

Realism." Klieneberger admits that the English novel of the 18th and 19th centuries is superior to the German novel, but argues that things have changed since the death of Conrad, Joyce and Lawrence. While Graham Greene, Angus Wilson and C.P. Snow are the last English novelists he mentions, Klieneberger takes the German novel up to 1975 (Handke, Grass, Böll, and Hildesheimer).

The material in the book is well organized, the study is well documented, and there is an index. The reader may be disturbed by an unhappy passage here or there ("*Der Hungerpastor* [1862-63] is derived from his [Raabe's] reading, not from personal observation, and is, consequently, lifeless cliché," p. 121), and one must object to Gotthelf being paired off with Auerbach as one who "tried to give a realistic dimension, if of a parochial and limited kind, to German literature in the eighteen-forties" (p. 61). This is the only sentence in which Gotthelf is mentioned. Few would subscribe to Dr. Klieneberger's statement that Storm's fiction is "markedly inferior" to Fontane's (p. 180).

With such a limited space at the author's disposal, one cannot expect more than outlines, but there are a few more detailed analyses and comparisons in the four central chapters. However, there are no surprises and no new insights to be found anywhere. The book is neither for the undergraduate (who is not familiar with most of the novels; no synopses are given), nor for the specialist in the field. But all those who know their way around English and German literature may read the book as a pleasant sort of "Repetitorium."

Hans Robert Jauss

*TOWARD AN AESTHETIC OF RECEPTION*

Trans. Timothy Bahti. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Pp. xxix + 231. \$8.95 & \$22.50.

Hans Robert Jauss

*AESTHETIC EXPERIENCE AND LITERARY HERMENEUTICS*

Trans. Michael Shaw. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1982.

Pp. xi + 357. \$12.95 & \$29.50.

Reviewed by Jerry A. Varsava

These two essay collections, Volumes 2 and 3 respectively of the University of Minnesota Press's new "Theory and History of Literature" series, present, in many cases for the first time, English translations of the work of the prominent German literary historian and methodologist, Hans Robert Jauss. Over the last dozen years Jauss's essays have appeared occasionally in English-language journals, e.g., *New Literary History* (Vols. 2, 5, 7, 10) and *Diogenes* (No. 109) and in essay collections, e.g., *Interpretation of Narrative* (ed. Mario J. Valdes and Owen J. Miller; 1978) and *What is Criticism?* (ed. Paul Hernadi; 1981). We can be thankful that a large portion of Jauss's scholarship is now accessible to those without a knowledge of German. Jauss is one of the founding fathers of the Constance school of criticism—"school" here often describing physical proximity more than identity of interest. Jauss's orientation differs from that of his Constance colleague, Wolfgang Iser. Iser, whose *The Implied Reader* (1972; trans. 1974) and *The Act of Reading* (1976; trans. 1979) are by this time well known in North America, analyzes the phenomenology of the reading experience. His focus is primarily synchronic, illustrating how reading strategies are determined by textual structures, i.e., "the implied reader." Iser is an Anglicist whose method takes him into close readings of individual texts, generally English fiction. Jauss's self-designated task has been and remains the analysis of the historicity of literary reception. Given the diachronic emphasis, Jauss, not unexpectedly, discusses the

development of the literary canon through the study of individual genres and themes in addition to theorizing on literary historiography and the protean quality of reception. A great syncretist, Jauss wears many coats—historian, sociologist, aesthetician, cultural critic, and phenomenologist. In addition to this capacity to overcome the artificial distinctions fashioned by the “discipline” or *Fach* concept of scholarship, the considerable merit of his work lies in its precise formulation and readable analyses of problems related to critical taste and canon formation.

*Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* brings together five essays. In addition to the famous “Provokation” essay (“Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory”; given here in extenso), there are studies on the historiography of art (in contrast to “pragmatic history”), medieval genre, the Faust theme in Goethe and Valéry, and, finally, an “experiment” in reading (as the author calls it)—in this case, of Baudelaire’s “Spleen II”—that illustrate in Jauss’s view the separability of understanding, interpretation, and application.

Presented in 1967 as his inaugural lecture upon assuming the chair in Romance Philology at the newly-formed University of Constance, “Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory” is Jauss’s provocative reply to a literary history that has been colored by teleological and objectivist biases for better than a century, that has been more concerned with the legitimation of its own arcane theories than with the serious study of canon change. Jauss offers seven theses by which he would have literary history guided. Briefly, these locate the historicity of literature in the historicity of literary reception (and not in factual collocations, “objective” *Stoffgeschichte*, or scientific models of evolution and development). Jauss quotes approvingly Collingwood’s assertion that “History is nothing but the re-enactment of past thought in the historian’s mind” (p. 21).

The writing of literary history is not a game of intellectual chess for Jauss with only an intra-literary significance. Jauss’s goal is the discovery of the “socially formative” function that belongs to literature as it competes with other arts and social forces in the emancipation of mankind from its natural, religious, and social bonds” (p. 45; Jauss’s emphasis). Jauss’s method places great importance upon the reconstruction of the work’s “horizon of expectations” (*Horizontserwartung*) and that of its contemporary readership. This synchronic frame of reception is then placed within the diachrony of subsequent receptions. In this manner, the literary historian uses literature as a barometer by which to measure shifting perspectives and values. Jauss’s approach contrasts with that of many literary historians who seem precritically disposed to absolutist (and nonhistorical) standards of evaluation, to a “masterworks” notion of literary history. Utilizing Gadamer’s strategy (adopted from Collingwood) of reconstituting the question(s) that a text asks, the literary historian can effect a horizontal fusion (*Horizontverschmelzung*)—his own and the text’s—that allows art an “intellectual and emancipatory function” (“History of Art and Pragmatic History,” p. 74).

The genre essay, the contrastive study of the Faust theme in Goethe and Valéry, along with the “experimental” reading of the Baudelaire poem are case histories of the relativistic nature of genres, of character archetype, and of reading itself. While a highly specialized discussion of the three primary mediaval genres—epic, romance, and the novella—Jauss expands the frame of reference at the conclusion of the genre study, outlining the methodological import of his approach. Jauss rejects as ahistorical the principle that genre is comprised of a set number of conventions; he also discards the complementary notion that genres are not mutually influential (p. 105). Though suspicious of the de-historicizing potential of categories, Jauss endorses the minimal schemata offered by the Russian formalists to explain genre dynamics, a three point outline that includes canonization, automatization, and reshuffling (p. 106).

Space restrictions prevent me from offering anything more than a paraphrase of the table of contents of *Aesthetic Experience and Literary Hermeneutics*. The latter is a translation of *Aesthetische Erfahrung und literarische Hermeneutik I* (1977). Jauss devotes half of the text to a “Sketch of a Theory and History of Aesthetic Experience,” an essay that develops the basic theme of his earlier *Kleine Apologie der ästhetischen Erfahrung* (1972). Jauss contends that Adorno’s “aesthetics of negativity” denies a fundamental component of the aesthetic experience, i.e., enjoyment. Jauss accepts Goethe’s dictum that “judgment” and “pleasure” are inalienable adjuncts in informed literary reception (p. 36). Two of the remaining four chapters take up the issue of the reader’s identification with the hero and two discuss the development of French lyric poetry.

Those unfamiliar with Jauss's work will find it most useful to refer first to *Toward an Aesthetic of Reception* and, specifically, to "Literary History as a Challenge to Literary Theory," Jauss's major position paper on reception study. The reader will find Jauss's method of exposition here (as elsewhere) largely unencumbered by terminological obscurity or rhetorical self-indulgence. Both volumes provide illuminating introductions—that of Volume 2 by Paul de Man and of Volume 3 by Wlad Godzich. Translators Timothy Bahti (Volume 2) and Michael Shaw (Volume 3) deserve a note of praise for achieving English formulations of often "untranslatable" German expressions. The publication of Jauss's work in English marks a scholarly event of the first order and speaks very well of the University of Minnesota's fledgling "Theory and History of Literature" series. Few interested in the serious study of literature as a historical phenomenon will fail to benefit from the range and fluidity of Jauss's thought.

Ellen Pifer

*NABOKOV AND THE NOVEL*

Washington, D.C.: Howard University Press, 1980, Pp. 197.

David Packman

*VLADIMIR NABOKOV: THE STRUCTURE OF LITERARY DESIRE*

Columbia, Mo.: University of Missouri Press, 1982. \$16.

J.E. Rivers, and Charles Nicol, eds.

*NABOKOV'S FIFTH ARC*

Austin, Texas: University of Texas Press, 1982. Pp. 317.

Reviewed by June Perry Levine

The two major lines that have been developing in Nabokov criticism over the past twenty years are growing exceedingly clear. Although these are the lines along which all modern criticism has been ranging, they are especially sharply defined in relation to Nabokov because his work polarizes response. On the one side stand the humanist critics who maintain that the chief value of literature lies in its representation of human beings in the real world; on the other stand the linguistic analysts who hold that the fictive world is structured reflexively rather than analogously. The three books under review indicate this division. In *Nabokov and the Novel*, Ellen Pifer declares: "My intention in this book is to demonstrate that even the most intricate of Nabokov's artifices reflect the author's abiding interest in human beings, not only as artists and dreamers but as ethical beings subject to moral law and sanction.... Nabokov's detachment from his characters and their 'invented habitus' contributes dramatically to a moral perception of reality" (pp. i, iii). In contrast to Pifer's humanist intention, David Packman writes in the Preface of *Vladimir Nabokov: The Structure of Literary Desire*: "The tactic of this study is to apply a reflexive critical apparatus to the problem of reading posed by and in a group of reflexive texts: the masterpieces of Vladimir Nabokov's English phase—*Lolita*, *Pale Fire*, and *Ada*. It is hoped that in the course of this scrutiny a number of methodological options available to the critic of modern fiction will be clearly illustrated" (p. viii). *Nabokov's Fifth Arc*, edited by J.E. Rivers and Charles Nicol, might seem to fall into the humanist camp because the editors write that the essays "attempt to focus attention on the human qualities of Nabokov's art and on the humanity that underlies and vivifies what is often interpreted as artifice for its own sake" (p. xv). However, the collection contains a number of pieces from proponents of both critical persuasions.

*Nabokov's Fifth Arc* is a handsome example of bookmaking—attractively designed and printed—but it is wretchedly proofread; the first page gives the twenty years Nabokov spent in Russia as "1899-1911," and in Dimitri Nabokov's essay, three lines of type are repeated, to mention but a couple of typographical errors. The book's organization may have seemed more