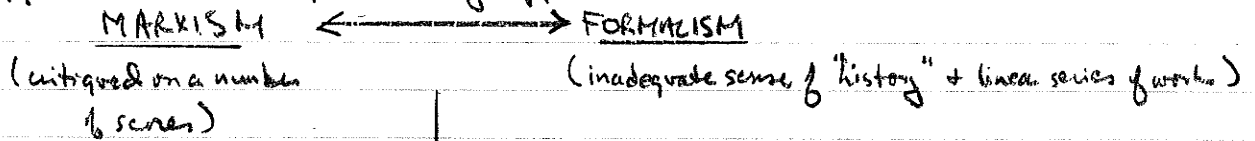


Jauss, "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory" (German, 1970)

Initially (pp. 3 - 20) sets up a binary opposition between



↓

Solution → AESTHETIC OF RECEPTION(S) — (20)  
 the all-important "horizon of a dialogue between work and audience  
 that forms a continuity" (19)

In short → art history does not reside in any "base" (or epistémè) nor in  
 the work itself (formalism). Its historicity lies in an ongoing  
 chain of concrete receptions. Uncover them: hermeneutic of recovery.

### OUTLINED IN SEVEN THESES

- ① Readers are the keys to works — "aesthetics of reception and influence" (20)  
 ... ∴ lit. work is not an object but an invitation to a process of  
 reception (more like an "orchestration" — 21)  
 - literature "becomes an event only for its reader" (21) ... (∴ lit. alone, as an  
 object, does not suffice)
- ② Mediated by an "objectifiable system of expectations ... in the historical  
 moment of [any work's] appearance, from a pre-understanding of the  
 genre, from the form + themes of already familiar works ... "etc. (22)  
 ∴ HORIZON(S) OF EXPECTATIONS that vary through time and  
 can be explored by "empirical means" (22)  
 (Also → how reception genres are transformed over time; expectations change  
 with experience)
- ③ "ARTISTIC CHARACTER" ("AESTHETIC VALUE") to be determined by  
 the "DISTANCE" between the horizon of expectations and the work"  
 (25) — I.e., how much "horizontal change" does it effect? (26)  
 (It → problematic)  
 (NB → original deviations can become normative, unnoticed by later  
 generations  
 - And some works are indeed ahead of their times (Michele) so that  
 the horizon for them has yet to be prepared,

④ Our task → to RECONSTRUCT THE HORIZON OF EXPECTATIONS (the original one), which enables one to POSE QUESTIONS THAT THE TEXT GAVE AN ANSWER TO" — (28)

- also → history of its reception

THE LOGIC OF QUESTION AND ANSWER, (29) (Collingwood / Gadamer)

- goal → "fusion of horizons" (30)

∴ a DIALOGICAL RELATIONSHIP OF PRESENT TO PAST (32)

⑤ "Insert the individual work into its 'literary series' to recognize its historical position and significance" (32)

- Works respond to other works (networks, series) and "can solve formal and moral problems left behind by the last works, and present new problems in turn" (32) — problems + "solutions" (34)

[READ p. 34, yellow highlight]

p. 35

"actual significance"

of a work

(1st reception, original innovative value)

(cf. Hirsch, "meaning"??)

distance

(the greater the work,

the longer it can

last historically,

promoting new receptions)

→ "virtual significance"

fuller meanings uncovered by later readers/receivers

(i.e. Jauss does not privilege an initial, Hirschian

"meaning")

JH: obv. valuing a Gadamerian

Wirkungsgeschichte

⑥ but don't confine yourself only to the (historical or) diachronic — (36-7)  
Also take (historical) cross-sections, the synchronic, in all its complexity, including the "noncontemporaneity of the contemporaneous" (36)  
∴ Art history → "at the intersections of diachrony and synchrony" (37)

⑦ Finally, literary history (as a 'special history') should also explore the relationship of lit. to 'general history' (a diff. horizon of expectations) 38-39

NB → touches also on "The socially formative function of literature" (40)

— literature (work) as [frictive] hypothesis → ∴ "a new experience of reality. The experience of reading can liberate one from adaptive prejudices, and predicaments of a lived praxis in that it compels one to a new perception of things" [JH → NB: → all positive!

no hint of manipulation or deception, false consc.]

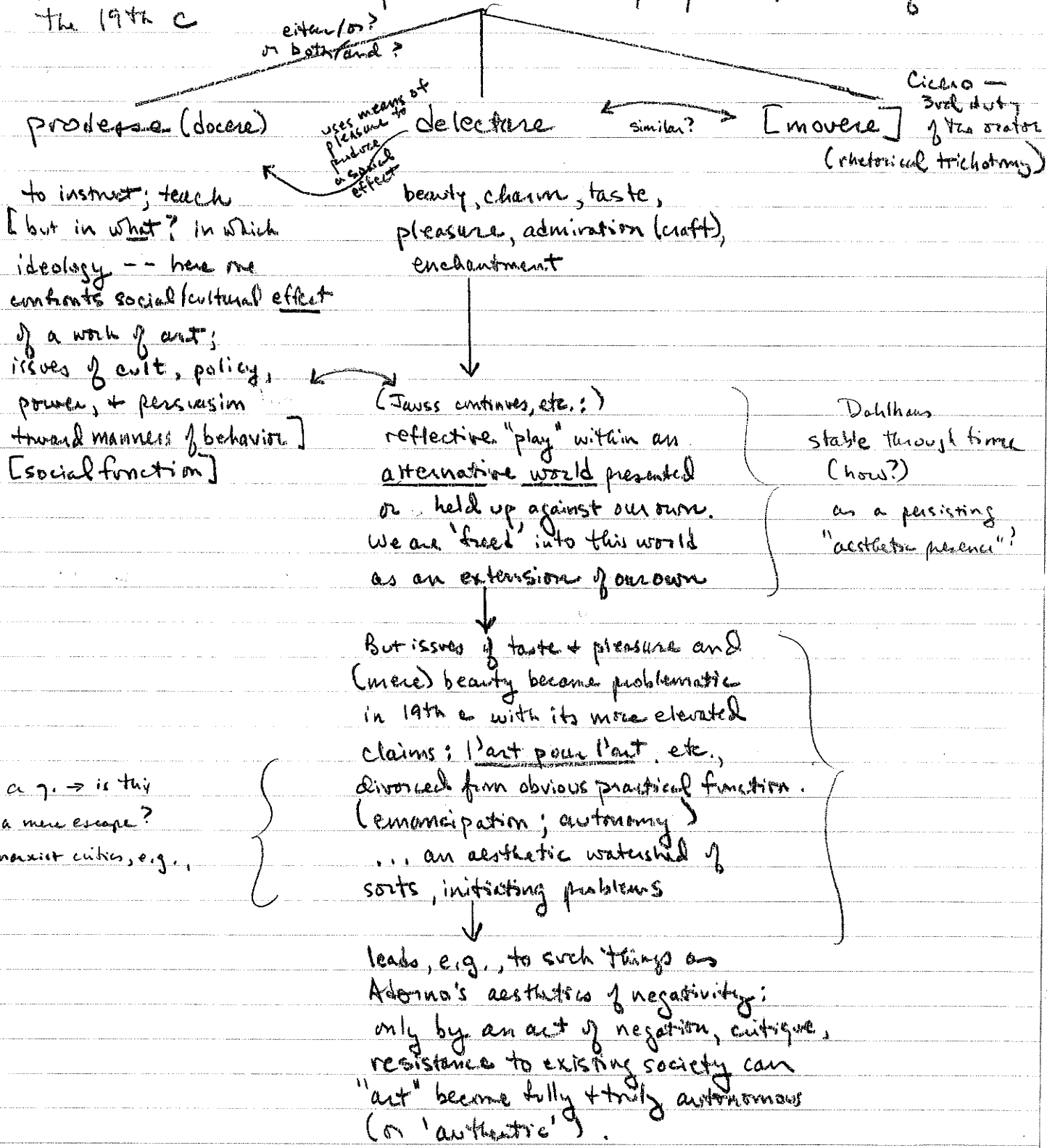
JH:  
the therapist's  
educational  
or corrective  
function of  
literature.  
(rich-free  
alternative world)

(Consider this function within a larger tradition)

# Jauss

## Tradition:

Concept → the universality and validity (value) of aesthetic experience; this dominated aesthetic practice from antiquity through most of the 19th c



∴ JH → Jauss + Iser, as found, embrace variants of the traditional, positive view of art as both necessary and salubrious within human cultures.

Call it:

The (positive) risk-free ALTERNATIVE WORLD (fictive double) that is free for exploration + contemplation  
— and its essential function is to create this "double" to hold up as a site from which one may examine and alter one's own perceptions in the everyday world

∴ the therapeutic, educational, or corrective function of art → recalibration of oneself from a fictive, risk-free "outside"

(to Iser → "Changing Functions"  
if you wish to)

2009 — p. 11 / (13) →

NB — All positive → nothing by way of suspicion, unmaking, interrogations of unjust power, potential for deception, etc,

(This Jauss → untouched by the Fr. poststructuralists?)