about desolation, this means that in reading the poem, the reader comes to understand precisely the way in which twilight or the desert can be desolate. Where interpreter and writer already share a linguistic context, agreement on the subject-matter of a text may be easier or come about more quickly. Nevertheless, hermeneutic understanding does not depend upon a previously shared idiom but rather serves to create one. Moreover, where reader and writer do not share a linguistic context, the hermeneutic process is not exhausted in reconstructing the linguistic conventions that the author assumes. Rather, understanding the meaning of a text involves constructing a common language and thereby coming to an understanding of the text's
"truth".

This position separates Gadamer not only from Hirsch but also from "reception" or "reader-response" critics such as Hans-Robert Jauss.6 For, if textual meaning cannot be located in the author's intentions, neither can it be identified with a reader's — even an informed or ideal reader's — experience. Rather, when a text is understood its meaning cannot be attributed to either writer or reader. The meaning of the text is a shared language, shared in the sense that it is no one person's possession; rather, it is a common view of a given subject-matter. Gadamer begins to defend this position by means of a phenomenological account of game-playing.

THE STRUCTURE OF GAME-PLAYING

Gadamer suggests that games and works of art both have an essential priority over the individuals who experience or play them. In playing a game, players enter a new and total environment. Indeed, it is often necessary to enter a space — a gym or playing field — set aside for the game. In entering this space, the players put aside their own concerns and desires and submit to the purposes of the game itself. Its goals and requirements take over and dictate actions and strategies of the players. The subject of action in a game is therefore not really the person playing it; the person's actions and aspirations are rather reactions to tasks the game itself imposes and hence it is the action of the game, or what Gadamer refers to as the to-and-fro movement internal to it, that is the decisive factor for any game-playing. As he writes:

The appeal of the game, the fascination it exerts, consists in the fact that it becomes master of the player. Even when games are concerned in which one tries to fulfill tasks one has set
oneself, it is the risk, the question of whether it "works," "succeeds," or "succeeds again," that exercises the game's attraction. The actual subject of the game (precisely those experiences make this clear in which there is only a single player) is not the player but the game itself. 7

This analysis of involvement in games has an obvious application to the experience of texts and works of art insofar as we are used to thinking of art works as encompassing, and, indeed, overwhelming, readers and spectators. Reading a book, watching a play, or examining a painting could thus be considered to have the same character of entry into a new domain as does playing a game. In each case, players, viewers, or readers are transported out of their own lives into another reality with its own overriding concerns and purposes. This account, however, does not differentiate Gadamer's analysis from others. For example, for Schiller and post-Kantian aesthetics, art is a beautiful illusion, a dream that suffuses and overcomes its viewers. Spectators are therefore lifted into a separate domain in the same way as are the players of a game; once again, they leave their own concerns, engrossed in those of the work of art itself.

One crucial difference between this position and Gadamer's is indicated by his emphasis on the normative authority of the game. Playing a game involves not only entering a different reality but, more importantly, submitting to its norms and requirements. Games comprise a set of rules to which participants must adhere. The game, therefore, has an authority over its players; it even specifies a range of appropriate attitudes and responses. Gadamer's suggestion is that art has a similar normative authority. Readers and spectators do not simply enter a new sphere; the books they read and the plays and paintings they view make a
claim on them.

Games, for Gadamer, constitute not only a separate domain but also a normative authority which the players have to accept. With the transformation of games into dramatical presentations, this normative authority becomes binding on the audience which it possesses. What was once a structure that dominated its players is now a structure that encompasses both players and audience; it forms an all-encompassing reality with rules which are demanding on the audience which is composed of players. Art presents a challenge to the way the audience lives its life, a challenge to live it differently. It does not simply introduce a new imaginary domain; instead, it presents a reality with consequences for the world its audience inhabits. Art, on Gadamer's view, turns out to be an attempt to represent truth. Reducing its meaning to an expression of its author's creativity reflects both a failure to recognize its autonomy and, more importantly, an unjustifiable restriction on the knowledge it contains.

The results of Gadamer's suggestions thus far imply that while the possibility of aesthetic meaning depends upon the presence of an audience, what the audience experiences is a claim to truth. While, on the one hand, Gadamer claims that the experience of meaning cannot be restricted to the experiences of either the author or the artist (hereby, acknowledging the importance of the audience to interpretation), he does not perceive the role of the audience as possessing a truth-giving ability. It is the work, for Gadamer, which possesses an ontological claim to truth.

Hans-Robert Jauss revises Gadamer's suggestion that certain works
(such as "Classics") possess claims to truth by adding the dimension of poetics to Gadamer's emphasis on hermeneutics. Although Jauks utilizes certain key Gadamerian notions or structures when developing his theory of Rezeptionsästhetik, he appeals both to the audience and the text for meaning, attributing an exclusive priority to neither one. Below, I will look at two Gadamerian structures which are utilized by Jauks in his work on aesthetic reception theory.

GADAMER'S MODEL OF PLAY

First, like Gadamer, whose model of "play" suggests that there is a to-and-fro movement between the reader and the text, Jauks perceives literary history as communicative and dialogical in nature. Jauks attempts to bridge the gap between literature and history. For him, literary criticism has failed adequately to consider the reader in his or her genuine role: "A role," Jauks states, "...as unalterable for aesthetic as for historical knowledge -- the addressee for whom the literary work is primarily destined."8 It is the public, for Jauks, which is the formative energy of history. In this sense, the communicative character of literature presupposes a dialogical, process-like relation between work, audience, and new work which is similar to such relations as those between message and receiver or question and answer.9 The work is, in this way, the question to which the audience must respond; the message which it in turn receives. Jauks suggests that the history of literature should be understood within the horizon of a dialogue between work and audience. This dialogue (referred to by Gadamer in his discussion of the model of play) forms a continuity, a continuous historical thread, which is constantly mediated by the audience's reception of the work. For
instance, the first reception of the work by a reader involves a test of its aesthetic value in comparison with works he or she has already read. The reader’s understanding may be enriched by a later chain of receptions or re-readings. In addition, the history of audience reception includes the reappropriation of past works simultaneously with the current reception and evaluation of new works. The reader tests the aesthetic value of the “new” work, while reappropriating the value of past works; here, there exists a perpetual mediation of past and present art, of traditional and current literature.

The reader’s relation to the text espoused by Jauss is clarified by Gadamer’s concept of play. For Gadamer, the role of play for the experience of art,

...refers neither to the attitude nor even to the state of mind of the creator or those enjoying the work of art...but to the mode of being of the work of art itself.  

It is the experience of art which is the focus of Gadamer’s notion of play. Here, play is characterized by a to-and-fro movement which is without any particular goal that would cause it to end. Instead, play renews itself through constant repetition. We are constantly confronting the work of art anew; also, we are consumed by the work in such a way that our enjoyment of it is without strain. Gadamer notes that the to-and-fro structure of play,

...absorbs the player into itself, and thus take from him the burden of the initiative, which constitutes the actual strain of existence. This is seen also in the spontaneous tendency to repetition that emerges in the player and in the constant self-renewal of play, which influences its form...  

The individual is lost in the process of play, in his or her reception of
the work. Here, there is a kind of "self-forgetfulness" characteristic of the reader at certain times.\textsuperscript{13} What Gadamer's notion of play involves is a re-evaluation of the ontological status of the work of art. For Gadamer, the being of art cannot be determined as an object of aesthetic awareness.\textsuperscript{14} The aesthetic attitude is both part of the essential process of representation and part of the process of play "as play". Gadamer asks, "If we start in...from the play character of play, what emerges for the closer definition of the nature of aesthetic being?\textsuperscript{15} Certainly what emerges in Gadamer's description of play is a lack of external rules or prescriptions for the apprehension of the aesthetic work. Here, there is a two-fold sense in which, while play is a structure, it is only a structure insofar as it is played. That is, play possesses a structure wherein despite its dependence on being played, it is nevertheless a meaningful whole which can be repeatedly identified and whose significance can be understood. Play possesses a structure as it presents itself as a meaningful whole: play does not exist in itself, but it gains, through being played, its proper being.\textsuperscript{16} Simply put, the structure of play achieves its full being only to the extent that it "is played".

What is important about Gadamer's notion of "play" for Jauss's conception of aesthetic reception is not the ontological status or claim of the work which Gadamer emphasizes; instead, Jauss focuses on the \textit{role} the to-and-fro movement plays when describing the way in which the actual apprehension of the work by the audience occurs. It is very important that the distinction be made between Gadamer's priorities and those of Jauss. Like Gadamer, Jauss is engaging in a descriptive theorizing; he is attempting to describe the way in which interpretation of the work of art occurs. But this is a very general similarity and it is
important to remember that it is the purpose of this section to clarify the Gadamerian terms which are used by Jauss, while not engaging in a full-fledge comparison of their enterprises. This is difficult, however, because one is tempted when defining a given term to go on and explain that term's function within a larger frame of reference. If left unabbreviated, this task becomes endless. While play for Jauss is not an important philosophical component in his overall interpretation theory, it does play an implicit role in the process of audience-work interaction, and it is well worth noting that for Jauss aesthetic reception is a process, a to-and-fro movement, a Spiel, which occurs throughout history between the reader and the text.

**THE 'FUSION OF HORIZONS'

In addition to "play", Jauss utilizes a second Gadamerian notion, the "fusion of horizons". Jauss perceives there to be a "horizon" of dialogue between the reader and the work which corresponds to Gadamer's notion of a "fusion of horizons" contained within the intersubjective horizon of the interpretive event. The "fusion of horizons" is a notion which suggests, for both Gadamer and Jauss, a way in which the text is understood by the recipient. First of all, for Gadamer, interpretation can be described by the hermeneutic phenomenon of conversation which is characterized by the structure of question and answer. Here, the historical text (which is the object of interpretation) asks the question of the interpreter. "Interpretation," Gadamer states,"always involves a relation to the question that is asked of the interpreter. To understand a text means to understand this question."¹⁷ Understanding what this "question" implies, however, is precisely what figuring out the hermeneutical "horizon"
involves. It is through the horizon of the question that the sense of the text is determined. The reader, for Gadamer,

...who seeks to understand must question what lies behind what is said. He must understand it as an answer to a question. If we go back behind what is said, then we inevitably ask questions beyond what is said. We understand the sense of the text only by acquiring the horizon of the question that, as such, necessarily includes other possible answers. 18

Understanding the "horizon of expectations" necessitates understanding the question to which the text is an answer. It is the acquisition of this historical horizon, emphasized by Gadamer, which Jauss relies upon in much of his interpretation theory. Gadamer borrows from Husserl the word "horizon"; here, "horizon" suggests that every finite present has limitations. 19 In this sense, one may speak of an individual who has no horizon, who overvalues what is nearest to him; in contrast, one who has a horizon may be aware of the relative significance of those things which are near him, large or small.

First, understanding the text within a historical context involves acquiring the particular historical horizon in order to perceive the aesthetic work in its "true dimensions". 20 If we do not put ourselves in the historical horizon of the text, we will not adequately understand the significance of what the text has to say. This approach is analogous to the process of conversation where, for instance, we get to know an individual by discovering his standpoint or horizon. The importance of understanding the historical horizon of the text is suggested when Gadamer states,

Just as in a conversation, when we have discovered the standpoint and horizon of the other person, his ideas become intelligible, without our necessarily having to agree with him, the person who thinks historically comes to understand the meaning of what
Analogously, when we understand the text historically we are forced to abandon the claim that it is uttering something that is “true.” That is, the horizon of the text, which we attempt to reconstruct in its historical context, does not possess a claim to truth which is valid for ourselves in our present horizon. Moreover, the horizon of the past, out of which both our present horizon and tradition evolves, is always in motion. Also, the horizon itself is never closed; it is always “something into which we move and that moves with us.”

For Gadamer, understanding the past, the horizon of the given text, requires a historical horizon. In order to understand this horizon, however, we do not simply place ourselves into the historical situation of the given work. Instead, we must always have a horizon of our own which we bring to the historical horizon of the text. Here, the move made by Gadamer to acknowledge two horizons (the historical horizon of the text and the horizon of the recipient) is significant because it points to the role the individual (and his or her present horizon) plays in the process of hermeneutic understanding. “For what do we mean,” Gadamer queries,

...by “placing ourselves” in a situation? Certainly not just disregarding ourselves. This is necessary, of course, in that we must imagine the other situation. But into this other situation we must also bring ourselves. Only this fulfills the meaning of “placing ourselves". 22

Our encounter with the past through the text takes place within the horizon of the present which is continually being formed; we are constantly testing and retesting our prejudices in relation to new
aesthetic experiences. There is, Gadamer suggests, no such thing as either an isolated horizon of the past or the present. "Understanding," he states, "is always the fusion of these horizons which we imagine to exist by themselves."23 For the reader, each encounter with the text occurs within historical consciousness. This necessarily involves the reader's experience of the tension between the past (embodied in the text) and the present. Here, the hermeneutic task consists in consciously uncovering the tension between the horizon of the reader and the horizon of the text. The historically conscious reader understands and is aware of the distinction between the horizon of tradition (which is embodied in the text) and his or her own horizon. Consequently, in the process of understanding a real fusion of horizons occurs wherein the historical horizon is both projected (by the work) and simultaneously uncovered (by the reader).

Jauss utilizes several Gadamerian notions pertaining to the "fusion of horizons" in his development of the three stages of reading characteristic of the reception of the aesthetic work. For instance, Jauss notes the importance of the "question and answer" structure to the process of understanding the text. He states, "The reconstruction of the horizon of expectations, in the face of which a work was created and received in the past, enables one on the other hand to pose questions that the text gave an answer to, and thereby to discover how the contemporary reader could have viewed and understood the work."24 Understanding the aesthetic work via the process of question and answer emphasizes the difference between former and current interpretations, raising to consciousness the history of the work's reception. Here, the history of the influence of a given work can be understood via the logic of question and answer.
In addition to the structure of question and answer, Jauss utilizes Gadamer's notion of a "fusion of horizons" wherein the reconstructed question of the text no longer exists within its original horizon because, as was noted above in the explication of the "two" horizons, the "past" horizon of the text is already enveloped within the horizon of the recipient's present. Jauss relies heavily on Gadamer's notion of the "fusion of horizons" for understanding the history of influence of a given work. It is, for Jauss,

"...the successive unfolding of the potential for meaning that is embedded in a work and actualized in the stages of its historical reception as it discloses itself to understanding judgment, so long as this faculty achieves in a controlled fashion the "fusion of horizons" in the encounter with the tradition."

The agreement between Jauss and Gadamer regarding the nature of the interpretive process reaches an end, however, when Jauss considers the role of poetics in addition to the role of hermeneutics. Consequently, while Jauss proposes a theory of interpretation which draws heavily on the features of Gadamer's philosophy which are characteristically "hermeneutic," the poetic features of the work receive, under Jauss's consideration, equal priority. Jauss, for instance, draws heavily on Gadamer's formulation of both the structure of play (Spiel) and the "fusion of horizons" as well as the structural, poetic features of the text itself when developing his theory of the aesthetics of reception.

Although a discussion of the key features of Gadamer's hermeneutics utilized by Jauss does not bear directly on an argument for determining the nature of "audience", it is, nevertheless, important. As Jauss's professor and mentor, Gadamer's work sets the tone, in many ways, for
Rezeptionsästhetik theory. Much of Jauss's approach is informed by an emphasis on the role of the historical horizon of the work itself. For instance, Jauss delineates “three stages” of reading. In the third stage, the primary focus is determining the horizon in which the work was originally received; here, the nature of the “first” audience is discussed and documented. While the third stage reading will be discussed in more detail in the chapter which follows, it suffices to note the importance the notion of a “fusion of horizons” plays in Jauss's conceptualization of the interpretation process.

There is a second, more significant reason for examining some of the major features of Gadamer's hermeneutics. Jauss separates himself from Gadamer to the extent that he emphasizes both the role of poetics and hermeneutics for interpretation theory. In contrast, Gadamer urges a firmly hermeneutical approach, stressing the role of the process of “play” and the “fusion of horizons” in the interpretive event. For Jauss, both the work and the audience, both hermeneutics and poetics, participate in the process of interpretation. As will be examined more carefully in Chapter Two, the poetics of the work for Jauss (that is, the structural and aesthetic features) as well as its hermeneutical features (the “horizon of reception”, the “fusion of horizons”) play equally important roles.

In the Chapter which follows, I will discuss the structure of Jauss's Rezeptionsästhetik theory in light of his application of the three stages of reading to Baudelaire's poetic text, "Spleen". In light of this, I will explore the nature of the “reader(s)” developed by Jauss and, in Chapter Four, the ways in which the “stages” of reception can be clarified in light of Alfred Schutz's notion of the “finite provinces of meaning.”
CHAPTER III
HANS ROBERT JAUSS'S THREE STAGES OF INTERPRETATION

Although Jauss incorporates elements of Hans Georg Gadamer's hermeneutics such as the "fusion of horizons" and the structure of question and answer in his Rezeptionsästhetik theory, he also considers the role played by poetics in the interpretation of the given text. For Jauss, a necessary relationship between the reader and the text occurs in the interpretive process; a give and take, grounded in historical understanding. But, while Jauss urges us to recognize the crucial role played by the audience in the process of interpretation, he does not provide an explicit formulation of the nature of the "audience" itself. Instead, Jauss describes the process of reception of the literary work, dividing it into three "stages". In this chapter, I will discuss each stage of reception in light of Jauss's own historical analysis of Baudelaire's poetic text, "Spleen." It is, of course, important to recall the influence Gadamer's notion of the fusion of horizons has had on Jauss's conception of the "stages" of interpretation. Jauss, however, makes several departures from Gadamer's hermeneutics, the most significant being his emphasis on both the poetics and hermeneutics of the work itself. As the reader is constantly reminded throughout this text, Jauss separates himself from his mentor, Gadamer, by introducing into the arena of hermeneutics the notion that neither poetics nor hermeneutics are mutually exclusive approaches to the text. Additionally, Jauss emphasizes the role of the audience in the triangle formed between author, reader, and text.
When considering Jauss's methodology (in light of his attempt to retranslate the poetic structure of the text back into the actual experience of the work itself), one is immediately struck by a discrepancy between the scholarly attention focused by Jauss on the actual structure of the work and his representation of the nature of the audience itself. That is, while Jauss describes the structure of the text with accuracy and ease, he nowhere discusses the structure or nature of the audience itself. Instead, Jauss focuses on the ways in which the audience "reads" the text in each "stage" of its reception. In the seminal application of his methodology to the poetic text, "Spleen", Jauss attempts to demonstrate how the process of retranslation occurs. Through his identification of the three stages of the interpretation (illustrated in his analysis of "Spleen"), Jauss descriptively formulates the process whereby the poetic structure of the work is experienced differently, depending upon its audience and on the stage of reading of the specific reader.

It is my contention that Jauss, in the actual application of his theory, focuses on the poetic structure of the work while avoiding a discussion of what features actually constitute the "audience" itself. I do not want, however, to suggest that Jauss's failure to provide a systematic discussion or definition of the "audience" as such reflects any failure of his theory per se. Instead, I hope to reinforce Jauss's claims by delineating the features of the "audience" in light of Alfred Schutz's notion of the "finite provinces of meaning". In this sense, Chapter Three presents a two pronged purpose. First, I will examine the three stages of interpretation which are presented by Jauss in the
application of his interpretation theory to an actual text. In this section, the role of audience will be discussed in comparison with the roles of both the text and author. Second, I will discuss the actual function of the third stage of literary interpretation. Here, the need for a delineation of "audience" is most clearly apparent.

Before looking at an actual application of Jauss's methodology, it is important that an accurate sense of what is meant by "hermeneutic" is defined. "Hermeneutic," as it was presented in the Romanticist tradition of Friedrich Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey, tended to identify interpretation with the category of "understanding" wherein understanding was defined as the recognition of an author's intention (from the point of view of the addressees in the original situation of discourse.) Here, priority is given to recovering the author's intention (as well as to those of the original audience). Romanticist hermeneutics regarded the aim of understanding as the recovering of the text (through empathy and intuitive understanding). In contrast to the features of empathy and divination characteristic of Romanticist hermeneutics, Jauss approaches the text as if it is a form of dialogue between the author and his or her audience. Understanding proceeds for Jauss, not from explicating the psychological intentions of the author, but from a process of question and answer (informed by historical understanding) between the audience and the work itself. It is important to note, therefore, that Jauss departs from earlier versions of Romanticist hermeneutics which emphasized a psychologizing of the text.

As a general overview to Jauss's project it is helpful to call attention to the seven theses which he outlines in the seminal chapter,
"Literary History as Challenge."\(^2\) The first instance in the seven theses where Jauss mentions the audience occurs in Thesis One where he emphasizes the role of historical context for the apprehension of the given work. The work is continually "reappraised" throughout history; it is continually subject to new contexts and new societal attitudes and mores. It is in light of the varieties of historical context that the audience understands the given text.\(^3\) Moreover, there is a relationship which evolves between the audience and the work as a result of shifts in the historical context within which the work is read. Jauss suggests an apt metaphor for describing the shifts in the historical contexts; he characterizes the text as an "orchestration" which strikes "new resonances" among its readers.\(^4\) Jauss indicates that the audience, in relation to the work, is constituted by "a horizon of expectations of contemporary and later readers, authors, and critics."\(^5\) Here, both the comprehension and representation of the history of literature (in, as Jauss states, "its unique historicity") depends on whether the horizon of expectations can be objectified.

The "horizon of expectations" plays a crucial role in Jauss's methodology. By characterizing an audience's set of expectations for a given text as well as charting possible shifts in the "horizon" of the audience's reception, the "horizon of expectations" may be reconstructed. For instance, Jauss asserts that there is a "given distance" between the new work and the expectations of its receiving audience. This distance is great if the received work challenges pre-conceived attitudes and mores. Conversely, the distance is less if the given work fulfills the audience's expectations. It is not surprising, therefore, that a shift in
horizons results when the distance between the audience's expectations and the text is great. Only when the literary work challenges the expectations of its audience does a shift in the horizon of expectations occur.

As alluded to in the Chapter One discussion of Hans Georg Gadamer's formulation of "Spiel", the reconstruction of the horizon of expectations can be understood via the analogy of "question and answer" whereby one imagines the questions to which the text (presumably, the "past" text) could have given answers. The method of historical reception is crucial, therefore, for understanding literature from the distant past.\(^6\) It is necessary, according to Jauss, that the reader imagine what questions the text posed for its original recipients, as well as what questions it poses in the present horizon of reception. Here, Jauss correctly identifies characteristics of the process of literary reception: literary evolution may be described as a ceaseless struggle between old and new; the alternation between the canonization of the past text and the challenge of the new work.

The audience is precisely that medium which determines what role the work shall play. It is the audience's reception of the work which can either draw forgotten, past works back into current dialogue or reject the relevance of past works based on current aesthetic attitudes and mores. The audience alone may allow new works to challenge aesthetic norms or it may reject the new work entirely. It is in this sense that the audience performs the task assigned to it by Jauss in his description of the process of literary evolution.

It is, however, in Jauss's application of his interpretation theory
that the role of the audience is actually demonstrated. As I have stated previously, it is my contention that Jauss's *Rezeptionsästhetik* theory, while intuitively correct, can be further supported by a more adequate (and perhaps systematic) characterization of "audience". This will be the primary focus of Chapter Three. In the remainder of Chapter Two, I will consider the three stages of literary reception which are the backbone of the actual application of Jauss's interpretation theory.

THE THREE STAGES OF INTERPRETATION

Jauss applies his theoretical methodology in a careful analysis of Baudelaire's poem, "Spleen". He suggests three successive "stages" of reading which characterize the progression of interpretation. Although the distinction which Jauss suggests is somewhat artificial, it is both a useful and accurate representation of the way in which interpretation proceeds. Stated generally, the first reading entails the immediate understanding of the text within the aesthetic perception of its reader. In addition to the reader's immediate perceptions, the second reading involves reflective interpretation. Here, the reader has already acquired a kind of "gestalt" overview of the text through the first reading and is able to reflect upon the text more critically and more "interpretively". The reader is not concerned in the second re-reading of the text with the simple, broad message of the work. Instead, he or she proceeds to a second stage: what does the message mean. The third reading is perhaps the most complicated and difficult stage both to characterize and to carry out. Here, the reader "reconstructs" the original horizon of expectations of the given text. In the case of Baudelaire's poem,
“Spleen”, Jauss attempts to recreate, as it were, a sense of the original audience’s “horizon of reception.” The third reading focuses our attention on shifting aesthetic canons. It is here, in the third “stage” of reading, that Jauss’s underlying assumption is most clearly articulated. As the reader reflects upon and recreates the original horizon of expectations for the text’s audience, Jauss’s primary hypothesis, the assumption that the concretization of the meaning of literary works progresses historically, following a kind of logic which is precipitated in both the formation as well as the transformation of the aesthetic canon, finds its central support.

Jauss’s analysis of the poem, “Spleen,” calls attention to the nature of the poetic text. The notion of the score as a metaphor for the text is used by Jauss to emphasize the way in which the text leaves open “significances” which the reader apprehends. Specifically, in the poetic text the aesthetic perception is directed at the process of perception and is directly related to the horizon of expectations of the first reading. The interpretation of the poetic text presupposes an aesthetic perception as its pre-understanding. Aesthetic perception is the prejudgment (for Gadamer, the Vorurteil) which prefigures the first reading of the poetic work. Without aesthetic perception, much of the meaning of the work would remain meaningless. (It is difficult, for instance, to imagine reading Dylan Thomas or James Joyce without assuming some knowledge or “aesthetic” appreciation of their poetic genre.) The reader brings to the text some degree of aesthetic judgment in light of which he or she “reads” the text for the first time.

The fullness of the text, however, is realized only through repeated
readings. It is, therefore, the first, perceptual reading which prefigures the horizon of expectation of later, repeated readings. That is, the secondary act of interpretation is separated from the first. Whereas the first, perceptual act of reading introduces and constitutes the aesthetic experience of the poetic text, the "special" significance of the text (for instance, the understanding of the text as an answer to a question) occurs only after the second and third readings.⁹

For Jauss, the horizontal structure of the experience of re-reading is very important. Here, the experience of the first reading becomes the horizon of the second one. During the course of the first reading, the reader performs the "score" of the text, sight reading, in a sense, each verse (in the case of a poem). As the reader approaches the end with anticipation, there is a movement from the particular toward the fulfillment of the whole. The fulfilled form, however, characteristic of the first reading, may be realized prior to any fulfilled significance or the "whole meaning". It is through the process of re-reading that the fulfilled significance and meaning of the text is attained.

The meaning of the lyric work is not, however, pre-given and timeless; it is a meaning which is intended, metaphorically speaking, to be performed. Through reading the "score" which the text provides, the audience seeks and establishes new meanings of the text, retrospectively: new meanings which contain within them the perspective of the fulfilled form of the text (acquired in the first reading). Here, the reader returns from the end of the work, in one sense, to the beginning. The questions which have been left open by the initial reading are answered, to some extent, in the re-reading. The level of
meaning which is acquired in the second "stage" of reading is distinct from the third stage.

The third reading is, for Jauss, the historical one. It is here that the reconstruction of the original horizon of expectations (that is, the social and aesthetic milieu of the work's first audience) is performed. Jauss repeatedly emphasizes that the text should be understood as an ongoing production or process whose meaning shifts depending upon the horizon of its audience. The underlying hypothesis which characterizes most of Jauss's Rezeptionsästhetik theory is the assumption that the concretization of the meaning of literary works progresses historically. He suggests that the text follows a sort of "logic" which is precipitated in the formation and transformation of the aesthetic canon. The third stage of reading grapples with the reconstruction of the initial literary-historical context within which work was received. What expectations, for instance, does the work fulfill or deny for its contemporary audience? What meaning did the work provide for its first reception? What meanings has it come to acquire? During the "third" reading, the interpreter must reconstruct the horizon of the past while taking into consideration the temporal distance which is necessarily ignored during the first, aesthetic, reading and the second, interpretive, one. The third reading operates to bring to the fore the historical dimensions of the text. Here, questions such as the following are posed,

Which expectations on the part of its contemporary readers can this "Spleen" poem have fulfilled or denied? What was the literary tradition, and what was the historical and social situation, with which the text might have come to have a relation? How might the author himself have understood his poem? And what was the meaning given to it by its first reception...?
'THE READER'

After studying Hans Robert Jauss's understanding of the role of the reader in interpretation theory, it becomes increasingly clear that any attempt to understand the true nature of the cooperative enterprise comprised of the reader, the author, and the work, confronts difficulty when the question of the reader is made explicit. Many different types of reader are actually invoked when literary critics make pronouncements on either the effects of literature or the responses to it. There are, generally, two categories which emerge depending on whether the critic emphasizes the history of responses or the literary effect of the text. First, there is the "real" reader. This category of reader is characterized by a documentation of the "history" of his or her actual reactions to the text. The second reader, in contrast, is characterized by his or her hypothetical responses. It is this reader upon whom all possible actualizations of the text may be projected. The category of the hypothetical reader is typically subdivided into the "ideal" reader and the "contemporary" reader. What is difficult, however, when attempting to describe a typology of the reader as such, is that the ideal reader cannot really be said to exist objectively and the contemporary reader, while definitely an existing entity, is virtually impossible to mold to the form of a generalization.

Let us look in more detail at the two categories of readers, the so-called real reader and the hypothetical reader, and their relationship to interpretation theory. The real reader is typically evident in studies of the history of responses where the focus is on the way in which the
literary work has been received by a specific reading public. Here, the emphasis tends to be on the norms and mores of the audience; literature is perceived as a kind of cultural code which conditions the judgments of its receiving public. Readers belonging to different historical periods reveal their own norms, reflecting the norms and tastes of their respective societies. The reconstruction of the real reader depends, however, on the survival of contemporary documents. The further back in time we go, the sparser the documents become. Beyond the eighteenth century, it becomes very difficult substantially to document and reconstruct a full picture of a given society (hence, perhaps, Jauss's carefully chosen poem, Baudelaire's "Spleen"). As a result, the reconstruction often depends entirely on what can be gleaned from the literary works themselves. The problem which emerges is whether the reconstruction corresponds to the real reader of the period or simply represents the role which the author intended the reader to assume. In this sense, two types of readers become evident. First, there is the real and historical reader. This reader is drawn from actual, existing documents and is much like the reader described by Jauss in his third stage characterization of the original reading audience for Baudelaire's poem, "Spleen". The other two types of readers are hypothetical. The second type is hypothetical and is extrapolated from the reader's role laid down in the text.

It is the ideal reader who stands in almost direct opposition to the contemporary reader. Although it is difficult to pinpoint precisely where the ideal reader is drawn from, it is probably safe to assume that much of who he or she is originates in the brain of the critic himself. The
ideal reader, unlike the contemporary reader, is a purely fictional being. Because he has no basis in reality, he is endowed with a variety of qualities which accord with whatever problems he is called upon to solve.

As a fictional being, the ideal reader can close the gaps which constantly appear in any analysis of literary effects and responses. The ideal reader not only fulfills the potential meaning of the text independent of his own historical situation, he performs this task exhaustively. It is the intention of those critics who invoke the ideal reader that he will be able to tackle those difficult texts whose meaning is cryptic and not readily unavailable. If the text's meaning is clear, the presence of the ideal reader is not required.

Several critics have tried to break free from these more traditional and restrictive categories of the reader. Present literary criticism offers specific categories for specific areas of discussion. There is, for instance, the superreader (Michael Riffaterre), the informed reader (Stanley Fish), and the intended reader (Erwin Wolff). Although these readers are primarily created for heuristic purposes, they are nevertheless drawn from specific groups of real, existing readers. Riffaterre's superreader, for instance, stands for a "group of informants" who always come together at "nodal points in the text," establishing through their common reactions the existence of a "stylistic fact." The superreader ferrets out the density of meaning potential encoded in the text. As a collective term for a variety of readers of differing competences, the "superreader" allows for an empirically verifiable account of both the semantic and the pragmatic potential contained in
the message of the text. By the sheer weight of numbers, Riffaterre hopes to eliminate the influence of the variation resulting from subjective interpretations. Riffaterre hopes to "objectify" the stylistic aspects of the text, arguing that the stylistic fact stands out from its context. The density of textual meaning that is encoded in the language of the text is brought to light by intratextual contrasts which are spotted by the superreader. Riffaterre's approach circumvents the difficulties encountered by a "stylistics of deviation". This approach uses linguistic norms lying outside of the text itself as a kind of gauge to measure the degree to which the poetic qualities of a text deviate from presupposed extratextual norms. Riffaterre's primary emphasis, however, centers around the notion that a stylistic fact can only be discerned by a perceiving subject. Consequently, the basic impossibility of formalizing the intratextual contrast manifests itself as an effect that can only be experienced by a reader. Here, the superreader functions as a kind of indispensable means for ascertaining the stylistic fact. Riffaterre's theory of the "superreader" demonstrates one very important point: stylistic qualities are not characterized by linguistics alone.

Stanley Fish formulates a concept of the "informed" reader who, while possessing a basic level of knowledge and competence, does not possess the degree of "extra" competences which characterize Riffaterre's superreader. He does not, for instance, attribute to the reader the necessary capacity to ferret out the "density of meaning potential encoded in the text." Instead, the informed reader is someone who,

1. is a competent speaker of the language out of which the text is built up. 2.) is in full possession of "semantic knowledge that a mature...listener brings to this task of
comprehension." This includes the knowledge (that is, the experience, both as a produced and comprehended) of lexical sets, collocation probabilities, idioms, professional and other dialects, etc. 3) has literary competence...The reader, of whose responses I speak, then, is this informed reader, neither an abstraction, nor an actual living reader, but a hybrid—a real reader (me) who does everything within his power to make himself informed.15

In addition to basic competency, Fish's informed reader must also be able to reflect upon his own reactions during the process of actualizing the text. The need for self-observation arises from the fact that Fish develops his concept of the informed reader with close reference to generative-transformational grammar. For instance, to the extent that Fish assumes that the reader structures the text herself, generating through the sequence of reactions the meaning of the text, he follows the model of transformational grammar.

Fish diverges, however, from transformational grammar in his evaluation of the surface structure of texts. He states, for instance, that his notion of the category of response, especially meaningful response,

...includes more than the transformational grammarians, who believe that comprehension is a function of deep structure perception, would allow. There is a tendency, at least in the writings of some linguists, to downgrade surface structure—the form of actual sentences—to the status of a husk, or covering, or veil; a layer of excrescences that is to be peeled away or penetrated or discarded in favor of the kernel underlying it.16

Fish begins his interpretation theory with a transformational model which shifts from an emphasis on the text to that of the reader. "In a peculiar and unsettling way," Fish notes,"it [the transformational model] is self-sharpening and what it sharpens is you. In short, it does not organize materials, but transforms minds."17 In this sense, the generative transformational grammar is simply a metaphor with a very
limited range; there is no doubt that processing a text is bound to result in changes within the recipient, and that these changes are not a matter of grammatical rules, but of experience. Here, the main problem with Fish's concept emerges: Fish begins with a grammatical model, justifiably abandons the grammatical model at the point which he acknowledges the shift in the reader based on experience, and then can only invoke experience as a reason for this change (experience which, though of indisputable importance, is inaccessible to the theorist.) In spite of this criticism, Fish's concept of the informed reader, more than Riffaterre's "superreader", illustrates how an analysis of the text requires more than just a linguistic model. In short, the superreader represents a test concept which serves to ascertain the "stylistic fact," pointing to a density in the encoded message of the text. The informed reader represents a self-instructing concept which aims at increasing the reader's informedness, and consequently his competence, through self-observation with regard to the sequence of reactions set off by the text. Although both of the theories discussed above differ in terms of their presuppositions and intent, they nevertheless share the common goal of transcending the limitations of (1) structural linguistics and (2) generative-transformational grammar.

Jauss's conception of the reader differs from the above notions. Through reconstructing the horizon of reception for a given work, Jauss gives credence the notion of a "real" reader. There are similarities, however, between the strategies of Riffaterre and Fish, but these similarities are general and, at best, superficial. Jauss does not, for instance, attempt to go beyond structural linguistics to the extent that
he ignores the role of structure for the reader. In addition, while he appeals to the notion of an "informed" reader, his conception of the reader is more complex. Jauss does not fabricate a "naive reader"; instead, he transposes himself into the role of a reader possessing a contemporary educational horizon. He states, "The role of the historical reader should presuppose that one is experienced in one's associations with lyrics, but that one can initially suspend one's literary historical or linguistic competence, and put in its place the capacity occasionally to wonder during the course of the reading, and to express this wonder in the form of questions." Jauss suggests that he avoids the accusation of "not being typical enough a reader" by separating stages of aesthetic perception and reflective interpretation. In short, Jauss's aim can best be summarized by the following statement: "I hope," he states, "to have tested practically the theoretical postulate of combining structural and semiotic analysis with phenomenological interpretation and hermeneutic reflection." In contrast to Riffaterre, who views interpretation as a process through which the superreader ascertains the hidden meaning of the text, Jauss describes stages of reading which take into consideration the "indeterminacy" of the text as well as its aesthetic and historical character.

Jauss's conception of the reader is a hybrid of both real and hypothetical models. Here, the reader, while not a "superreader," is nevertheless "informed"; sociological mores and norms contribute significantly to the reader's "knowledge," for example. In this instance, literature functions as a kind of cultural code which conditions the judgments of its receiving public. Essentially, Jauss employs several
conceptions of the reader which correspond to the respective stages of reading which he identifies. In the chapter which follows, I will identify a model for the reader (based on Alfred Schutz's conception of finite provinces of meaning) which will both illuminate and foster Jauss's intent.
CHAPTER IV
MEANING PROVINCES AND REZEPTIONSÄSTHETIK CRITICISM

As discussed in Chapter Three, Hans Robert Jauss employs several conceptions of the reader which correspond to the respective stages of reading which he identifies. For instance, the first stage reader may engage in an “informed”, aesthetic reading of the text while the third stage reader analyzes the “real”, original reception of the work in light of its first, historical horizon of reception. Neither of these readers is, strictly speaking, the same. That is, each stage of reading necessitates, by its very nature, a different mode of reading as well as a different emphasis. While Jauss’s analysis of the different stages of reader-reception is a significant advance over theories which stress a dogmatic and narrow conception of the reader (as either real or hypothetical, superreader or informed reader), he does not suggest a framework for understanding the way in which the different types of readers (characteristic of the different reading stages) may be conceived. Alfred Schutz, however, develops a framework of understanding which is helpful for explaining the way in which the different “readers” in Jauss’s interpretation theory may be described. Schutz’s notion, the “finite provinces of meaning,” will be briefly discussed in the following pages, after which I will examine the relationship between Jauss’s conception of the stages of reception and the “provinces“ which they may occupy.
FINITE PROVINCES OF MEANING

Referring to William James’ conception of sub-universes of reality, Alfred Schutz proposes a theory of provinces of meaning which, I will suggest, provides the rudiments for the type of transcendental model of audience suitable for Jauss’s Rezeptionsästhetik theory.¹ For Schutz, each province of meaning is unified and coherent in virtue of a common theme or ground of interest. This common theme unifies the set of experiences constituting the province. The set of experiences making up the province of meaning possesses a certain common style (referred to by Schutz as a “cognitive style”) such that there is a relative degree of compatibility among all of the experiences of a province of meaning. There is an important qualification here since the compatibility must hold together with respect to the theme. That is, two experiences may be mutually compatible in one respect but incompatible in another, so that the compatibility of experiences within a province must obtain with respect to the theme of that province. For example, it may be that two specific point of belief in a religious doctrine may be logically incompatible, yet both be accepted by its adherents.²

One of the prime examples of a province of meaning (frequently referred to by Schutz as a “finite province of meaning”) is the world of everyday life.³ The lifeworld, and more specifically the world of working, was taken by Schutz to be the “paramount reality.”⁴ Borrowing Henri Bergson’s conception of “attention to life”, Schutz states that the attentiveness to the world inherent in working is the highest degree of
such attention. As one turns away from working, from "gearing into the world," his attention to life diminishes until, at the other end of the spectrum, one merely dreams. These varying states of attention account for the various accents of reality bestowed on the separate provinces of meaning. The attention to life has a specific level or degree appropriate to each province and is the constitutive principle of that province. The level of attention for the world of working is called "wide awareness" and it is in virtue of this that the world is called the paramount reality.

What constitutes a cognitive style can be approached by considering the specifics of this province of everyday life. The following points describe the distinguishing characters of this province: 1) That specific tension of consciousness called "wide-awareness," full attention to life; 2) the _epoché_ of the natural attitude, the refraining from doubt; 3) working as the specific form of manifestation of the spontaneity of man; and, 4) the common intersubjective world and social action. The above features provide at least a partial explication of the style of the lifeworld.

Experience in the lifeworld is characterized by this style. Such experience is given the "accent of reality" and is taken as being more important, genuine, fundamental or "real" than experience in the worlds of play or dreams. The phantasms of children at play or of dreams usually considered to be "mere fictions" are unimportant, even though they may be indicative of a person's attitudes or emotions. The sense of the reality of the lifeworld draws a person's attentive awareness to the affairs of daily life with the result that, upon turning to another province, there arises a sense of discontinuity, a sense of "shock."
Although this sense of "shock" may vary in intensity, it is not a particularly rare occurrence. In fact, examples of this shock are found in happenings as common as falling asleep into the world of dreams and in returning from dreaming to the lifeworld. Again, the transition one makes when the curtain rises on a stage, or as one becomes absorbed in a painting, or when one enters into a religious devotional service, are forms of the shock of moving from one context or province to another. A partial listing of the various provinces of meaning (in addition to the lifeworld) includes the following: 1) the world of dreams, 2) the world of imageries and phantasms, 3) the world of art, 4) the world of religious experience, 5) the world of scientific contemplation, 6) the play world of the child, 7) the world of the insane. Schutz did not intend for this list to be taken as exhaustive, and it may be possible to distinguish further correlative provinces. Certainly it is possible to distinguish sub-provinces or specialized areas within these broader divisions, such as physics, psychology, and interpretation theory. 

Each province of meaning has three basic qualities: a) a specific cognitive style, b) compatibility and coherence with respect to this cognitive style, and c) a specific accent of reality. It should also be clear that the fundamental distinguishing criteria for the various provinces of meaning are the affairs as experienced, and this includes the way they are experienced as well as what is experienced. While the experiences within any one province are mutually compatible, it is not the case that experiences within any one province are compatible with those of another province. In fact, there may be overt clashes. It is for this reason that Schutz calls these provinces finite. In addition, it is
this incompatibility which gives rise to the experience of shock in the transition or shifting of concern or interest from one to the other. The experience in one province does not lend itself to transformation by rule or formula into another. For Schutz, the shock of transition involves an adjustment in the "tension" or attention to life. In addition, each province, as a consequence of the different attention to life inherent to it, has its own form of spontaneity, of self-experience, of sociality, and a specific time perspective. "The world of working in daily life is the archetype of our experience of reality. All the other provinces of meaning may be considered as its modifications."

Because attention to life is the constitutive principle of each of these contexts, it is possible to organize the provinces in terms of it. The attention to life lessens as one turns from the affairs of life and the world (the paramount reality) to other concerns. Specifically, as the attention to, or focusing on, some aspect of worldly life is lessened, suspended, those affairs lose the "accent of reality" and other affairs receive it. The shift of the accent of reality is correlated to the decrease and increase of the attention to life, so that one might distinguish levels of experience in the lifeworld. Moreover, the various levels or strata are taken as the various provinces of meaning in such a way that those aspects of the world, as well as the mode of attending to them called the cognitive style of the province, are unified in one relative continuous spectrum by means of the attention to life.

In an important footnote Schutz,\textsuperscript{10} forestalls the misconception that these provinces are static, concrete divisions with which we become concerned at various points in our daily life. What occurs, rather, in
daily life is that one's movement between various provinces takes place within the natural flow of life and is not necessarily planned. A scientist, for instance, may plan to go to work in the morning, thereby entering that specific province of scientific concern which is shared with others who are also scientists. He rarely, however, explicitly grasps that he is adopting a different set of attitudes, assumptions, concerns, and activities as he enters his office or laboratory. Furthermore, there are interconnections among the provinces, making up "enclaves" of one province within another. A specific example is the role fantasy plays in the projection of acts in the social world. It should be clear that these "interconnections" have no bearing on the compatibility or incompatibility of the various provinces.

Finally, with respect to the relative separateness and incompatibility between the provinces, which nevertheless have interconnections, overlaps, or enclaves, it may be helpful to point out that the provinces of meaning are determined by forms of experience and the meaning of these experiences. While the worlds of religion and art are thought to be distinguishable, possessing typifications and relevances which are unique to each other, it is certainly true that art forms are used in religious worship. Yet, the very phrase just used demonstrates the sort of incompatibility about which Schutz speaks; the worshiper approaches the art forms first of all as religious items, fulfilling the purpose of his worship. The artist, on the other hand, may find the religious meaning of the object to be secondary or even irrelevant to his aesthetic grasp of it. The assertion of incompatibility does not mean that an individual cannot experience affairs in the various provinces. Instead, "incompatibility"
implies that the affairs experienced are themselves not reducible to those of another province. To attempt a reduction of this sort would result in the loss of the very meaning inherent in the experience peculiar to a given province.

**Typification and Relevance: Two Features of Meaning Provinces and Their Application to Jauss’s Three Stages of Reading**

Hans Robert Jauss describes three separate and distinct stages of readings (discussed in Chapter Three). In each stage of reading, he discusses different modes of apprehension which the reader assumes. In the first stage, for instance, the reader assumes an "aesthetic" stance. In contrast, the reader makes a "shift" in horizons when he or she "leaps" into the third, historical stage of reading. The stages of reading are, first of all, distinct. They are, like Schutz's finite provinces of meaning, clearly delineated from each other. The consistency and compatibility of experiences with respect to each "reading stage" occurs within the borders of the particular province of meaning to which those experiences belong. Like the finite provinces of meaning described by Schutz, the reader experiences a specific cognitive perspective peculiar to each stage of reading. Schutz characterizes the "separateness" of provinces in the following way:

> By no means will that which is compatible within the province of meaning P also be compatible within the province of meaning Q. On the contrary, seen from P, supposed to be real, Q and all the experiences belonging to it would appear as merely fictitious, inconsistent and incompatible and vice versa...For this reason we are entitled to talk of finite provinces of meaning. 11

Jauss's conception of the reader, as suggested above, is neither exclusively real nor hypothetical. Instead, the type of reader conceived
by Jauss differs depending on the reading stage. For instance, the first stage may necessitate a more hypothetical, "informed" reader who is aware of the aesthetic dimensions of the genre at hand. In contrast, the third stage may include uncovering the "who" of the "real" or original reader. Here, the historical reader is unearthed through careful historical documentation and sociological research: The nature of the work's original audience and reception is formulated.

Schutz's notion of the finite provinces of meaning advances Jauss's argument for the stages of reader reception. For one thing, the discrepancies which exist between the 'stage one' versus the 'stage two' and 'stage three' reading can be understood and discussed in terms of the differences in the cognitive experiences which correspond to them. Here the cash value of Schutz's conception of the finite provinces of meaning emerges. Simply stated, the aesthetic experience (corresponding to its own special meaning province) correlates with a 'stage one' reading whereas the interpretive experience (corresponding to another unique meaning province) correlates with a 'stage two' reading. The common link which unifies the set of experiences constituting each meaning province is the reader who, at different stages of the reception of the work, participates in different provinces of meaning. Schutz's notion of the "finite provinces of meaning" provides a conceptual scheme which greatly fosters the unpacking of each reading stage suggested by Jauss. In what follows, I will examine the implications of Schutz's formulation of the finite provinces of meaning in more detail. Specifically, I will
look at the role of typification and relevance in Schutz's notion of the finite provinces of meaning and their relation to the reading stages discussed by Jauss. Both typification and relevance are crucial components in each finite province of meaning; additionally, both contribute to a better understanding of the three stages of reading discussed above. By unpacking the features of the finite provinces of meaning developed by Schutz (specifically in terms of both typification and relevance) we are able to develop a better understanding of each reading stage delineated by Jauss and, in terms of the "big picture", acquire a better notion of the way in which the process of interpretation takes place.

To say that various finite provinces of meaning have their constitution in a specific cognitive style is a shorthand way of affirming their dependence upon both typifications and relevance schemes. Cast in these terms, it is evident that each province has a certain typical style of experience peculiar to it alone (even though there may be overlaps, as mentioned above, in certain respects), and also that the typifications appropriate to one province do not apply to another. For instance, even though a business man may describe his business in terms of a game, such as football, saying things like "team spirit," "get in there and fight," "fair play," and "penalties," these terms do not mean entirely the same thing in business and football, and their use is by analogy. In short, the elements which define the cognitive style and disposition of a province are actually the specific typifications which compose the province.
itself. While it can be said that each province of meaning is defined by the systems of relevance which are taken to apply within it (this will be discussed in more detail below), the typifications which occur in each province are important as well. That is to say, all typification occurs relative to some problem.

To use one of Schutz’s favorite examples, I may experience an Irish Setter for the first time and see it, to be sure, as something somewhat novel, but by no means completely so. It is recognized immediately as a dog and not a cat or bird. I may even ask, “What kind of dog is this?” Upon receiving the requested information, I henceforth take it as an Irish Setter. Later, perhaps, I purchase such a dog and name him “Rover.” Now, my familiarity increases and I come to form a more well defined typification of Rover’s typical traits as distinct from those of other Irish Setters. If Rover displays some atypical behavior, I may become concerned about his health, and so on.

Typifications are not sharply delimited or theoretical concepts. I may discover that what I thought to be common to Irish Setter behavior is merely an idiosyncrasy of Rover. Normally I do not set out to distinguish dogness from vertebrateness from mammalness, and so on. In daily life the indistinctness implicit in our typifications is only rarely brought under scrutiny, and then only due to some specific problem or when my typical expectations are disconfirmed by a countervening experience (such as the state of Rover’s health). Typifications become problematic because one’s attention has become directed to some feature
not included in them. A type is originally formed by ignoring certain individual features not pertinent to the situation or purpose in which it arises. Then, when new relevant information comes to the fore, it may be necessary to revise, expand, or subdivide the type, or else to form a new type more specific than the old one.

The process of typification is a very important concept for understanding the way in which Jauss’s theory of interpretation operates, especially in terms of the stages of reading which the individual may experience in his or her reception of the text. Before considering how Schutz’s notion of typification actually operates in Jauss’s project, there is one additional feature of typification which should be discussed. Types, at least for Schutz, can be characterized as elliptical. That is, while the object S may be properly said to have the property "p" so that “S is p” is correct as far as it goes for the specific purpose at hand, the full statement should be “S is, among other things, p.” One could go on to explicate the q-ness, r-ness, etc., of S as well as its being p. Until such motivation arises, however, the type “S is p” will remain in the stock of knowledge as the taken-for-granted character of S. If the “further notice” is delivered and the typification of S is seen to be inadequate for some purpose then a problem emerges from the stock of typifications. When the new typification is formed, it will, in the course of everyday life, become sedimented in the stock of knowledge as itself valid until further notice.

The cash value of Schutz’s claims about typification can be
understood in terms of Jauss's three stages of reading. The first stage of reading, for instance, as discussed above (see pages 39-41) entails the immediate understanding of the text within the aesthetic perception of the reader. Here, the typification which is taken-for-granted as characterizing the reader's aesthetic perception is a stock knowledge of genre, rhyme, poetic structure, and some degree of historical appreciation of literature. In Jauss's examination of the three stages of reading and their application to Baudelaire's poem, "Spleen", the first reading stage examines features such as the meaning of the poem's title, the accents on various lines of verse, the symmetry and asymmetry within the composition, the lyrical "I", syntactic parallelism, and transitions (or the lack of them) between the verses. Here, the aesthetic perception of the reader is "typified" by the features of the text which he or she focuses on.

In contrast to the features which are important (and "typify") an aesthetic perception, reflection and interpretation are characteristic of the second stage reading. Here, the second movement of the interpretation is concerned with clarifying the work's meaning through a reflection upon the questions left open by the first reading; this reading focuses on the reader's returning from the end to the beginning of the text in order that, from the perspective of the achieved whole of the form, the still indeterminate particulars of the text may be illuminated and the questions left over from the first reading brought to the fore and understood. This "second stage reading" consists primarily in the
reader's reflection upon the text in light of the first, aesthetic reading. The reader returns, in a sense, to the beginning of the text. The aesthetic dimensions of the work have already been, at least partially, cashed out in the first reading; the second reading functions as a "return" to the unanswered questions relevant to the whole of the text itself. Here, for instance, the reader is neither concerned with the pentameter of the verse nor the work's structure or form (these are all considered under the rubric of "aesthetic" concerns); instead, during the second stage reading, the reader both reflects and interprets. As well, in the second stage reading the meaning of the text is carefully teased out; the overall form is understood in light of the first stage reading (the reader, for instance, is now aware of the genre of the text as well as some of the features of its rhyme, symmetry, etc.) and the reader "fills in" the gaps which are left out in an aesthetic reading—gaps such as what the lyrical consistency (or inconsistency) of the work actually means.

Schutz's notion of typification is helpful because it aids in understanding the actual types which compose each reading stage. For instance, what types are brought into play when the reader "reflects", as it were, on the text? What typifications are characteristic of the activity of reflection? As noted above, the second stage reader is not concerned with types such as genre and rhyme scheme (notably important to the first stage reading) at least insofar as they concern the purely aesthetic features of the text. Instead, the second stage reader is concerned with the meaning of such typifications as the point of view of the narrator;
the symmetrical or asymmetrical tendencies of the verse; the movement of the verse from scene to scene, image to image; the mood or tone of the verse; and, most importantly, the expectations which the verse either does or does not fulfill. While the second stage reading may utilize certain types which are useful in the first stage reading (such as, for instance, rhythm patterns or tone), such types are related in different ways. That is, while each stage of reading may possess a certain degree of overlap, there are distinctly differing relevance schemes pertinent to the stage at hand. For instance, the second stage reader may possess concerns similar to those characteristic of the first stage reading (such as rhythm or point of view), but only insofar as he or she is deliberating about the meaning which these "types" imply. For instance, what did the author mean by choosing a first person point of view? What do the gaps in lyric consistency imply about the meaning the author is trying to convey about his or her perception of the world, humanity, etc.? What does the author's choice of types (such as choice of genre) imply? The difficulty with explicating the typifications utilized in the second stage reading arises in the fact that a large amount of overlap occurs between the types associated with the first and second readings. The difference arises in the relevance these types have to their respective readings. The second stage reading, for instance, is concerned with unpacking the meaning of the author's use of certain types; their implicit roles and functions.

Finally, Jauss's "third stage" reading is typified in the following
ways. As noted above, the third stage reading is perhaps the most complicated and difficult stage to characterize. One is reminded here of the examples which Schutz suggests. While, for instance, stage one and stage two readings are like "Rover" in the sense that they can be typified by broad and more or less straightforward characteristics, the stage three reading is less amenable to any simple description. It can, perhaps, be compared to a mutt who does not fit neatly into any of the well-known species of dog. For instance, Rover is typified by characteristics common to an Irish Setter; the stage one reading is typified by aesthetic concerns (genre, rhyme scheme, etc.); and the stage two reading is typified by reflective concerns, an interpretive inquiry into the meaning of the text. The stage three reading, however, is typified by an attempt to recreate, as it were, a sense of the original audience's "horizon of reception." Here, the expectations which the text fulfilled for its original audience are examined. The historical understanding which is employed in the third stage reading is constituted by more than just the reconstruction of the past; this reading should also consider the temporal distance that was leapt over in the first and second stage readings, considering how the meaning of the text has unfolded historically. Such historical examination of the text requires an immense amount of research, lending itself to more than any one type. Instead, several typifications are employed. There is, for instance, the sociological examination of the original audience; the hermeneutical and anthropological dimensions of the text; the author's
intentions, etc. For instance, typifications characteristic of a sociological examination of the work include the reconstruction of the ideal type of the original audience, hypothetical constructs regarding the norms and expectations of certain historical periods, typifications regarding class expectations (such as working versus ruling class), etc.

All typifications occur in relation to some problem. The material differences in the composition of each finite province of meaning, that which is the theme of the province, are therefore accounted for in terms of relevance systems. The problems peculiar, for instance, to paramount reality, the world of working, and the world of everyday life, have predominantly a pragmatic character. The typifications and systems of relevance which are relevant for dealing with aesthetic experience do not apply within the pragmatic sphere. Similarly, the religious experience may not lend itself to scientific analysis, for typically that which is relevant to the scientist's inquiry is not relevant to a believer's worship, even if the scientist and the believer is one and the same person. Likewise, the critic who engages in an aesthetic reading of the text is not concerned with the same pragmatic concerns as the individual who picks up the morning paper. Different relevance schemes are employed.

Essentially, the elements which define the cognitive style of each finite province of meaning are actually the specific typifications which compose the province itself. As illustrated above, each reading stage is characterized by certain specific "typifications" which, essentially,
make up the finite province of meaning unique to it alone. There is, for instance, an aesthetic province of meaning, as well as an interpretive/reflective province and an historical one. Each province of meaning is characterized by a predominant, overriding general concern or theme. There is a certain common ground that functions as a binding tie for each province in virtue of which it is defined as a unified province and set apart from the other provinces. What follows from Schutz's discussion of provinces is that the set of typifications (generated for the sake of some problem such as the identification of a number of items—ranging from dogs to genres) have a common meaning and are unified in virtue of their relevance to the given province of meaning. Hence, the aesthetic work is understood via typifications which are developed for each stage of its reception; these typifications characterize and compose, as it were, various finite provinces of meaning.

In addition to typifications, Schutz uncovers the problem of relevance at multiple points in his attempts to describe and explicate the lifeworld. Relevance plays an essential role in the formation of typifications as well as in their application to further experience. Because action in our world dealing with others, and within the world in general, is always in terms of acquired typifications, relevance is integral to any clarification or understanding of these experiences. Moreover, relevance enters the analysis via its being essential to typification. There are various zones of meaning and human experience
which constitute coherent and interrelated systems of relevance. Moreover, relevance can be seen as constitutive of the pragmatic character of our world.

As we now encounter the phenomenon of relevance, there are several questions which need to be asked. What is relevance, and what are systems of relevance? How does the phenomenon of relevance arise? How does it come about that one affair is experienced as relevant to another, and to this specific thing, but not to something else? Essentially, these questions are related and cannot be separated. They entail further questions concerning how to go about answering them. Are these questions, for instance, to be found by a continuation of the phenomenological descriptions of the structures of the lifeworld, or in what Husserl calls a regressive phenomenological constitutional analysis of the structures of consciousness? Schutz's own approach remains largely concerned with the lifeworld, pursuing the nature of relevance by attempting to explicate as fully as possible the connections between relevance systems and the structures of the lifeworld. By revealing the workings of relevance at this level, the nature of relevance itself becomes apparent. Although the only way to answer the questions raised above is to carry out the full constitutional analysis of relevance to the most fundamental levels of consciousness, it is beyond the scope of this discussion. Instead, I would like to return to the further application of two features of finite provinces of meaning, typification and relevance, to Jauss's third reading stage. I will, however, add one
brief comment about relevances.

As noted above, relevances are not intended to be spatio-temporal, causally individuated affairs in the real world. That is, they are not things or objects in the same way trees, mountains, chairs, dogs, or even societies are. Throughout Schutz's work, what he calls relevances are clearly limited, in some way, to matters of consciousness, of experience, etc. Consider some examples: If a person declares that an idea is "just not relevant" to the issue at stake, he is referring to ideas as "experienced" or as "meant" (the noematic senses as intended); he is not referring to the character of one's mental processes (qua noesis). If one seeks to uncover all the "relevant aspects" of a problem, he does not seek (unless perhaps he is a phenomenologist doing a phenomenological analysis) reflectively to grasp the experiences or mental processes. Instead, he usually seeks more information or data, or to uncover relationships among the data which pertain to his problem. These are again ideal affairs, i.e., the experienced aspects as meant, the senses to be grasped, rather than the "experiencings," knowings, or grasplings of the individual. In general, relevance is usually considered as pertaining to the experienced world, not to the subject's experiencing of the world.

Essentially, the third stage, "historical," reading is the most demanding of the three stages. This is because the third stage reading involves a large number of typifications and relevance schemes each of which are complicated and interrelated. A quote from Jauss at the introduction to his discussion the third stage reading (and its application
to Baudelaire's "Spleen") is, while long, very helpful for understanding, in his words, the necessary elements which compose this stage. Questions which must be answered when examining the third stage include:

Which expectations on the part of its contemporary readers can this "Spleen" poem have fulfilled or denied? What was the literary tradition, and what was the historical and social situation, with which the text might have come to have a relation? How might the author himself have understood his poem? And what was the meaning given to it by the first reception, and which meanings were only made concrete in the later history of its reception?12

In order to unpack the components of the third stage reading, it is helpful to examine the typifications which characterize each of the questions raised above. For instance, in order for the reader adequately to describe the expectations of the contemporary readers of "Spleen", he or she must be informed of the sociological and historical dimensions of the period in which it was composed. Typifications specific to sociological investigation include hypothetical constructs such as class types including racial and economic typifications. Here, the critic may "reconstruct" the type of audience which the text may have originally encountered based, in some sense, on an artificial typification of societal expectations of the given period. Such investigative skills include an ability to identify the critical attitudes characteristic of the period in which the work appeared, its reception in relation to critical mores and norms, as well as any groundbreaking shifts the work may make in either its topic or style. Although in the case of Baudelaire's poem, "Spleen", both style and topic were groundbreaking, such claims cannot be justifiably made
(or even understood) without first reconstructing the horizon of expectations of the original audience. In the case of "Spleen", for instance, the original audience possessed a certain set of romantic expectations such as the expectation of a harmony between nature and psyche. Moreover, there is a certain body of literature which composes the expectations of the original audience. For the romantic audience, this included the "realist school" which works such as Baudelaire's *Fleurs du mal* challenged in its use of a new "style of decadence" that brought to light the formerly unchallenged and unacknowledged suffering conditions of the contemporary society of the mid- to late nineteenth century. Here, once again, several typifications are employed. There is both a *historical* examination of works which were characteristic of the literary norm at the time of the original audience's reception as well as the utilization of a *critical apparatus* in the analysis of the poem's style and form. Here, Schutz's conception of relevance schemes can be clearly applied. For instance, the critic of the first reading is not the same critic of the third reading, although similar typifications may be employed. That is, the first reading may be characterized as broadly "aesthetic," utilizing critical techniques such as an awareness of form, style, sentence structure, rhythm, meter, etc; the third reading may employ this same critical apparatus. What differs between the readings is the relevance scheme which is pertinent to the point of view of the reader. While the first reading is characterized by a broadly aesthetic reading of the work, the third
reading is characterized by an analysis of the primary literary and historical context within which the poem (or text) was received. Here, historical investigation and critical textual analysis operate with certain types such as the typification of class distinction, the philosophical anthropology of society (such as the typification of the alienated working class), and the typification of certain class types (such as the "charismatic leader").

There is, finally, one additional contribution which Schutz’s notion of finite provinces of meaning makes to Jauss’s Rezeptionsästhetik theory; this refers to the way in which a shift in horizons from one reading to another can occur. Schutz’s conception of the individual’s experience of "shock" as he enters into a new "province" is analogous to the shift the reader experiences when entering a new horizon of reception. The sense of "shock" may, for instance, vary in intensity for each reading. In addition, the transition from one stage of reading to another is not necessarily a smooth one. Like the experience the audience has when the curtain rises on stage or as one becomes entranced by a painting, the reader experiences a certain "shock" when he or she enters shifts from one stage of reading into another one. While the notion of "shock" is not one which is appropriate to explore in depth, at least at this point in the discussion, it is a nice characterization of the way in which the individual’s shifting participation in the finite provinces of meaning proceeds. In reading the text, a variety of different typifications are employed, each of
them characteristic of a specific province of meaning. It is my hope to have illustrated one way in which Schutz's conception of the finite provinces of meaning (and the underlying use of typification) has helped to clarify, at least in some small sense, the way in which Jauss's notion of Rezeptionsästhetik theory might operate, specifically in terms of the three stages of reading: aesthetic, reflective, and historical.

In conclusion, Hans Robert Jauss delineates a convincing interpretation theory which carefully considers the role the audience plays for understanding the work. Each reading stage, outlined in Chapter Three, can be characterized by a corresponding and different "reader". In this sense, no simple or traditional category of the reader (such as hypothetical versus real) can be applied to Jauss. Instead, Jauss incorporates several conceptions of the reader which necessarily participate in different experiences of the work itself. Alfred Schutz's notion of the "finite provinces of meaning" characterizes boundary conditions for a variety of different experiences which provides both an interesting and helpful typology for understanding Jauss's conception of the "reader".
NOTES

CHAPTER I. INTRODUCTION


6. Fish adds that, "...it is the structure of the reader's experience rather than any structures available on the page that should be the object of description...The sins of formalist-positivist analysis are primarily sins of omission, not an inability to explain phenomena but an inability to see that they are there because its assumptions make it inevitable that they will be overlooked or suppressed" (Interpreting the Variorum, in Is There A Text in This Class?, 151-2).
7. Fish, "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics," in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 27.

8. "The basis of the method," Fish states, "is a consideration of the temporal flow of the reading experience, and it is assumed that the reader responds in terms of that flow and not to the whole utterance. That is, in an utterance of any length, there is a point at which the reader has taken in only the first word, and then the second, and then the third, and so on, and the report of what happens to the reader is always a report of what has happened to that point" (Ibid).

9. Ibid., 46-7.

10. Fish, "Interpreting the Variorum," in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 155.

11. Fish, "Facts and Fictions: A Reply to Ralph Rader," in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 143.

12. "...consequently," Fish adds, "any procedure that attempts to determine which of a number of readings is correct will necessarily fail. What this means is that the commentators and editors have been asking the wrong questions and that a new set of questions based on new assumptions must be formulated" ("Interpreting the Variorum," in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 149).

13. "The search for style," Fish states, "like the search for an essentialist definition of literature, proceeds in the context of an assumption that predetermines its shape. If one does not accept that (positivist) assumption, as I do not, the results of such inquiries will have only a limited historical interest; for even when they succeed (as they cannot help but do), it will be in the narrow sense of having been faithful to their constraining beginnings," ("How Ordinary is Ordinary Language?" in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 110).


15. Ibid., 101.
16. Fish, "Literature in the Reader," in *Is There A Text in This Class?,* 29.

17. Ibid.


19. Ibid., 209.

20. Regarding his intent toward the problem of "literary history" Jauss states, "My attempt to bridge the gap between literature and history, between historical and aesthetic approaches, begins at the points at which both schools stop. Their methods conceive of the literary fact within the closed circle of an aesthetics of production and of representation. In doing so, they deprive literature of a dimension that inalienably belongs to its aesthetic character as well as to its social function: *The dimension of its reception and influence*" (Jauss, *Toward An Aesthetic of Reception*, 18).

21. Ibid., 19.

22. Ibid.


CHAPTER II. HANS GEORG GADAMER'S CONTRIBUTIONS TO REZEPTION - ÄSTHETIK CRITICISM


5. Ibid., 49.

6. See, for example, Stanley Fish, \textit{Is There A Text in This Class?}, esp. the Introduction, "Literature in the Reader: Affective Stylistics." Also see the essays by Fish and Michael Riffaterre in Jane P. Tompkins (ed.), \textit{Reader Response Criticism} (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980).


9. Ibid.

10. Ibid., 20.


12. Ibid., 94.

13. Ibid., 111.

14. Ibid., 104.

15. Ibid., 105.

16. Ibid., 106.


18. Ibid.
19. "Every finite present has its limitations," Gadamer states. "We define the concept of 'situation' by saying that it represents a standpoint that limits the possibility of vision. Hence an essential part of the concept of situation is the concept of 'horizon'. The horizon is the range of vision that includes everything that can be seen from a particular vantage point...The word has been used in philosophy since Nietzsche and Husserl to characterize the way in which thought is tied to its finite determination, and the nature of the law of the expansion of the range of vision. A person who has no horizon is a man who does not see far enough and hence overvalues what is nearest to him...the working out of the hermeneutical situation means the achievement of the right horizon of enquiry for the questions evoked by the encounter with tradition" (Truth and Method, 269).

20. Ibid., 270.

21. Ibid.

22. Ibid. 271.

23. "In fact," Gadamer states, "the horizon of the present is continually formed, in that we have continually to test all our prejudices. An important part of this testing is the encounter with the past and the understanding of the tradition from which we come. Hence, the horizon of the present cannot be formed without the past. There is no more an isolated horizon of the present than there are historical horizons. Understanding, rather, is always the fusion of these horizons which we imagine to exist by themselves" (Truth and Method, 273).


25. Ibid., 30.

26. Ibid.

CHAPTER III. HANS ROBERT JAUSS'S THREE STAGES OF READING


4. "Accordingly," Jauss states, "the change of horizons between the first and the second readings may be described as follows: the reader--who performs the 'score' of the text in the course of the reception of verse after verse, and who is led toward the ending in a perceptual act of anticipation, from the particular toward the possible whole of form and meaning--becomes aware of the fulfilled form of the poem, but not yet of its fulfilled significance, let alone of its 'whole meaning'" (Ibid).

5. Ibid., 22.

6. Ibid., 28.

7. Ibid., see esp. 139-48, 170-85.

8. Aesthetic perception differs from everyday perception. Jauss states, "The investigation of the aesthetic character proper to the poetic text, in distinction to the theological, the juridical, or even the philosophical one, must follow the orientation given to the aesthetic perception through the construction of the text, the suggestion of its rhythm, and the gradual achievement of its form" (Ibid., 141). For a specific application of the "aesthetic perception" in the first phase of reading see Ibid., 149-151.


11. Ibid., 170.


16. Ibid., 143.

17. Ibid., 160ff.

18. Ibid., 144.

19. Ibid.

CHAPTER IV. MEANING PROVINCES AND REZEPTIONSÄSTHETIK CRITICISM

1. Alfred Schutz, "Transcendences and Multiple Realities," in *On Phenomenology and Social Relations* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970), 252-53. "The ingenious theory of William James has, of course, to be detached from its psychological setting and analyzed for its many implications...We prefer to speak of finite provinces of meaning upon which we bestow the accent of reality, instead of subuniverses as does William James. By this change of terminology we emphasize that it is the meaning of our experiences, and not the ontological structure of the objects, which constitutes reality." (Ibid., 252)

2. See Ibid., 253-4, 256-8.

4. Schutz observes, "William James rightly calls the subuniverses of senses, of physical things, the paramount reality. But we prefer to take as a paramount reality the finite province of meaning which we have called the reality of our everyday life..." (Ibid., 253). Also see, "On Multiple Realities," Collected Papers 1, ed. Maurice Natanson (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973), 226-29. Here, Schutz states, "The world of working as a whole stands out as a paramount reality over against the many other subuniverses of reality" (Ibid., 226).

5. Schutz, On Phenomenology and Social Relations, 253-54; also see "On Multiple Realities," Collected Papers 1, 230.

6. Schutz, "On Multiple Realities," Collected Papers 1, 231. "There are," Schutz observes, "as many innumerable kinds of different shock experiences as there are different finite provinces of meaning upon which I may bestow the accent of reality. Some instances are: the shock of falling asleep as the leap into the world of dreams; the inner transformation we endure if the curtain in the theater rises as the transition into the world of the stageplay..." (Ibid., 231).

7. Ibid.

8. Ibid., 232.

9. Ibid., 233.

10. Ibid.

11. Ibid., 232.

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