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THE THEME OF DEATH AS TREATED BY THOMAS MANN,
WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO BUDDENBROOKS,
DER TOD IN VENEDIG AND DER ZAUBERBERG

A thesis presented in candidature for the

degree of

Master of Arts

by

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ABSTRACT

The main characters in Thomas Mann's early works are often men whose imagination and sensitivity detract from their ability to take part in active, practical life. Creative activity is linked with sickness and often with death. The death theme is thus a facet of Mann's preoccupation with the antithesis of 'nature' and 'spirit' in man, death being viewed as a spiritualising principle.

Mann's treatment of the death theme is viewed here as evidence of a concern with man's search for a meaningful existence. Buddenbrooks examines the rapport between the individual and the society in which he lives. The work depicts the increasing alienation of man from a society which offers less and less room for personal expression. This alienation finally results in an embrace of death as release from the pain of existence. Tonio Kröger offers hope of a balance between 'nature' and 'spirit' but the balance is precarious. In der Tod in Venedig suppressed 'nature' erupts and Aschenbach surrenders to dissoluteness and eventually death.

Der Zauberberg represents a stage of development in Mann's thought when concepts which dominate the early works are re-examined and re-assessed. The work is an exhaustive attempt to establish the significance of death and its relationship to life.

The works discussed in this thesis are seen as showing signs of a balanced attitude even before der Zauberberg. While the artist in Mann's nature tends to show a sympathy with death, the bourgeois side of his personality points out the dangers of such an attitude. Der Zauberberg represents Mann's criticism of one-sided attitudes in favour of a notion of totality. Life and death are seen as inseparable.

ABBREVIATIONS

- Ges. W. - Gesammelte Werke in zwölf Bänden, Fischer, 1960.
- Budd. - Buddenbrooks, Fischer Bücherei, 1960.
- T.in V. - Der Tod in Venedig, Fischer Bücherei, 1954.
- Zbg. - Der Zauberberg, Fischer Bücherei, 1967.
- Betracht. - Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen in Gesammelte Werke
in zwölf Bänden, Fischer, 1960.

INTRODUCTION

An antithetical view of the world is inherent in Thomas Mann's nature. The roots of this outlook may be seen in his mixed parentage and in his decision to forsake the traditional life-style of his ancestors to pursue an artistic career, a decision which did not leave him free from pangs of conscience. The conflict which he experienced within himself, between the demands of the bourgeois element in his nature and the needs of the artistic element, finds expression in his writings. The artist appears as the antithesis of the Bürger who stands firmly on the side of active, practical life.

The death of Mann's father proved a formative experience for the young man: the family firm was liquidated and he was left more or less free to pursue his chosen career. But the conflict within Thomas Mann between the Bürger and the artist was in no way resolved. He viewed the artist as set apart from practical life. Imaginative activity became linked in his works with physical decay and often with death.

But Mann's experience had given him an insight into the dual nature of death. It signified for him freedom to pursue his art, and as such could be seen as a 'spiritualising' power, but also appeared as dissolution, the abrogation of tradition and indeed of form itself, which was a vital element for the bourgeois side of his personality. This dual attitude towards death is a notable facet of his treatment of the death theme in his writings.

Underlying Thomas Mann's work, therefore, is a set of opposing concepts: life/death, Bürger/artist, Nature/Spirit, form/chaos and

duty/freedom. In his early writings Mann's preference for the death principle appears to be total. With reference to this, much has been written about Thomas Mann's links with the Romantic movement and particularly with Novalis (cf. for example Käthe Hamburger, Thomas Mann und die Romantik, 1932). Indeed, we may see Romantic influences in many aspects of his work: his treatment of the isolation of the artist, interest in the non-rational side of man and in music, and in his treatment of illness as a spiritualising power. Not least, such influence may be seen in Mann's dualistic view of life and in his 'sympathy with death'. Hamburger writes of the Romantic outlook:-

"Aber die differenzierte Problematik des Lebens kommt dadurch zustande, dass es als in einer zweifachen Polarität stehend erlebt wird; in einer ursprünglichen und gewissermassen elementaren, der Polarität von Leben und Tod, und einer zweiten weniger elementaren, aber für den abendländischen und zumal den romantischen Menschen nicht weniger bedeutsamen, der Polarität von Leben und Geist" (1).

There are obvious analogies with Mann's own experience. He himself has testified on many occasions to his links with the Romantic movement:-

"... so liegt auch mein geistiger Schwerpunkt jenseits der Jahrhundertwende. Romantik, Nationalismus, Bürgerlichkeit, Musik, Pessimismus, Humor - diese Atmosphärien des abgelaufenen Zeitalters bilden in der Hauptsache die unpersönlichen Bestandteile auch meines Seins" (2).

But in placing Thomas Mann in the mainstream of Romantic thought one important difference must be pointed out. There is no trace of Christian symbolism in Mann's writings, a fact which must be particularly borne in mind when considering his treatment of the death theme. There is no evidence in his work of a concern with immortality and in this he is very much a child of the nineteenth century as the century of science,

psychology and Scientific Materialism.

The treatment of the death theme in each of the three major works discussed in this thesis may be interpreted in psychological terms. In Buddenbrooks we see the increasing alienation from life of characters who have ceased to see the validity of the life-style which they are offered. The conflict which Thomas Buddenbrook experiences between the demands of the society in which he lives and whose ethic he has supported, and the needs of his inner self, results in his collapse. His son, Hanno, unable to see any possibility for self-expression within the framework of that same society, is consequently bereft of the will to live. Der Tod in Venedig presents the failure of a self-inflicted and artificial attempt at repression of inner needs. The consequent outburst of emotion leads to dissolution and death. The formative experience of Hans Castorp's childhood, in der Zauberberg, is death. Given no viable adult pattern to emulate, and living in a society and period which offers him no real sense of the meaning of existence, he discovers he is temperamentally drawn towards death. Only after a lengthy 're-education' does he manage to combine this sympathy with a proper respect for life and see that life and death form a unity, that each is meaningless without the other (see Der Zauberberg chapter).

The psychological element in Mann's treatment of the death theme may be seen also in his repeated use of dreams in this connection. As well as the fact that both der Tod in Venedig and der Zauberberg have overall a dream-like quality, the major characters in both works, as well as Thomas in Buddenbrooks, experience vivid dreams or visions in which their attitudes to death are explored.

The Naturalist influence in Mann's treatment of the death theme

is evident in his thoroughly detailed and realistic descriptions of illness and of death scenes. This is particularly evident in Buddenbrooks in the section dealing with the death of the Konsulin and in the typhus chapter. In der Tod in Venedig we find a vivid passage on the origins of cholera and the course of that illness, whilst der Zauberberg offers numerous graphic descriptions of tubercular patients as well as a good deal of scientific and physiological discussion.

The writings of Schopenhauer had a great impact on the young Thomas Mann, an impact which is particularly evident in the latter's treatment of the death theme, specifically in Buddenbrooks. Mann's reading of the philosopher's works confirmed the pessimism which he himself felt and provided support for his own ideas on the acquiescence of the will in death.

In his notion of suffering at the hands of life Mann had much in common with Schopenhauer. The main characters of Mann's early writings are all 'marked' men, set aside from normal (i.e. in Mann's terms bourgeois) life. Allowed no freedom of self-expression in the society in which they live, they seek it in the absolute freedom of death. Hence such words as 'Spannung' and 'Druck' are commonly used in connection with characters on whom life places intolerable restrictions, whilst the moment of freedom, of death, is often described in terms of 'Erfüllung', 'Erlösung' or 'Abspannung'.

His artistic characters (or those marked for death) are usually easily distinguishable physically. Shadows under the eyes, weak teeth, and blue-veined temples are leitmotifs in Mann's work, always having connotations of death and/or imaginative activity. Likewise the sea; many of Mann's characters who suffer at life's hands find

in the formlessness of the sea the promise of the freedom which death will bring. Thomas and Hanno Buddenbrook, Hans Castorp and Gustav von Aschenbach all love the sea. Music, also, is allied with death in Mann's writings. Hanno Buddenbrook's improvisations reflect his longing for the release of death; the appearance of the guitarist at his hotel marks Aschenbach's increasingly close contact with death; and for Hans Castorp music acts as a narcotic to life. Indeed, the appearance, in Der Tod in Venedig, of the same figure in different guises is in itself like a musical motif.

But death does not appear in Mann's work only as freedom. Another aspect is present even in the early works. Thus he uses words such as 'schlaff' and 'lässig' about characters linked with death, and 'Auflösung' is commonly found in descriptions of death scenes. If the artistic side of his personality sees the lure of death in its spiritualising aspect, the bourgeois in Mann tries to redress the balance by pointing out death's more dubious facet.

Death, in Thomas Mann's work, is not seen as the pathway to
immortality. The lack of evidence in his writings of a belief in life after death has been the subject of much criticism. It seems to me, however, to represent in itself a positive attitude to life. Mann attempts to bring death into relationship with the here and now. His characters are, to a large extent, people seeking to establish a valid existence for themselves in the face of their knowledge of their own transience. It is when their sense of meaningfulness in life is destroyed that they seek it instead in death. Thus Mann's starting point is life. He is concerned with the individual and his relationship to the world around him, the artist and his relationship to society.

Many concepts of death are depicted in Mann's writings. In Buddenbrooks the unproblematic concept of death of the first generation and the Christian Pietist attitude of the second generation are superseded by Thomas' scepticism and finally by the "Schopenhauerian" negation of the self in Hanno Buddenbrook. The classical concept of death is examined in Der Tod in Venedig. Death appears here in the guise of a handsome youth. But this optimistic, aesthetic approach to death does not satisfy Mann either. He is aware of death's other, dissolute face. In der Zauberberg the gothic, medieval concept of death, which is implicit in der Tod in Venedig, is examined in detail. In the final analysis this too is found lacking for it robs life of its vitality.

If in his writings Thomas Mann shows a fascination with death, it results from a profound questioning of the meaning of life. Der Zauberberg is his most exhaustive attempt to come to terms with the problem of death and its significance for life, and to adopt the correct stance towards both. Some critics claim that the work does not, in the final analysis, represent a rejection of Mann's early tendency to sympathise with death. I hope to show that not only does der Zauberberg end on a new note of affirmation of life, but that the seeds of this positive attitude are present in Mann's work from the beginning.

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THE EARLY SHORT STORIES

From the beginning the theme of death dominates the writings of Thomas Mann. In his early short stories his characters are preoccupied with thoughts of death, and death scenes are common, forming the climax of several of the works. This has led to the accusation by some critics that Mann's early work is life-denying. It is the contention of this thesis, however, that Nolte comes nearer the truth when he writes:-

"Thomas Mann hat das Leben nicht verneint. Seine Menschen gehören nicht der natürlichen und gesunden Gesellschaft an; sie sind von dieser getrennt, leben als Einsame und Gezeichnete ... Für sie hat der Dichter zwar das Leben verneint, und indem er sie, statt in einen leidenschaftlichen Kampf mit sich und ihrem Leben zu führen, lieber in Sympathie mit dem Tode dahinvegetieren oder in diesem ihre vernichtende Befreiung finden lässt, dürfen wir ... feststellen, dass Thomas Manns Frühwerk im Zeichen der Dekadenz, nicht aber der uneingeschränkten Lebensverneinung und der absoluten Vormachtstellung des Todes steht." (1)

His emphasis on the special circumstances of Mann's characters is of great importance. Whilst acknowledging certain influences on his works, I wish to argue that Thomas Mann's treatment of the theme of death is essentially, even at this early stage, of a highly individual nature and is inextricably interwoven with the problem of the tension between Bürger and artist, ordered practical life and the claims of the imagination, the tension between 'nature' and 'spirit'. The problem is deeply rooted in Mann's own experience and only in Buddenbrooks does he begin to explore it in detail. What is particularly interesting about the early Novellen, however, is the extent to which the ideas basic to Mann's Todesgedanke are already evident in embryo form.

Nowhere in these early works does the reader find a character struck

down in the middle of a healthy active life. It is clear from the outset that Thomas Mann is concerned with 'marked' men, who stand outside normal society: Friedemann in "der kleine Herr Friedemann" is deformed as the result of a childhood accident; Lobgott Piepsam in "der Weg zum Friedhof" is dogged by ill-fate. He is described as "ein elender und verlorener Mensch" (2) and is "ohne Halt und Stütze, von allem Anhang entblösst, allein auf Erden" (3). The count in "der Tod" lives under the shadow of a premonition of the exact date of his death. Paolo Hoffmann in "der Wille zum Glück" is set apart both by his illness and by the fact that he is an artist. In common with characters of Mann's later works and with the author himself, Hoffmann is of mixed descent, as is indicated by his name. Such a mixed descent is always symbolic in Mann's writings. But for this, one imagines, Paolo Hoffmann would be leading the normal life of a healthy citizen. As it is he is marked by "das blassblaue Geäder" (4), a physical attribute used repeatedly by the writer to signify the sick man or the artist. Like Hanno Buddenbrooks later, Hoffmann is often absent from school due to illness and has little rapport with his fellow pupils. Reference is made to "das 'Pathos der Distanz' dem grössten Teile unserer Mitschüler gegenüber" (5). What sets all of these characters apart is a heightened awareness: they possess a knowledge beyond that of the normal healthy citizen, a knowledge of suffering and of the transient nature of existence.

Of the stories written before Buddenbrooks it is perhaps in "der Weg zum Friedhof" that the antithesis underlying Mann's early work can be most clearly seen. The man aware of death (Lobgott Piepsam in this case) is a man apart:-

"Auf dem Wege zum Friedhof ging nur ein Mann" (6).

The contrast with the cyclist is total. Piepsam, downtrodden and desolate:-

"stand da, keuchte und starrte dem Leben nach. Es stürzte nicht, es geschah ihm kein Unglück, kein Pneumatik platzte, und kein Stein lag ihm im Wege" (7).

The torrent of abuse hurled at the cyclist by Piepsam culminates in the sentence:-

"Der Teufel kratze dir aus, du unwissender, unwissender, unwissender Geck!" (8).

This repetition of the word 'unwissend' is significant. Life, nature, personified here in the cyclist, chooses to ignore the cruelty of reality. Blissfully unaware of the finiteness of existence it proceeds on its way whistling and singing.

In these first short stories the opposition of "todverbundene Vornehmheit" and "bürgerliche Gewöhnlichkeit" (9) is almost complete. Critics opposed to Mann's treatment of the death theme, who accuse him of excessive reverence towards death or total negation of life, find support in statements such as that of the count in "der Tod":-

"Ich ängstige mich davor, dass der Tod etwas Bürgerliches und Gewöhnliches an sich haben könnte. Es soll um mich her fremdartig und seltsam sein an jenem grossen, ernststen, rätselhaften Tage" (10).

It should be remembered, however, that even at this stage Mann was aware of the dangers of the cultivation of sensitivity and awareness to the point of dilettantism, as can be seen in his short story ^{2,} "Bajazzo". Moreover the element of irony is present in his work from the outset. He can write of Friedemann:-

"Oh! mann konnte beinahe sagen, dass er ein Epikureer war!" (11), calls the wretched main character in "der Weg zum Friedhof" Lobgott and has him finally disposed of "wie ein Brot in den Backofen" (12). One

aspect of "der Wille zum Glück" is of interest here. Paolo Hoffmann is in love with a healthy young girl:-

"der egoistische Instink des Kranken hatte die Begier nach Vereinigung mit blühender Gesundheit in ihm entfacht" (13).

The longing, said to be occasioned by an "egoistischer Instinkt" in this particular work, reappears and develops in others into the mutual longing of the two basic Mann types. It is to transform the antithesis of his early novels and short stories (life/death, Bürger/artist, nature/spirit) into the idea of harmony which underlies his later writings.

Thomas Mann did not read Schopenhauer until he was working on Buddenbrooks but a study of his work before that time explains why he was so receptive to the ideas of the philosopher. The concept of life as an act of will and death as the withdrawal of that will runs through several of the short stories. Supported by Mann's discovery of Schopenhauer's writings it is developed more fully in Buddenbrooks, but already in "der Wille zum Glück" Hoffmann says:-

"Ich schlafe sehr tief und sehr lange, denn ich bin eigentlich immer todmüde. Glaubst du, dass ich, wenn ich wollte, mich hier einfach hinlegen könnte und sterben?" (14).

The question posed here is answered by Mann via the count in "der Tod":-

"Oh, es ist eine stete Verbindung zwischen dem Menschen und dem Tode! Du kannst mit deinem Willen und deiner Überzeugung an seiner Sphäre saugen, du kannst ihn herbeiziehen, dass er zu dir tritt, zu der Stunde, an die du glaubst" (15).

It is made even more explicit later in the same story:-

"Was ist Selbstmord? Der freiwillige Tod? Aber niemand stirbt unfreiwillig. Das Aufgeben des Lebens und die Hingabe an den Tod geschieht ohne Unterschied aus Schwäche, und diese Schwäche ist stets die Folge einer Krankheit des Körpers oder der Seele, oder beider. Man stirbt nicht, bevor man einverstanden damit ist" (16).

For the marked men of Mann's work living is not a joyous experience.

It is their heightened awareness that makes this impossible. Knowing that he is doomed to die, Paolo Hoffmann seeks "irgendein Narkotikum" (17) for his life and finds it in constant travelling. Denied a normal life Friedemann grasps any sensation offered him. Here again Mann comes close to Schopenhauer's philosophy of the will as oscillating between desire and fulfillment. Friedemann relishes all his unfulfilled longings because, he tells himself:-

"mit der Erfüllung ^{das Beste} [würde] vorbei sein. Ist das süsse, schmerzliche, vage Sehnen und Hoffen stiller Frühlingsabende nicht genussreicher als alle Erfüllungen, die der Sommer zu bringen vermöchte" (18).

It is an idea expressed later by Thomas Buddenbrooks.

Death, then, comes to the characters in these short stories as a release from a painful existence. Friedemann utters

"einen Klagelaut, der doch zugleich etwas Erlösendes hatte" (19).

For several of them it is the experience of love that precipitates death. The link between death and love is common in Mann's works. The reader is told of Friedemann, as he sits and watches Gerda von Rinnlingen:-

"Es war nichts Leidenschaftliches in seinem Blick und kaum ein Schmerz; etwas Stumpfes und Totes lag darin, eine dumpfe, kraft- und willenlose Hingabe" (20).

Friedemann knows within himself that he cannot win Gerda and realises that his relationship with her will result in his own destruction:-

"Noch war es nicht zu spät, noch konnte er dem Verderben entrinnen!" (21).

When it is finally impressed upon him that she wants nothing to do with him, his will to live is broken. For Paolo Hoffmann the reverse is true. It is the realisation of his hopes which weakens his will to survive.

The short story "Gefallen" is of interest here. Apparently the story

of a love affair, the similarity between the vocabulary used in it and that used in connection with death scenes in Buddenbrooks is remarkable. Describing the atmosphere before the consummation of the love between the student and actress, Mann writes:-

"Und auf der ganzen Welt diese dumpfe Last, diese lauwarne, brütende Stille, so durstig und lechzend. Er fühlte es, dass irgendeine Befreiung kommen musste, irgendwoher eine Erlösung, eine stürmisch erquickende Befriedigung all dieses Durstes in ihm und der Natur" (22).

A comparison with the description of the atmosphere before the death of Konsul Buddenbrooks (23) shows how alike the two passages are. A storm marks both the moment of the Konsul's death and the achievement of the student's desires:-

"Ein stürmischer Gewitterregen war über Nacht niedergegangen. Die Natur war aus ihrem dumpfen Fieber erlöst. Die ganze Welt atmete einen erfrischten Duft" (24).

'Erlösung', 'Befreiung' and 'Befriedigung' are words used in Mann's work in association with death. The student dreams of his beloved:-

"und dann sah er wieder das Mädchen vor sich, in dem hellen antiken Kostüm, und ihren schmalen, weissen Arm, der weich und kühl sein musste" (25).

Thomas Buddenbrooks is later to long for "ein kühles Kissen" (26) and to rest "in den Armen seiner Mutter, an ihrer Brust, in dem zarten Parfüm, das von der weichen Seiden ihres Kleides ausging ..." (27). It is the vocabulary of the longing for death.

Several other elements connected with the theme of death are worthy of note in Mann's early stories. The link between the sea and death appears in both "der Tod" and "der Wille zum Glück". The former opens with the sentence:-

"Nun ist der Herbst da, und der Sommer wird nicht zurückkehren; niemals werde ich ihn wiedersehen ... Das Meer ist grau und still, und ein feiner, trauriger Regen geht hernieder" (28).

Here is expressed the melancholy of the foreknowledge of death. Paolo

Hoffmann, like many of Mann's later characters who have a familiarity with death, loves the sea. The symbol of the ringing bell as the call to life, used in the chapters on Hanno in Buddenbrooks, can be found in "der Weg zum Friedhof" in the confrontation between the cyclist and Piepsam. The former signals his approach with his cycle bell. It is a direct challenge by life to the man who is, in more than one sense, on the way to the graves of his loved ones.

Much has been written about the various influences on Thomas Mann's work. This discussion of his early short stories is intended to show that many of the ideas basic to Mann's treatment of the theme of death were present from the outset. Other writers often provided confirmation of and support for ideas which were rooted in Mann's own experience. With Buddenbrooks many of the concepts running through the earlier stories are drawn together. It is here that one can explore the origins of Mann's Todesgedanke. That the author himself began, with the writing of this novel, to understand what lay at the basis of his art, can be seen from his own words:-

"Was ich selber sei, was ich wolle und nicht wolle;
wie ich mich zum Leben verhielt und zum Tode; ich erfuhr
das alles, indem ich schrieb" (29).

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BUDDENBROOKS

"Noch jedes gute Buch das gegen das Leben geschrieben wird, ist eine Verführung zum Leben."
(Thomas Mann - Brief an Kurt Martens)

The death of his father in 1891 and the consequent liquidation of the family firm had a profound and lasting effect on Thomas Mann. Questioned in later years about his attitude to religion, Mann recalled his father's death, remarking that the thought of death which it had awoken was for him more important than any "fromme Redereien" (1) and lay behind everything that he had written:-

"Das religiöse Problem ist das humane Problem, die Frage des Menschen nach sich selbst" (2).

His experience impressed on Mann at an early stage the important role of death in any appraisal of the meaning of existence and the death theme thus has a prominent place in his work. Nolte's comment that

"Thomas Manns Todesbegriff ist hauptsächlich als Frage nach dem Leben zu verstehen" (3)

is the premise from which this study proceeds.

The significance of his father's death for Mann was twofold. Not only did it focus his thoughts on the problem of the transcendence of life, but it also signalled for him the end of an epoch:

"Für Thomas Mann bedeutete die Auflösung des väterlichen Besitztums das entscheidende Erlebnis seiner Jugend. Er sah darin später ein Gleichnis, eine Erscheinung des Niedergangs der bürgerlichen Gesellschaft und des Fin de Siècle überhaupt" (4).

On a personal level, it marked the beginning of a way of life totally divorced from that of his predecessors. The transition to his life as a writer did not take place with ease. The years of his first literary attempts were marked by "Depressionen wirklich arger Art mit vollkommen ernst

gemeinten Selbstabschaffungsplänen" (5) and Mann has written that this period "setzte sich aus Indolenz, schlechtem bürgerlichen Gewissen und dem sicheren Gefühl latenter Fähigkeiten zusammen" (6). All of these experiences underlie Buddenbrooks, Thomas Mann's first novel, in which, as in much of Mann's fiction, autobiographical elements can be found.

His original intention, to write the story of Hanno only, would have been completely in keeping with Mann's earlier works, dealing with yet another character lacking the will to live. As it grew in concept, however, the novel developed into an exploration of the background and forces which mould such an outlook.

Buddenbrooks chronicles the decline of a rich North German burgher family through four generations. The external decline of the family is paralleled by a heightening of spiritual awareness: an increasing reluctance to accept without question traditional modes of thought. Absolute values give way to mental confusion; a firm conviction of the worth of one's existence dwindles first to a serious questioning of the purpose of life and then to the belief that it is not worth living.

The melancholy mood stemming from Mann's own situation was doubtless reinforced by the pessimistic mood prevalent in Europe at the time, but any assessment of Buddenbrooks as a pure product of Schopenhauerian philosophy does not do justice to the work. In many ways the novel may be seen as a study of the social and spiritual development of modern man. The emphasis of the work, however, and Thomas Mann's specific treatment of his material in terms of increasing artistic awareness, is rooted in the author's personal experience. He was to write later in Betrachtungen eines

Unpolitischen:-

"Was ich erlebte und gestaltete - aber ich erlebte es wohl erst, indem ich es gestaltete - das war auch eine Entwicklung und Modernisierung des Bürgers, aber nicht seine Entwicklung

zum Bourgeois sondern seine Entwicklung zum Künstler ... das Seelisch - Menschliche ging mich an, das Soziologisch - Politische nahm ich eben nur halb unbewusst mit, es kümmerte mich wenig" (7).

What we see in Buddenbrooks is the gradual process of the alienation of the individual from a world which leaves less and less room for personal expression. The ultimate manifestation of this alienation is the embrace of death. In Thomas Mann's terms the burgher is succeeded by the artist. That this process is treated in the work as decadent has its cause, I would argue, in Mann's bad burgher conscience:-

"Späte, ja verspätete Bürgerlichkeit machte mich zum Verfallsanalytiker; und jene 'ethische Luft', der moralistische Pessimismus (mit Musik), den ich von Schopenhauer und Wagner empfangen zu haben angab, er war es vielmehr, was ich bei diesen europäischen Deutschen als mein Selbst und Eigen vorfand, was mich von vornherein zu ihnen zog und führte" (8).

His 'bad conscience' does not allow him in Buddenbrooks to show his characters transposing to the artistic field the ambition and willpower they cannot give to the practical life. Heightened spiritual awareness is shown increasingly as undermining the ability to take part in an active life and saps the later Buddenbrooks of their will to live. In their excellent analysis of Buddenbrooks Braverman and Nachman argue that the poignancy of Mann's early period stems from the fact that he could neither abandon his deep commitment to the human community nor live as a member of the only community he knew. Poised between two worlds and as yet fully at home in neither, the conclusion of many early works is that the only solution lies in death (but cf. this thesis, p. 55).

The theme of death runs right through Buddenbrooks and becomes increasingly dominant as the work progresses; the attitude to life of each member of the Buddenbrook family is reflected in his or her attitude to death. Mann's treatment of the death theme provides an insight into his view of

life and of his art.

The eldest generation of Buddenbrooks is healthy, self-confident and unproblematic, finding satisfaction in a life imbued with meaning by an unquestioned moral and social code and an undisputed work ethic. This generation is the embodiment of the tradition of the patrician burgher which "stands for activity, energy, a degree of cultivation and certain not too rigorous ethical standards, for 'life' in a good sense" (9). Art, for this generation, acts as mere decoration and religious fervour is suspect:-

"Johann Buddenbrook ... lachte vor Vergnügen, sich über den Katechismus mokieren zu können" (10).

The deaths of Antoinette Buddenbrook and her husband occur shortly after the beginning of the novel. It is significant that the descriptions of these deaths are brief, lacking the horrific detail found elsewhere in Mann's work. Death comes quickly and easily:-

"Der bis ins Alter lebenskräftigen, optimistisch-rationalistischen Ältesten Generation ist der Tod, an den man während des Lebens niemals ernstlich dachte, ein unbegreiflich 'kuriöses' Naturereignis, das weder Freude noch Furcht auslöst, sondern dem man mit dem primitiven Staunen des Naturmenschen gegenübersteht" (11).

This is the last Buddenbrook generation to lead a carefree existence, untroubled by self-questioning. With the final illness of Madame Antoinette:-

"etwas Neues, Fremdes, Ausserordentliches schien eingekehrt, ein Geheimnis das einer in des anderen Augen las; der Gedanke an den Tod hatte sich Einlass geschafft und herrschte stumm in den weiten Räumen" (12).

The implication is far-reaching. It is not simply a case of Madame Antoinette's family realising that she will probably die. The following generations of Buddenbrooks become increasingly preoccupied with the

thought of death.

The two eldest Buddenbrooks are personifications of a healthy will to live. When Madame Antoinette takes to her bed one day we are told that **neither** old age nor illness is the real cause. The root of the problem can be seen rather in her "verändertes, ausdrucksloses und entsetzlich gleichgültiges Gesicht" (13). The final adjective is particularly revealing: her life has run its course; she has remained vigorous until the end and now suddenly is no longer concerned to go on living. This is emphasised by the fact that her last sigh is brief and, more important, is described as 'kampflos' (14).

Madame Antoinette's death is rapidly followed by that of her husband. Johann Buddenbrook has already been made aware that his ideas are outmoded. The discussion at the celebration meal for his new house made that quite clear. The death of his wife finally weakens his desire to remain part of a society in which he no longer has any real role. During Madame Antoinette's last illness Johann remains physically isolated from the rest of the household, an isolation which reflects his increasing dissociation from life itself:-

"Er dachte nicht viel, er sah nur unverwandt und mit einem leisen Kopfschütteln auf sein Leben und das Leben im allgemeinen zurück, das ihm plötzlich so fern und wunderbar erschien, dieses überflüssig gerauschvolle Getümmel, in dessen Mitte er gestanden, das sich unmerklich von ihm zurückgezogen hatte und nun von seinem verwundet aufhorchenden Ohr in der Ferne erhallte" (15).

The old man's decision to withdraw from the business, expressed in the single word 'assez' (16), signifies that he has also had enough of life. After this "seine nachdenkliche Apathie [nahm] in erschreckender Weise zu" (17). His death and funeral, like those of his wife, are dealt with only briefly.

Johann Buddenbrook is a product of the Enlightenment. Braverman

and Nachman write:-

"The enlightened mind thus pays the highest tribute to the human personality, for it attributes to that personality and to it alone, the capacity to create a moral order in a universe whose essence is brute indifferent nature" (18).

Johann enjoys the freedom of the enlightened mind so that his whole life is the result of unhampered expression of his personality. The firm itself, for whose success he is chiefly responsible, is a product of this. He never experiences a conflict between his personality and the demands of the world at large. His grasp on life is absolute.

The deaths of Johann and Antoinette Buddenbrook shortly after the beginning of the novel mark the passing of an era. The following Buddenbrooks never again experience such harmony between the world within them and that outside. Life, it is said, has withdrawn from Johann 'imperceptibly'. For his descendants it is a much more tortured process. As the novel progresses the freedom for self-expression of the later Buddenbrooks is increasingly restricted. Thus they become more and more at odds with the world in which they live and, as they retract into themselves, alienated from life itself.

The death of Lebrecht Kröger is in many respects a 'Steigerung' of the deaths of the two old Buddenbrooks: it is the symbolic death of the old order. In the 'revolution', and most particularly in the refusal of the mob to let his coach pass, Kröger sees the public rejection of every value he represents. In the coach on the way home he is described as 'matt' and 'kalt' (19), words used repeatedly in Mann's work to indicate a weakening will to live. After the stone flies through the window he sits "gerader, höher, steifer noch denn zuvor" (20). It is already the rigidity of a corpse. The mood of oppressive silence completes the picture and the reader already knows that Kröger will die.

His change of expression to "einer schwachen, schiefen, hängenden und blöden Greisengrimasse" (21) shows finally that the values he upheld are outmoded and incapable of survival.

With Jean Buddenbrook we see a change begin to take place in the Buddenbrook family. His eyes are described as more dreamy than those of his father, revealing a tendency to introspection which was quite foreign to the old man. It is a tendency which is emphasised by Jean's attitude to music, again quite different from that of Johann Buddenbrook:-

"Er wäre gar zu gern im Landschaftszimmer zurückgeblieben, um in einem Lehnstuhl bei diesen Klängen seinen Träumen und Gefühlen nachzuhängen" ... (22).

Above all the change is revealed in his attitude to religion. In contrast to his father's superficial scepticism, albeit within a framework of belief, Jean Buddenbrook is a Christian Pietist. Johann was a member of a self-confident, unproblematic generation. Comparing him with his son, Braverman and Nachman write:-

"It is hardly surprising that such ages of confidence are uncommon. For the offspring of the representatives of such an age, lacking, as may well be, the self certainty of their fathers, may tremble in horror before a social order whose ultimate basis is supposed to lie in their own modest personalities. They are, as they see themselves, mere men and desire above all a fixed and stable order in the world" (23).

Thus in Jean Buddenbrook the personal is subordinated always to the practical and the institutional. The firm becomes "diesem vergötterten Begriff" (24) to which his own desire must be subservient. Spirit, human personality, must, however, have a means of self-expression. If it cannot find it in the world it does so in inwardness and subjectivity. With Jean it takes the form of religious fervour. His religiosity does not make life easier for him but rather intensifies

the split in his nature so that inclination and duty are constantly at variance within him. His duties as a host prevent him from listening to his father's flute playing; on the birth of his daughter Klara, rather than go to his wife and child, he forces himself to copy long passages from the bible into the family papers "als Züchtigung gerade für sein unfrohes Gemüte" (25). Each time his natural inclinations come into play he stamps them out. Whereas for his father work constituted a natural vocation, Jean Buddenbrook goes about it "mit zusammengebissenen Zähnen" (26). He encourages his daughter to choose a husband for the good of the firm, telling her:-

"Wir sind ... nicht dafür geboren, was wir mit kurz-sichtigen Augen für unser eigenes, kleines, persönliches Glück hätten, denn wir sind nicht lose, unabhängige und für sich bestehende Einzelwesen, sondern wie Glieder in einer Kette" (27).

Nowhere is the conflict within Consul Buddenbrook more clearly revealed than in his reactions at the time of his son-in-law's bankruptcy. He is moved by pity for Grünlich but quickly masters his feelings. He cannot afford to give way in the face of human emotion which "[hatte] stets mit seinem nüchternen und praktischen Geschäftssinn in Hader gelegen" (28). His face reveals the dichotomy:-

"Seine Augen blickten erschrocken und traurig, und dennoch kniff er die Lippen zusammen ..." (29).

The tension caused by the consul's outlook begins to have its effect on his vitality. His last years are spent bedevilled with cares and he becomes increasingly ailing. The description of the atmosphere before the storm, during which the consul dies, is a vivid and precise portrayal by Mann of the mental oppression of Jean Buddenbrook's life and the physical symptoms at the moment of his death. As was the case with Kröger, that moment is preceded by absolute silence:-

"Da, plötzlich, trat dieser Moment ein ... ereignete sich etwas Lautloses, Erschröckendes. Die Schwüle schien verdoppelt, die Atmosphäre schien einen sich binnen einer Sekunde rapide steigernden Druck auszuüben, der das Gehirn bedrängte, das Herz bedrängte, die Atmung verwehrte ..." (30).

Tony, it will be noted, has just remarked of her father "dass er [bekommt] oben Kongestionen und Herzklopfen ..." (31). The description continues:-

"Und dieser unentwirrbare Druck, diese Spannung, diese wachsende Beklemmung des Organismus wäre unerträglich geworden, wenn sie den geringsten Teil eines Augenblicks länger gedauert hätte, wenn nicht auf ihrem sofort erreichten Höhepunkt eine Abspannung, ein Überspringen stattgefunden hätte ... ein kleiner erlösender Bruch, der sich unhörbar irgendwo ereignete, und den man gleichwohl zu hören glaubte" (32).

Consul Buddenbrook's will to live, which has been under increasing pressure, finally breaks. Death comes to him as a release from a life made intolerable by continual suppression of his personality.

If Thomas Mann, through the character of Jean Buddenbrook, does not show religion as making life any easier, his attitude becomes even more explicit in his treatment of the death of Jean's wife. Elisabeth Buddenbrook is rather different from her husband. She is imbued with a great love of life and, whilst she shares the consul's religious convictions, they do not cause in her the same scruples and self-questioning. Her worldliness and vitality remain unaffected until the time of her husband's death. It is only then that she realises she must come to terms with her own transience and in an attempt to do so throws herself with increasing zeal into the organisation of services, Sunday schools and her 'Jerusalem' evenings. Mann makes the reason clear:-

"Sie, die ehemalige Welt dame, mit ihrer stillen, natürlichen und dauerhaften Liebe zum Wohlleben und zum Leben überhaupt, hatte ihre letzten Jahre mit Frömmigkeit und Wohltätigkeit erfüllt ... warum? Vielleicht nicht nur aus Pietät gegen ihren verstorbenen Gatten, sondern auch aus dem unbewussten Triebe, dem Himmel mit ihrer starken Vitalität zu versöhnen und ihn zu veranlassen, ihr dereinst trotz ihrer zähen Anhänglichkeit an das Leben einen sanften

Tod zu vergönnen? Aber sie konnte nicht sanft sterben" (33).

Her rather desperate attempt at piety does not help Elisabeth Buddenbrook to face death with equanimity and her last hours are spent in torment. In his treatment of her death Mann, once more, as in his early stories, makes the point that the will must acquiesce before death can occur, very explicitly. The consul's wife has a difficult death because she has never experienced:-

"jene Minierarbeit des Leidens, die uns langsam und unter Schmerzen dem Leben selbst oder doch den Bedingungen entfremdet, unter denen wir es empfangen haben, und in uns die süsse Sehnsucht nach einem Ende, nach anderen Bedingungen oder nach dem Frieden erweckt" (34).

Sensing at once the significance of her illness Elisabeth prepares to fight it since she is "ganz und gar nicht gewillt, sich aufs Ohr zu legen und den Dingen nachgiebig ihren Lauf zu lassen" (35). For the first time in Buddenbrooks Mann gives graphic descriptions of symptoms and physical deterioration. It is worthy of note that the other occasion in the novel when he does this to a similar extent is in the typhus chapter. In both instances the role of the will is emphasised. Elisabeth Buddenbrook, with her overwhelming love of life, fights to the last. Hanno, who has found life a torment from the outset, gives up without a struggle. The young boy's death is described in a dispassionate manner, with no specific reference to the character involved. Given the previous circumstances of Hanno's life any such reference is unnecessary. The treatment of Madame Buddenbrook's death is completely different. The horrific details reach a climax with her fight to live:-

"Grässliche Merkmale der beginnenden Auflösung zeigten sich, während die Organe, von einem zähen Willen in Gang gehalten, noch arbeiteten" (36).

The change in her attitude to sleep marks the turning point in her struggle. At first she "[lehnte] sich gegen den Schlaf auf ... und

[klammerte] sich an das Wachsein" (37). Her call for "was zu schlafen" (38) makes it evident that Elisabeth Buddenbrook is now fighting to be allowed to die.

Thomas Mann's attitude to the ceremony which often surrounds death is unequivocal. In his description of Madame Buddenbrook's funeral the emphasis is placed heavily on the idea that the religious ceremonial is purely for the benefit of the surviving relatives. Hanno alone appears to sense the real significance of his grandmother's death. He regards her corpse as "eine fremde, wächserne Puppe, die in dieser Weise aufzubauen etwas Grauenhaftes hatte" (39). The overriding purpose of the funeral is epitomised by the pole-bearer's handling of the difficult moment when the coffin disappears: everything must be arranged so that no one has time "sich das Schreckliche des Augenblickes klarzumachen" (40). Pastor Pringsheim speaks of Elisabeth Buddenbrook's 'peaceful' passing "da das Wort 'Ende' ein Beiwort haben muss" (41) which is doubly ironic in view of the descriptions of her sufferings and the fact that Mann has made it clear that her strong will to live made it impossible for her to find alleviation through religious faith.

Jean Buddenbrook is described as "der erste seines Geschlechtes ..., der unalltägliche, unbürgerliche und differenzierte Gefühle gekannt und gepflegt hatte" (42). The tendency to introspection, which first reveals itself in the consul, is intensified in his son Thomas. The importance of this character in any understanding of Thomas Mann's attitudes is emphasised by the author's own reference to Thomas Buddenbrook as "Vater, Sprössling und Doppelgänger" (43). In Tom the tension between the two basic Mann types reaches a climax. He is the incipient artist, the burgher in decline. He stands, as Nivelle remarks, at the centre of the chronological evolution of the novel:-

"Il est le passage de la bourgeoisie conformiste et sans problèmes de conscience au monde de la sensibilité et de l'introversión, indifférentes à la vie pratique et incapable de lui faire face". (44).

The dual aspects of his nature find concrete expression in his physical appearance. Thomas has the blond hair and blue eyes of the burgher but the nose and teeth of the artist and his temples are marked with the blue veins indicative of the latter. His hands also, apparently Buddenbrook hands, can at times take on

"in gewissen, ein wenig krampfhaften und unbewussten Stellungen einen unbeschreiblichen Ausdruck von abweisender Empfindsamkeit und einer beinahe ängstlichen Zurückhaltung" (45).

True to the demands of the bourgeois side of his nature Thomas sacrifices his love for the young flower seller. His visit to Amsterdam, however, reveals that left to himself he would deviate from the traditional norm. Here his taste for satirical and polemic writers develops and the first signs of nervous illness appear. The deviation is seemingly halted by the death of his father. The event impresses on Thomas the fact that his personal leanings must be suppressed for the sake of the firm. It is at this time that first mention is made of Tom's reaction to outbursts of emotion from others. He adopts "einen taktvollen Ernst, ein gefasstes Schweigen, ein zurückhaltendes Kopfnicken" (46), a stance which is to develop into a permanent public mask. Tom's discussion with Tony about Christian's continual baring of his private emotions is most revealing about his own character:-

"Ich selbst habe manchmal über diese ängstliche, eitle und neugierige Beschäftigung mit sich selbst nachgedacht, denn ich habe früher ebenfalls dazu geneigt. Aber ich habe gemerkt, dass sie zerfahren, untüchtig und haltlos macht ... und die Haltung, das Gleichgewicht ist für mich meinerseits die Hauptsache. Es wird immer Menschen geben, die zu diesem Interesse an sich selbst, diesem eingehenden Beobachten ihrer

Empfindungen berechtigt sind, Dichter, die ihr bevorzugtes Innenleben mit Sicherheit und Schönheit auszusprechen vermögen und damit die Gefühlswelt der anderen Leute bereichern. Aber wir sind bloss einfache Kaufleute, mein Kind; ... Ach, wir sollen uns hinsetzen, zum Teufel, und etwas leisten, wie unsere Vorfahren etwas geleistet haben" (47).

Tom's designation of himself as a simple merchant is ironic, for he is far from being such, but he senses that his introspective tendencies represent a danger to his ability to take part in the practical life. Unable, because of the bourgeois side of his nature, to find fulfillment in the 'artistic' field, he seeks it instead in bourgeois activity par excellence. Nivelle writes:-

"S'il se voue à la vie de négociant et à l'activité pratique, à la poursuite de l'influence, de la richesse et des honneurs, ce n'est pas par simple tradition familiale ni par inertie intellectuelle; il considère que cette vie pratique est pour lui le moyen de satisfaire son ambition, d'atteindre à un idéal, d'exprimer sa sens de la poésie ..." (48).

The validity of the comment can be seen by an examination of Tom's thoughts at his uncle's deathbed:-

"Obgleich du trotzig warst und wohl glaubtest, dieser Trotz sei etwas Idealistisches, besass dein Geist wenig Schwungkraft, wenig Phantasie, wenig von dem Idealismus, der jemanden befähigt, mit einem stillen Enthousiasmus, süsser, beglückender, befriedigender als eine heimliche Liebe, irgendein abstraktes Gut, einen alten Namen, ein Firmenschild zu hegen, zu pflegen, zu verteidigen, zu Ehren und Macht und Glanz zu bringen. Der Sinn für Poesie ging dir ab ..." (49).

It is the mixture in Thomas Buddenbrook's character which makes possible his success, and yet contains the seeds of his downfall. His whole life style is the result of conscious reflection; spontaneity is unknown to him. The continual self-appraisal, and need to achieve by conscious effort what had come naturally to his forefathers, lead to "eine raschere Abnützbarkeit" (50). In spite of the fact that his new house apparently marks the height of his success, Thomas himself

senses that this is an illusion:-

"Mir ist als ob mir etwas zu entschlüpfen begänne, als ob ich dieses Unbestimmte nicht mehr so fest in Händen hielte wie ehemals ... Ich habe in den letzten Tagen oft ein türkisches Sprichwort gedacht, das ich irgendwo las: 'Wenn das Haus fertig ist, so kommt der Tod.' Nun es braucht noch nicht gerade der Tod zu sein. Aber der Rückgang ... der Abstieg ... der Anfang vom Ende" (51).

The tension caused by his dual nature has worn Thomas Buddenbrook out. There are increasing signs that his will to live is weakening. He is no longer as punctilious in his attention to his appearance, an activity which has previously provided him with the opportunity of some sense of order in one area of his life. The fact that his mother agrees to Tiburtius keeping Klara's dowry without any consultation with Thomas, confirms the latter's feeling that "nichts ging mehr nach seinem Willen" (52).

Thomas Buddenbrook's problem is clearly expressed in his reactions to the Maiboom affair. His decision to buy the Poppenrad harvest represents a final attempt to exercise his will and prove that he can stand with his predecessors as a practical business man:-

"War Thomas Buddenbrook ein Geschäftsmann, ein Mann der unbefangenen Tat - oder ein skrupulöser Nachdenker? O Ja, das war die Frage; das war von jeher, solange er denken konnte, seine Frage gewesen! Das Leben war hart, und das Geschäftsleben war in seinem rücksichtslosen und unsentimentalen Verlaufe ein Abbild des grossen und ganzen Lebens. Stand Thomas Buddenbrook mit beiden Beinen fest wie seine Väter in diesem harten und praktischen Leben? Oft genug, von jeher, hatte er Ursache gehabt, daran zu zweifeln!" (53).

Increasingly, after his failure here effectively to prove himself a practical business man, Thomas appears a broken character. His own comment on the building of his new house proves prophetic: it is the beginning of the end. The longing for escape which now fills him is

indicative of his weakening hold on life. His reaction to his mother's embrace at the centenary celebration has implications beyond this specific occasion:-

"Ein hilfloses Bedürfnis erfüllte ihn, in den Armen seiner Mutter, an ihrer Brust, in dem zarten Parfüm, das von der weichen Seide ihres Kleides ausging, mit geschlossenen Augen zu verharren, nichts mehr sehen und nichts mehr sagen zu müssen" (54).

The intensity of his argument with Christian expresses Tom's sense of panic. He tells his brother:-

"Ich bin geworden, wie ich bin ... weil ich nicht werden wollte wie du. Wenn ich dich innerlich gemieden habe, so geschah es, weil ich mich vor dir hüten muss, weil dein Sein und Wesen eine Gefahr für mich ist" (55).

The public acceptance of his so-called success is ironic. Tom is increasingly described in terms which emphasise his weariness. The word 'matt' is frequently used in connection with him and his mother's death alone does not account for the reference to him as "ohne Blut und Leben" (56). Herr Gosch's comments reflect perfectly Thomas Buddenbrook's own experience:-

"Oh die Hoffnung, nicht die Erfüllung, die Hoffnung war das Beste im Leben. L'espérance toute trompeuse qu'elle est, sert au moins à nous mener à la fin de la vie par un chemin agréable" (57).

Thomas is satiated. He has achieved what was possible in the bourgeois sphere:-

"In ihm war es leer, und er sah keinen anregenden Plan und keine fesselnde Arbeit, der er sich mit Freude und Befriedigung hätte hingeben können. Sein Tätigkeitstrieb aber, die Unfähigkeit seines Kopfes, zu ruhen, seine Aktivität, die stets etwas gründlich anderes gewesen war als die natürliche und durable Arbeitslust seiner Väter: etwas Künstliches nämlich, ein Drang seiner Nerven, ein Betäubungsmittel im Grunde, so gut wie die kleinen, scharfen, russischen Zigaretten, die er beständig dazu rauchte ... sie hatte ihn nicht verlassen" (58).

The fact is that Thomas Buddenbrook has no feeling of any real meaning to his life. His inner self has never corresponded to the image he has projected; the aims he has set himself have never offered full play to his personality. As Kaufmann writes:-

"At the bottom of his heart man cannot rest content with a calling which no longer presses on towards any ultimate goal but ensnares him in a network of means" (59).

Thomas has never been able to discover his 'ultimate goal' in bourgeois activity. His conscience and scruples lead him again and again to question the entire bourgeois ethic:-

"er [konnte] nicht darüber hinwegkommen, wie es möglich sei, eine Situation zu erkennen, zu durchschauen und sie dennoch ohne Schamempfindung auszunutzen" (60).

His almost obsessive pursuit of success in the bourgeois sphere has merely served as a temporary 'Betäubungsmittel' for the knowledge that the life style of his forefathers no longer has any validity for him. Braverman and Nachman sum up Thomas' predicament:-

"Too sensitive and able a man to live by predetermined forms, in order to suppress his 'dreaming' he had vitiated what were precisely the wellsprings of his life - creative personality and originality. In the end he destroyed his ability to deal effectively with a changing and recalcitrant world. His self-consciousness did not weaken his will merely by its presence. It was rather that his denial and terror of his own impulses and aspirations poisoned his life and made willing futile" (61).

Finally faced with the reality of "sein erkaltetes und künstliches Leben", Thomas gives way to despair:-

"Nur ein Wunsch erfüllte ihn dann: dieser matten Verzweiflung nachzugeben, sich davonzustehlen und zu Hause seinen Kopf auf ein kühles Kissen zu legen" (62).

It is precisely at the point when the Senator's faith in his ability to carry on in the traditions of his ancestors is at its lowest that the von Throta affair occurs. It emphasises that Thomas is incapable of moving over to the 'other side', of finding in his creative personality

a valid compensation for and triumph over the difficulties of the bourgeois world. The affair is the final straw. The idea, present in the work for some time, that Thomas Buddenbrook is a shell of a man, whose outer appearance does not coincide with his inner state, is now fully developed. He has long been described in terms reminiscent of a corpse and Senator Buddenbrook himself now begins to reckon with the conviction of his imminent death:-

"Sobald er nämlich sein zeitliches Ende nicht mehr als eine ferne, theoretische und unbeträchtliche Notwendigkeit, sondern als etwas ganz Nahes und Greifbares betrachtete, für das es unmittelbare Vorbereitungen zu treffen galt, begann er zu grübeln, in sich zu forschen, sein Verhältnis zum Tode und den unirdischen Fragen zu prüfen" (63).

He is ripe for the experience which he now undergoes: his encounter with Schopenhauer.

Thomas Mann has written extensively of the impact the philosopher made on him when he first read his works and stated that he utilised the experience in Buddenbrooks:-

"und welch ein Glück, dass ich ein Erlebnis, wie dieses, nicht in mich zu verschliessen brauchte, dass eine schöne Möglichkeit, davon zu zeugen, dafür zu danken, sofort sich darbot, dichterische Unterkunft sofort dafür bereit war. Denn zwei Schritte von meinem Kanapee lag aufgeschlagen das unmöglich und unpraktisch anschwellende Manuskript, welches eben bis zu dem Punkte gediehen war, dass es galt, Thomas Buddenbrook zu Tode zu bringen" (64).

The exact point at which Mann read Schopenhauer is not clear. He himself states that only one chapter in Buddenbrooks was directly a result of his reading of Schopenhauer's works, but has written:-

"Ich erinnere mich des eigentümlichen Eindrucks von Paradoxie und gebietender Kühnheit, den ich empfang, da ich als junger Mensch, ... von Schopenhauer die grosse Erlaubnis zum Pessimismus erhalten hatte" (65).

Thomas Buddenbrook's experience is described in similar terms.

Tom's sceptical and questioning nature has made it impossible for him to adopt either the literal approach of his father to religion or the superficial approach of his grandfather. In Schopenhauer's work he finds the philosophical justification of his own sufferings, experiencing as he reads:-

"die Genugtuung des Leidenden, der vor der Kälte und Härte des Lebens sein Leiden beständig schamvoll und bösen Gewissens versteckt hielt und plötzlich aus der Hand eines Grossen Weisen die grundsätzliche und feierliche Berechtigung erhält, an der Welt zu leiden" (66).

It is noticeable that after reading the chapter "Über den Tod und sein Verhältnis zur Unzerstörbarkeit unseres Wesens an sich" Thomas is described in the following terms:-

"Sein glühender Kopf, in dem ein seltsamer Druck, eine beängstigende Spannung herrschte, als könnte irgend etwas darin zerspringen, [war] nicht eines vollkommenen Gedankens fähig" (67).

The vocabulary is reminiscent of the storm description before Jean Buddenbrook's death and is an unmistakable indication that Thomas too is approaching breaking point. Significant also is the fact that he sleeps that night "drei Stunden lang, tief unerreichbar tief, wie noch niemals in seinem Leben" (68). His vision, when it comes, he experiences stretched out in the position of a corpse:-

"Er sah, er wusste und verstand wieder nicht das geringste mehr und liess sich tiefer in die Kissen zurücksinken, ... mit gefalteten Händen, ohne eine Regung zu wagen ..." (69).

What his vision reveals to him is death as a joyous experience, a release from the pain of individuality:-

"Er (der Tod) war die Rückkunft von einem unsäglich peinlichen Irrgang, die Korrektur eines schweren Fehlers, die Befreiung von den widrigsten Banden und Schranken - einen beklagenswerten Unglücksfall machte er wieder gut" (70).

✓ This, at least, is the point at which Thomas' new insight into the relationship of life and death begins. His vision is not, however, pure Schopenhauer. In a sudden Nietzschean modification his thoughts take a new turn:-

"Wo ich sein werde, wenn ich tod bin?... In allen denen werde ich sein, die je und je ich gesagt haben, sagen und sagen werden: besonders aber in denen, die es voller, kräftiger, fröhlicher sagen ..." (71).

This is a far cry from Schopenhauer's idea of death as an opportunity "nicht mehr ich zu sein". (121).

Much criticism of Buddenbrooks has centred on an interpretation of the work in terms of Schopenhauer's philosophy. Mann himself has denied such interpretation:-

"Buddenbrooks waren garkeine schopenhauerische Conception, denn ich habe 'Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung' erst gelesen, als ich schon im letzten Drittel des Buches stand" (72).

The reading of Schopenhauer's work, I would argue, confirmed and supported but did not cause the pessimism which Mann felt at this period; a pessimism which was closely connected with the Bürger/artist conflict within the writer himself. Of Thomas Buddenbrook's death vision he wrote:-

"diese Abwendung von der Idee der Familie und Geschlechtsverewigung, diese Flucht ins Metaphysische ist Ausdruck desselben Prozesses von Auflösung der Lebensucht, von 'Heimkehr' in die orgiastische Freiheit des Individualismus, den ich im 'Tod in Venedig' in Gestalt der Knabenliebe noch einmal geschildert habe. Immer flossen die Begriffe des Individualismus und des Todes mir zusammen ... umgekehrt aber der Begriff des Lebens mit dem der Pflicht, des Dienstes, der sozialen Bindung und selbst der Würde" (73).

The Senator's flight does not quite succeed; his burgher instincts fight against it. The solution offered to him by his vision is not 'practical'. Once again duty suppresses the individual:-

"Das öffentliche, geschäftliche, bürgerliche Leben ... nahm seinen Geist und seine Kräfte wieder in Besitz" (74).

So Thomas falls back on the belief of his ancestors:-

"dieser ganzen, ein wenig unklaren und ein wenig absurden Geschichte, die aber kein Verständnis, sondern nur gehorsamen Glauben beanspruchte und die in feststehenden und kindlichen Worten zur Hand sein würde, wenn die letzten Ängste kamen ... Wirklich?" (75).

Yet he cannot find comfort here either and, convinced still that his death is imminent, he tries to make do by organising his worldly affairs. Not only does he make his will but most uncharacteristically agrees to suggestions of a holiday. At Travemünde the talk is of decline and illness. Thomas muses on the sea:-

"Was für Menschen es wohl sind, die der Monotonie des Meeres den Vorzug geben? Mir scheint, es sind solche, die zu lange und tief in die Verwicklungen der innerlichen Dinge hineingesehen haben, um nicht wenigstens von den Äusseren vor allem eins verlangen zu müssen: Einfachheit ... Es ist das wenigste, dass man tapfer umhersteigt im Gebirge, während man am Meere still im Sande ruht. Aber ich kenne den Blick, mit dem man dem einen, und jenen, mit dem man dem anderen huldigt. Sichere, trotzig, glückliche Augen, die voll sind von Unternehmungslust, Festigkeit und Lebensmut, schweifen von Gipfel zu Gipfel; aber auf der Weite des Meeres, das mit diesem mystischen und lähmenden Fatalismus seine Wogen heranwölzt, träumt ein verschleierter hoffnungsloser und wissender Blick, der irgendwo einstmals tief in traurige Wirrnisse sah ... Gesundheit und Krankheit, das ist der Unterschied ..." (76).

Love of the sea and longing for death merge here as in the earlier short stories, and form a particular aspect of Mann's treatment of the death theme that has its ultimate expression in der Tod in Venedig. In this passage from Buddenbrooks Thomas voices his conviction that the future for him is 'hoffnungslos', that he no longer has the courage or desire to go on and it is no surprise that the following chapter relates his death.

The senator dies, it appears, as the result of a toothache. Attempts to remove the tooth fail:-

"er fühlte deutlich, dass dies nicht das Bezweckte, nicht die wahre Lösung der Frage, sondern eine verfrühte Katastrophe sei, die die Sachlage nur verschlimmerte" (77).

Faulty teeth are symbolic of the artist in Mann's work. Tom's attempts to suppress this side of his nature have provided no real solution but have simply intensified his problem. It is not merely because of his strenuous efforts to remove the offending tooth that Herr Brecht "sah aus wie der Tod" (78). Death has finally come to Thomas. His immaculate and dignified façade, symbolic of every restriction that life has placed upon him, is destroyed by the 'degrading' circumstances of his death. In Senator Buddenbrook's collapse, the 'spiritual' and 'individual' take final revenge on 'duty' and 'life'. When Mann writes of Tom's final passing that "seine Augen waren schon vorher tot gewesen" (79), the statement is true not only of the period since the latter's collapse but also of the final years of his life. Of the deaths in Buddenbrooks, that of Thomas reveals most clearly the dual aspect of death which continually concerned Thomas Mann: death as both dissolution and release. It was as such that he had experienced the death of his own father: the disintegration of a tradition and the freedom for a new, spiritual and artistic development. In Thomas Buddenbrook's collapse on the dirty pavement the experience finds vivid concrete expression. Ironically Thomas' funeral is conducted with all the ceremonial indicative of the life style which has stifled him. The laughter of his son, Hanno, who is helping Gerda to write the death notices, seems to echo the irony.

Gerda Arnoldsens marriage to Thomas Buddenbrook has acted as a catalyst in the process of the growing introspection of the Buddenbrook family. The introspective tendencies reach a climax in Gerda and Thomas' son Hanno. Unlike his father, Hanno experiences no inner conflict, since he has no foothold in burgher society except by birth. From the beginning

the community into which he is born is inimical to him, and, as if sensing that it will allow him no room for self expression, Hanno's birth is "sonderbar lautlos" (80). It is made quite clear that he might well not have survived at all. The note of doom is continued with Grobleben's speech at the christening, insisting that "wi. müssen all tau Moder warn, tau Moder ... tau Moder ...!" (81).

Hanno's childhood is plagued by illness, notably that caused by problems with his teeth. As far as physical appearance is concerned the child has his mother's mouth, "der [neigte] frühzeitig ... dazu, sich in zugleich wehmütiger und ängstlicher Weise verschlossen zu halten" (82). He also has the blue shadows under the eyes which never augur well for the vitality of a character in Mann's work.

Every description of Hanno's early life serves to emphasise the unlikelihood of his surviving for any length of time. In a brief and exceptional period of happiness he enjoys those childhood games which require:-

"vor allem ... die reine, starke, insbrünstige, keusche, noch unverstörte und uneingeschüchterte Phantasie jenes glückseligen Alters, wo das Leben sich noch scheut, uns anzutasten, wo noch weder Pflicht noch Schuld Hand an uns zu legen wagt, wo wir sehen, hören, lachen, staunen und träumen dürfen, ohne dass noch die Welt Dienste von uns verlangt" ... (83).

The passage points again to Thomas Mann's concern in this work with the question of individual self-expression. Hanno's sensitivity is evident from the start, his response to the poems, which he hears as a child, indicating an intense inner life. It is this inner world, the real Hanno, that Herr Stuhl, the music master, senses and to which he hopes he has, through his tuition, given a means of expression:-

"Manchmal betrachte ich seine Augen ... es liegt so vieles darin, aber seinen Mund hält er verschlossen. Später einmal im Leben, das vielleicht seinen Mund immer

fester verschliessen wird, muss er eine Möglichkeit haben, zu reden ..." (84).

Hanno finds freedom of expression only through his music. The description of his piano recital is of great interest:-

"und nun kam der Schluss, Hanno's geliebter Schluss, der an primitiver Gehobenheit dem ganzen die Krone aufsetzte. Leise und glockenrein umperlt und umflossen von den Läufen der Violine, tremolierte pianissimo der e-Moll-Akkord ... Er verweigerte sich die Auflösung, er enthielt sie sich und den Hörern vor. Was würde sie sein, diese Auflösung, dieses entzückende und befreite Hineinsinken in H-Dur? Ein Glück ohnegleichen, eine Genugtuung von überschwenglicher Süßigkeit. Der Friede! Die Seligkeit! Das Himmelreich! ... noch nicht ... noch nicht! Noch einen Augenblick des Aufschubs, der Verzögerung, der Spannung, die unerträglich werden musste, damit die Befriedigung desto künstlicher sei ... Noch ein letztes, aller letztes Auskosten dieser drängenden und treibenden Sehnsucht; dieser Begierde des ganzen Wesens, dieser Äussersten und krampfhaften Anspannung des Willens, der sich dennoch die Erfüllung und Erlösung noch verweigerte, weil er wusste: Das Glück ist nur ein Augenblick" (85).

It is the language of passion, but of a passion directed towards death. Just as he used the storm description to reflect exactly the Konsul's situation, so Mann here uses the description of the performance to emphasise Hanno's predicament and to confirm what has already been hinted: that Hanno has made a pact with death.

Only in the release of death, Mann makes us feel, will Hanno Buddenbrook experience the happiness which the music promises. At every instance where questions of duty occur "sein/Widerstandskraft [brach] vollständig zusammen" (86). His nightmares, in which he cries out "nach Hilfe oder Erbarmen ..., als stände er in Flammen, als wollte man ihn erwürgen, als geschähe etwas unsäglich Grauenhaftes" (87), indicate the extent to which his life stifles him. Hanno's retreat into himself, his separation from the world, is made increasingly obvious. The drawing of a line beneath his name in the family papers gives concrete

expression to this and his stammered:-

"Ich glaubte ... ich glaubte ... es käme nichts mehr" (88)

sounds like a premonition.

Hanno's longing for the release of death intensifies. At the death of his grandmother, Mann writes:-

"Er atmete langsam und zögernd, denn bei jedem Atemzuge erwartete er den Duft, jenen fremden und doch so seltsam vertrauten Duft, den die Wolken von Blumengertchen nicht immer zu übertäuben vermochten. Und wenn er kam, wenn er ihn verspürte, so zogen sich seine Brauen fester zusammen, und seine Lippen gerieten einen Augenblick in zitternde Bewegung ... Schliesslich seufzte er" (89).

There is no question that Hanno stands on a strangely familiar footing with death. The contrast with his blond, blue-eyed schoolmates is given greater impact by the immediately following description of Hanno's health problems, which culminates in the incident of the arsenic pills:-

"Hanno fragte in der Folge oftmals danach, von einem beinahe zärtlichen Bedürfnis nach diesen kleinen, süssen, beglückenden Pillen getrieben" (90).

The friendship with Kai, to which Hanno is led by "ein sicherer Instinkt" (91), is of interest. The count's son is allowed a freedom of expression in his life-style that Hanno's milieu does not permit. Kai runs wild at home and at school shuns gym:-

"weil er die Disziplin und gesetzmässige Ordnung verabscheute, die dabei beobachtet werden musste" (92).

His creative personality, moreover, is expressed in the stories with which he entertains Hanno. In contrast, Hanno has in his father a continual reminder of the price paid by the individual in the service of 'duty', 'life' and 'order':-

"Aber der kleine Johann sah mehr, als er sehen sollte, und seine Augen, diese schüchternen, goldbraunen, bläulich umschatteten Augen beobachteten zu gut. Er sah nicht nur die sichere Liebenswürdigkeit, die sein Vater auf alle wirken liess, er sah auch - sah es mit einem seltsamen, quälenden

Scharfblick -, wie furchtbar schwer sie zu machen war ..." (93).
Far from encouraging his son to show more interest in the practical life, Thomas Buddenbrook's very being causes his son to retreat further into himself.

The visit to Travemünde provides Hanno with a brief escape from the tortures of his life, and there he finds solace, like so many other Mann characters, in the sea, which is once again clearly associated with the idea of death:-

"dieses mühe - und schmerzlose Schweifen und Sichverlieren der Augen über die grüne und blaue Unendlichkeit hing von welcher, frei und ohne Hindernis, mit sanftem Sausen ein starker, frisch, wild und herrlich duftender Hauch daherkam, der die Ohren umhüllte und einen angenehmen Schwindel hervorrief, eine gedämpfte Betäubung, in der das Bewusstsein von Zeit und Raum und allem Begrenzten still selig unterging ..." (94).

Ironically Ida Jungmann remarks to her charge:-

"Komm, Hannochen; müssen gehen; Abendbrotzeit; wirst dir den Tod holen, wenn du hier wirst schlafen wollen" (95).

His stay at the coast does not provide Hanno with a greater zest for life, as hoped by his family, but merely strengthens his introspective tendencies. With his unerring insight he senses his father's increasing inability to cope:-

"Thomas Buddenbrook [konnte] ... überall, wo es sich nicht um Energie, Tüchtigkeit und hellköpfige Frische, sondern um Furcht und Leiden handelte, des Vertrauens und der Hingabe seines Sohnes gewiss sein ..." (96).

Thus it is that Hanno instinctively knows of the Senator's defreezing hold on life and stands outside the door, as Thomas makes his will, with

"einem Ausdruck, ganz ähnlich demjenigen, mit dem er an der Bahre seiner Grossmutter den Blumengeruch und jenen anderen, fremden und so seltsam vertrauten Duft eingeatmet hatte" (97).

There is no sense of shock at his father's death and the dissolution which follows:-

"Der alten Ida Verabschiedung schloss sich in seiner Anschauung folgerichtig den anderen Vorgängen des Abbröckelns, des Endens, des Abschliessens, der Zersetzung an, denen er beigewohnt hatte. Dergleichen befremdete ihn nicht mehr; es hatte ihn seltsamerweise niemals befremdet" (98).

The passage leaves no doubt that Hanno is part of that same dissolution.

What Thomas Mann has to say on the subject of Hanno's death is said in the school rather than the typhus chapter. It is immediately evident that the chapter has wider significance than a simple description of a day in Hanno's life. The alarm clock which wakens him to the rigours of life is described as 'pflichttreu'. The additional adjective 'grausam' (99) reminds us of the annihilating effect of anything to do with 'duty' on a personality as sensitive as that of Hanno. The previous evening's visit to Lohengrin has served only to impress on him:-

"wie wehe die Schönheit tut, wie tief sie in Scham und sehnsüchtige Verzweiflung stürzt und doch auch den Mut und die Tauglichkeit zum gemeinen Leben verzehrt" (100).

He is aware of being oppressed by "eine Bürde, die von Anbeginn seine Seele beschwert habe, und sie irgendwann einmal ersticken müsse" (101).

It is soon evident that it is no longer a question of 'irgendwann' but that Hanno's death is very near. Of the boy's sleep Mann writes that it is:-

"so tief und tot, wie man schläft, wenn man niemals wieder erwachen möchte" (102),

and that Hanno's expression while sleeping is one of "einer insbrünstigen und schmerzlichen Hingabe an den Schlaf" (103). Every movement to get ready to face the day is carried out only with a supreme effort.

In a scene reminiscent of Lobgott Piepsam's confrontation with the cyclist, Hanno is faced, on his frantic rush to school, with the unhurried

presence of those fortunate people who stroll to work secure and unthinking in their own worlds. Their smiling reaction to his hassled appearance produces a reaction in him similar to that of Piepsam at the cyclist's behaviour:-

"Er war ausser sich über dieses Lächeln. Was dachten sie sich, und wie beurteilten diese Ungeängstigten die Sachlage" (104).

The desire for escape intensifies in him:-

"Sie könnten bedenken, dass es innig wünschenswert wäre, vor dem geschlossenen Hoftore tot umzufallen" (105).

The bell ringing for morning assembly, the call to 'life', interrupts his thoughts. Again it is reminiscent of the cyclist's bell in "der Weg zum Friedhof".

The theme of duty and insensitivity runs through the whole description of Hanno's day at school. The injustices of the system are taken for granted or ignored by his schoolmates who are "stark und tüchtig für das Leben" (106). Hanno, on the other hand, suffers because of what he considers unearned good fortune and is victimised by the one person from whom he might expect some sympathy, the wretched Herr Modersohn:-

"Selbst das Mitleid wird einem auf Erden durch die Gemeinheit unmöglich gemacht" (107).

Every sentence of the school chapter speaks of the constriction of the inner self imposed by the system on a character as sensitive as Hanno's. The impossibility of his survival in such a world is stated unequivocally by Hanno himself in his conversation with Kai:-

"Ich kann nichts werden. Ich fürchte mich vor dem Ganzen ... Ich kann beinahe nichts, ich kann nur ein bisschen phantasieren, wenn ich allein bin ... ich möchte schlafen und nichts mehr wissen. Ich möchte sterben Kai... Nein, es ist nichts mit mir. Ich kann nichts wollen ... Man sollte mich nur aufgeben. Ich wäre so dankbar dafür! ... Ich habe gar keine Hoffnung" (108).

In the silence that follows Hanno's mention of his piano improvisations, Kai remarks:-

"Ich weiss, wovon du spielst" (109).

His improvisations that evening prove that it is the longing for death. They echo the torments of his existence, finally rushing towards

"einem unaussprechlichen Ziele ... , das kommen musste, nun kommen musste, in diesem Augenblick, an diesem furchtbaren Höhepunkt, da die lechzende Drangsal zur Unerträglichkeit geworden war ... Und es kam, es war nicht mehr hintanzuhalten, die Krämpfe der Sehnsucht hätten nicht mehr verlängert werden können, ... Die Lösung, die Auflösung, die Erfüllung, die vollkommene Befriedigung brach herein" (110).

Afterwards Hanno lies down "und blieb so lange Zeit, ohne ein Glied zu rühren" (111). To all intents and purposes the boy is already dead.

The ensuing typhus chapter is brief and makes no mention of Hanno. Such reference has been rendered totally unnecessary by the school chapter. The call back to life echoes the call of the alarm clock. The idea is inconceivable that in Hanno's case it will register as:-

"ein Gefühl der feigen Pflichtversäumnis, der Scham; der erneuten Energie, des Mutes und der Freude, der Liebe und Zugehörigkeit zu dem spöttischen, bunten und brutalen Getriebe, das er im Rücken gelassen" (112).

Instead the reaction must surely be the same as that to the alarm:-

"er [zuckt] zusammen vor Furcht und Abneigung" (113).

Death is inevitable.

Hanno's death is viewed by some critics as the fulfillment of the Schopenhaurian plot which they take to form the basis of Buddenbrooks. The boy's brief life appears to be the embodiment of Schopenhauer's ideas on the will. A comparison with Mann's earlier short stories quickly shows, however, that the lack of a will to live in Hanno echoes perfectly the sentiments of several of Mann's early characters, and proves

that the pessimism evident in such an outlook was present long before his discovery of the philosopher's works. Paolo Hoffman in "der Wille zum Glück" is very much the forerunner of Hanno Buddenbrook, sharing a similar background, appearance and childhood. The sentiment expressed in his remark:-

"Ich schlafe sehr tief und sehr lange, denn ich bin eigentlich immer todmüde. Glaubst du, dass ich, wenn ich wollte, mich hier einfach hinlegen könnte und sterben" (114),

is reiterated with heightened poignancy in Hanno's desperate confession to Kai:-

"Ich möchte schlafen und nichts mehr wissen. Ich möchte sterben, Kai" (115).

On the young Thomas Mann, whose works before Buddenbrooks already show evidence of pessimism, the writing of Schopenhauer made a great impact. He wrote later in Betrachtungen eines Unpolitischen:-

"Schopenhauer ist recht etwas für junge Leute ... Schopenhauer's Weltgedicht [trage] das Gepräge des Lebensalters, ... in welchem das Erotische dominiert. Und der Sinn für den Tod - darf man hinzufügen; denn junge Leute sind mit dem Tod viel vertrauter und wissen viel mehr von ihm als alte, weil sie mehr von der Liebe wissen. Todes-Erotik als musikalisch-logisches Gedankensystem, geboren aus einer enormen Spannung von Geist und Sinnlichkeit - einer Spannung deren Ergebnis und überspringender Funke eben Erotik ist: das ist das Erlebnis verwandt entgegenkommender Jugend mit dieser Philosophie, die sie nicht moralisch, sondern vital, sondern persönlich versteht, ... und die sie recht damit versteht" (116).

In the character of Hanno Buddenbrook we have an example of Thomas Mann's fascination with this 'Todes-Erotik'. If we examine some of Schopenhauer's statements we see how closely they reflect the attitude to life exhibited by Hanno. The philosopher writes:-

"Als Zweck unsers Daseins ist in der Tat nichts Anderes auszugeben, als die Erkenntnis, dass wir besser nicht dawaren" (117),

a statement which might stand as a summary of Hanno's feelings about existence.

Likewise, the young boy's reaction to the constrictions of his life can be outlined by Schopenhauer's comments on man's dilemma:-

"... die Frage dringt ihm auf, woher und wozu das Alles sei und hauptsächlich, ob die Mühe und Not seines Lebens und Strebens wohl durch den Gewinn belohnt werde?" (118).

In this connection it is also interesting that Hanno's means of self-expression is music, of which Schopenhauer writes:-

"die Musik [stellt] ... den Willen selbst dar" (119),

and further

"Es gibt eigentlich in der ganzen Musik nur zwei Grundakkorde: den dissonanten Septimenakkord und den harmonischen Dreiklang, als auf welche alle vorkommende Akkorde zurückzuführen sind. Dies ist eben dem entsprechend, dass es für den Willen im Grunde nur Unzufriedenheit und Befriedigung gibt, unter wie vielerlei Gestalten sie auch sich darstellen mögen" (120).

The music which Hanno plays at the centenary celebration of the Buddenbrook firm (c.f. this thesis, p. 39) is therefore of particular interest. In Schopenhauer's philosophy the only real solution to the long-term insatiability of the will is death:-

"der Tod ist die grosse Gelegenheit nicht mehr ich zu sein" (121).

Of Hanno's music Mann writes:-

"Was würde sie sein, diese Auflösung, dieses entzückende und befreite Hineinsinken in H-Dur? Ein Glück ohnegleichen, eine Genugtuung von überschwenglicher Süßigkeit. Der Friede! Die Seeligkeit! Das Himmelreich!" (122).

Hanno Buddenbrook is unable to produce a valid art. His piano playing consists mainly of improvisations and he himself realises that he can have no future through his art:-

"Ich will nicht einmal berühmt werden. Ich habe Angst davor, genau, als wäre ein Unrecht dabei!" (123).

The dilemma is apparent. Mann, the burgher, saw at this stage the

possibility of Hanno's success in the artistic field as 'unrecht'; Thomas Mann, the artist, expresses through the death of the young boy his criticism of 'life'. He wrote later:-

"Die Kunst - ist sie nicht immer eine Kritik des Lebens, ausgeübt durch einen kleinen Hanno? Die anderen, das ist offenbar, fühlen sich im Leben, wie es ist, ja recht wohl und in ihrem Element, - wie Hanno's Kamaraden in der Schule. Er, durch dessen Erlebnis die Schule erscheint, und zwar als skurril, quälend, stumpfsinnig, abscheulich erscheint, ist im Grunde weit entfernt, sein Erlebnis und Empfindungsurteil für allgemeingültig und massgebend zu halten, denn er kennt sich als reizbaren Ausnahmefall" (124).

The final sentence is an important comment and draws attention to a fact which some critics overlook. Amidst the apparently overwhelming atmosphere of death and decay, and to some extent offering a balance to it, signs of a healthy 'normal' counterpoint are present. Notable among these is the recurring appearance of the flower-girl mistress of Tom's youth. The latter's new home is, appropriately, opposite the flower shop and, as Thomas and Gerda with the sickly young Hanno visit it to see the progress, they are watched by Iwersen, his pregnant wife and their two healthy children. Pregnant again, Frau Iwersen goes to say her final farewell to Tom's corpse. At Travemünde, amidst talk of decline and death, a young girl goes by "korpulent und frech", a breath of life.

As in the earlier work, however, Mann's preoccupation in Buddenbrooks is with the 'marked' man. At every stage of the novel the note of doom is sounded. No Buddenbrook celebration passes without mention of death or decline. Most of the deaths in Buddenbrooks do not come as a surprise. In fact, Mann is able to convey the death of such characters as Jean Buddenbrook and Hanno with no reference to the person in question. There is much sound psychological basis for Mann's

approach to the theme of death. The continued repression of personality in the service of an idea alien to that personality cannot but lead to a wearing down of the will to continue living, a process clearly observed in *Thomas Buddenbrook*. That Hanno too should find prospects of a future spiritual self-mutilation abhorrent is not surprising. Such negation of the well-springs of life must surely lead ultimately to a longing for the absolute escape of death.

The conflict between art and life, imagination and vitality was a problem which was to occupy Thomas Mann for many years. It was a conflict of which he had personal experience. In its most acute form the antithesis presents itself in his works as the life/death opposition. But Thomas Mann's concern, we should note, is life and the problem of the individual's approach to it, and one of the major factors in that approach is an assessment of the meaning of death:-

"Der Tod ist dem Leben eingeboren, Leben selbst ist Sterben und dennoch Wachstum zugleich" (125).

Buddenbrooks itself may be seen as a study of the nature of man and his goals in the face of death.

If Mann's characters appear to have more to do with death than with life it is because life, in the form in which they have experienced it, allows them little room for self-expression, provides them with little sense of meaning; and because it appeared to Thomas Mann at this point that imagination and vitality are necessarily at odds. He explores the theme again, with differing conclusions, in Tonio Kröger and der Tod in Venedig. We should not accept the conclusion of Buddenbrooks as Mann's final word on the subject. He himself insisted that his work forms a unity:-

"Das Leben eines Künstlers, wie sein Werk, ist eine

Einheit von vornherein ..." (126).

Buddenbrooks should therefore be examined in the context of his other writings.

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DER TOD IN VENEDIG

"Es ist aus mit dem Künstler sobald er Mensch wird und zu empfinden beginnt."

(Thomas Mann - Tonio Kröger)

In marked contrast to Buddenbrooks, Tonio Kröger 1903 ends on a note of hope. No longer, it seems, need the tension between imagination and vitality be resolved only in death. The idea of mutual longing between the two Mann types is introduced and Kröger's mixed nature is viewed, at the close of the work, as positively fruitful:-

"Denn wenn irgend etwas imstande ist, aus einem Literaten einen Dichter zu machen, so ist es diese meine Bürgerliebe zum Menschlichen, Lebendigen und Gewöhnlichen" (1).

The artist forms tenuous links with the 'living' and thus the death theme, dominant in other works, is not overtly present, although the link between the artist, sickness and death is by no means totally missing. Of Kröger's career it is said that:-

"in dem Masse, wie seine Gesundheit geschwächt ward, verschärfte sich seine Künstlerschaft ..." (2)

and if Tonio Kröger, unlike Hanno Buddenbrook, survives to produce works of art, it is only at the cost of an emotional death, an "Auf-Eis-Legen der Empfindung" (3).

But the balance which Tonio Kröger suggests is possible, seems, at best, a precarious one and the work in no way exhausts Mann's fascination with the problem of the artist and his link with sickness and death, a theme which he takes up again with a very different outcome in der Tod in Venedig.

The work is interpreted by many critics on a psychological level as the failure of an artificial attempt at repression and, indeed, lends

itself well to such a reading. Aschenbach is thus seen as the victim of a breakdown occasioned by the outburst of emotions too long suppressed in the service of his art. The crouching tiger of Aschenbach's vision can be interpreted as symbolic of his repressed animal nature, the setting of the vision as the place where life runs rampant; and the mysterious strangers as projections of his subconscious. A violent break with propriety after severe repression is a psychologically sound thesis. Life, it therefore would seem, takes vengeance here on art. But, paradoxically, indulgence in life leads to death for the artist. Close examination of Der Tod in Venedig shows, in fact, that the work is full of ambiguity. The novelle restates and elaborates on the original doubts expressed by Kröger about the "Äussert fragwürdige Gabe" of art (4).

Gustav von Aschenbach has the background of a typical Mann artist. Illness in childhood causes him long periods of absence from school and hence isolation from his peers. His mixed parentage provides the usual exotic element from the maternal side and solid, bourgeois element from the paternal side:-

"Die Vermählung dienstlich nüchternen Gewissenhaftigkeit mit dunkleren, feurigen Impulsen liess einen Künstler und diesen besonderen Künstler erstehen" (5).

He epitomises the concept of the artist expressed in Kröger's statement:-

"dass man gestorben sein muss, ^Lam ganz ein Schaffender zu sein" (6).

His work is produced in conditions of strict discipline and in the description of his working methods the emphasis is on words such as 'Zucht', 'Willensdauer' and 'Zähigkeit' (7). The heroes of his novels reflect the restraint that Aschenbach himself practises and indicate his belief:-

"dass beinahe alles Grosse, was dastehe, als ein Trotzdem dastehe ... es war eine Erfahrung, war geradezu die Formel seines Lebens und Ruhmes, der Schlüssel zu seinem Werk" (8).

Yet his sacrifices in the service of his art have left their mark on

Aschenbach:-

"Bedeutende Schicksale schienen über dies meist leidend seitwärts geneigte Haupt hinweggegangen zu sein, und doch war die Kunst es gewesen ..., welche sonst das Werk eines schweren, bewegten Lebens ist" (9).

Indeed, there are several references which cast doubt on the nature of Aschenbach's restrained classical style, which apparently represents a rejection of all sympathy with the abyss:-

"Und hat Form nicht zweierlei Gesicht? Ist sie nicht sittlich und unsittlich zugleich, - sittlich als Ergebnis und Ausdruck der Zucht, unsittlich aber und selbst wider-sittlich, sofern sie von Natur eine moralische Gleichgültigkeit in sich schliesst, ja wesentlich bestrebt ist, das Moralische unter ihr stolzes und unumschränktes Szepter zu beugen" (10).

As the work progresses this dubious aspect of art is emphasised more and more. With supreme irony Mann himself writes in the classical style that has epitomised Aschenbach's later years and in which one can see:-

"die elegante Selbstbeherrschung, die bis zum letzten Augenblick eine innere Unterhöhnung, den biologischen Verfall vor den Augen der Welt verbirgt" (11).

(One is reminded of one of Mann's earlier characters, Thomas Buddenbrook.)

For despite the restraint of his prose it is indeed a story of disintegration and decay in which death is not merely a theme but a major protagonist and in connection with which the following comment on art from Tonio Kröger seems particularly appropriate:-

"sie (die Kunst) lohnte ... mit allem, was sie zu schenken hat, und nahm ... unerbittlich all das, was sie als Entgelt dafür zu nehmen pflegt" (12).

The man whom we meet at the beginning of der Tod in Venedig is

undoubtedly on the point of exhaustion. The continual exercise of will-power needed to produce his art has led to a "zunehmende Abnutzbarkeit seiner Kräfte" (13), a description at once reminiscent of Thomas Buddenbrook. Like Tonio Kröger, von Aschenbach leaves his work, unable to concentrate, on a Spring day. In both cases Spring, with all its connotations of rebirth and awakening of the senses, is not conducive to the production of works of art, for which the emotions must be suppressed. Aschenbach's Spring walk, however, by no means leads to rebirth. Significantly, during its course he takes to ever quieter pathways and stands overlooking for a while the busy inn garden, cut off from the bustling activity of life. The walk ends, ominously enough, at the cemetery as the sun is setting. It is while Aschenbach stands reading inscriptions on gravestones that the mysterious figure appears "im Portikus, oberhalb der beiden apokalyptischen Tiere" (14). The description which follows has unmistakable connotations of death. The man is "mager" and "auffallend stumpfnäsiger" (15) and stands with head raised:-

"so dass an seinem hager dem losen Sporthemd entwachsenden Halse der Adamsäpfel stark und nackt hervortrat" (16).

The skeleton-like description continues:-

"seine Lippen schienen zu kurz, sie waren völlig von den Zähnen zurückgezogen, dergestalt, dass diese, bis zum Zahnfleisch blossgelegt, weiss und lang dazwischen hervorablekten" (17).

The suit that the man wears is yellow, the colour of sickness and decay.

Yet there are other aspects to the character, deceptive indications of health and life: the red colour of his hair and the milky freckled skin. Aschenbach's vision also, triggered by the sudden appearance of this stranger, is ambiguous. The tropical setting of the vision conjures

up images of luxuriance and fertility but also of rank swampland, haunt of the tiger, place of origin of the cholera which is to strike Aschenbach down in Venice, and mythical home of Dionysus, god of orgiastic delirium. This ambiguity continues throughout the work. Behind each apparent indication of rebirth and rejuvenation, death lies in wait for Aschenbach. Even his reaction to the vision is twofold as he "fühlte sein Herz pochen vor Entsetzen und rätselhaftem Verlangen" (18). Aschenbach's sight of the stranger causes him to experience:-

"eine seltsame Ausweitung seines Innern ..., eine Art schweifender Unruhe, ein jugendlich durstiges Verlangen in die Ferne, ein Gefühl, so lebhaft, so neu oder doch so längst entwöhnt und verlernt ..." (19).

This state of mind is in marked contrast to the "Behutsamkeit, Umsicht, Eindringlichkeit und Genauigkeit" (20) demanded by his work. Aschenbach himself considers the possibility that his suppressed emotional life is now avenging itself but brushes aside his experience as "Reiselust, nichts weiter" (21) and promises himself "Reisen also, - er war es zufrieden. Nicht gar weit, nicht gerade zu den Tigern" (22). The challenging attitude of the Munich stranger as he stands looking at Aschenbach is only the first of several sinister incidents which are to happen to the writer:-

"Seine Haltung [hatte] etwas herrisch ["]Überschauendes, Kühnes oder selbst Wildes ... Jener [erwiderte] seinen Blick und zwar so kriegerisch, so gerade ins Auge hinein, so offenkundig gesonnen, die Sache aufs Äusserste zu treiben" (23).

Aschenbach's first choice of destination proves totally unsatisfactory and, as if fated, he has to rethink his plans. The apparent reasons for his departure are not convincing and the cause lies rather within him:-

"Ein Zug seines Innern, ihm war noch nicht deutlich, wohin, beunruhigte ihn ... und auf einmal, zugleich überraschend und selbstverständlich, stand ihm sein Ziel vor Augen" (24).

From the outset his journey to Venice takes on a nightmarish quality, a fact which lends weight to the interpretation of der Tod in Venedig in psychological terms. Viewed in this way the events of the story represent the gradual revelation of Aschenbach's subconscious, of the suppressed elements in his nature. The first sign that the foundations of reality are shifting comes when Aschenbach buys his ticket. The description of the ticket-seller has a grotesque and faintly sinister quality and we are told:-

"Die glatte Raschheit seiner Bewegungen und das leere Gerede, womit er sie begleitete, hatten etwas Betäubendes und Ablenkendes, etwa als besorgte er, der Reisende möchte in seinem Entschluss, nach Venedig zu fahren, noch wankend werden" (25).

The appearance of the elderly man on board the ship to Venice emphasises the ambiguous nature of this 'holiday' and is immediately evocative of the stranger at the Munich cemetery:-

"sein Hals [war] verfallen und sehnig ... sein gelbes und vollzähliges Gebiss, das er lachend zeigte, ein billiger Ersatz" (26).

The yellow colour is carried through in the man's suit and, like the Munich traveller, he wears a straw hat. In this case too elements of vitality are present. The man's tie is symbolically red and most important is "das matte Karmesin der Wangen" (27). But the apparent youthfulness is clearly an illusion, a mere façade beneath which lurks the process of decay.

It is at this point that Aschenbach first begins to sense that he is entering a world totally beyond his control:-

"Ihm war, als lasse nicht alles sich ganz gewöhnlich

an, als beginne eine träumerische Entfremdung, eine Entstellung der Welt ins Sonderbare um sich zu greifen, der vielleicht Einhalt zu tun wäre ..." (28).

But this last idea of possible escape is also illusion as Aschenbach himself subconsciously suspects. It is "mit unvernuftigem Erschrecken" (29) that he notices that the ship has begun to move. Again a note of death is sounded in the reference here to the sea. The figures on the ship take on a distorted quality as Aschenbach, lulled by the monotony of the sea, drifts into sleep:-

"Aber im leeren, im ungegliederten Raume fehlt unserem Sinn auch das Mass der Zeit, und wir dämmern im Ungemessenen. Schattenhaft sonderbare Gestalten, der greise Geck, der Ziegenbart aus dem Schiffsinnern, gingen mit unbestimmten Gebärden, mit verwirrten Traumworten durch den Geist des Ruhenden, und er schlief ein" (30).

The feeling of disorientation does not leave Aschenbach. He feels numbed as if "die Welt eine leichte, doch nicht zu hemmende Neigung [zeigt], sich ins Sonderbare und Fratzenhafte zu entstellen" (31).

The previous vague possibility of halting the process is here dismissed. Even Venice appears in an unfamiliar guise:-

"er fand sich darein, auf dem Wasserwege ein anderes Venedig zu erreichen, als, er zu Lande sich nähernd, je angetroffen hatte" (32).

It is evident that Aschenbach's expectations of this trip will not be realised in the way he imagines.

Aschenbach's encounters with the death-like strangers in the work become increasingly closer. Hence he sees the stranger in Munich only from a distance. On the boat, however, the drunken man addresses his comments to the author and in the gondola incident Aschenbach is brought into direct confrontation with the figure. Moreover, the balance between the ambiguous aspects of these characters changes each time, with increasing emphasis being given to the death-like features. In the old man on the

boat indications of vitality are seen as illusion only. Although it is true that the gondolier has "rötliche Brauen" and rows "mit grosser Energie" (33), the death-like attributes of this character outweigh the vital characteristics.

Once again it is a case here of a "kurz aufgeworfene Nase" (34) and the remainder of the description is a subtle paraphrase of those which have gone before:-

"Ein paarmal zog er vor Anstrengung die Lippen zurück und entblösste seine weissen Zähne" (35).

The yellow clothing this time takes the form of a sash and, interestingly, the straw hat is described as shapeless, with its weave beginning to unravel. The comment that the man appears to be "durchaus nicht intalienischen Schlages" (36) is reminiscent of the "Gepräge des Fremdländischen und Weitherkommenden" (37) that Aschenbach noticed in the figure at the cemetery.

Above all the gondola itself is openly described in terms linked with death:-

"Das seltsame Fahrzeug ... so eigentümlich schwarz, wie sonst unter allen Dingen nur Särge es sind ... es erinnert noch mehr an den Tod selbst, an Bahre und düsteres Begängnis und letzte, schweigsame Fahrt. Und hat man bemerkt, dass der Sitz einer solchen Barke, dieser sargschwarz lackierte, mattschwarz gepolsterte Armstuhl, der weichste, üppigste, der erschlaffendste Sitz von der Welt ist? Aschenbach ward es gewahr" (38).

Uncharacteristically Aschenbach relaxes "im Gemüsse einer so ungewohnten als stüssen Lässigkeit" (39). His thoughts are prophetic:-

"Die Fahrt wird kurz sein ..., möchte sie immer währen" (40).

Everything points to the fact that this will indeed be Aschenbach's final journey. Silence reigns in this world, broken only by the incomprehensible whispering of the gondolier. The man whose life

and work until this point has been based on an exercise of will:-

"sah ... kein Mittel seinen Willen durchzusetzen ...
Ein Bann der Trägheit schien auszugehen von seinem
Sitz, von diesem niedrigen, schwarzgepolsterten
Armstuhl" (41).

He manages to stir only once, to enquire as to the price of the journey.

The ensuing exchange, with the gondolier's insistence that Aschenbach will indeed pay, causes the latter to muse:-

"Das ist wahr, du fährst mich gut. Selbst,
wenn du es auf meine Barschaft abgesehen hast und
mich hinterrücks mit einem Ruderschlage ins Haus des
Aides schickst, wirst du mich gut gefahren haben" (42).

The association with Charon is obvious and Aschenbach's apparent escape from payment only temporary.

On arrival at his hotel Aschenbach's first action is to go to the window of his room and look at the sea. It is at this point 'unbesont' (43) but, as Aschenbach's infatuation for Tadzio grows, it becomes, symbolically, bathed in bright sunshine. His meticulous preparations for dinner that evening are a vestige of his previous disciplined life.

At dinner Aschenbach notices Tadzio:-

"Mit Erstaunen bemerkte Aschenbach, dass der Knabe vollkommen schön war. Sein Antlitz ... erinnerte an griechische Bildwerke aus edelster Zeit, und bei reinster Vollendung der Form war es von so einmalig persönlichem Reiz, dass der Schauende weder in Natur noch bildender Kunst etwas Ähnlich Geglücktes angetroffen zu haben glaubte" (44).

But the reference to form recalls Mann's earlier remarks on its dubious nature and in this context the description of the Polish boy, emphasising the difference between him and his sisters, is interesting. He sits "in einer Haltung von lässigem Anstand" (45). Vocabulary such as 'lässig' is often used by Mann about a character who is linked with or nearing death.

Aschenbach already feels "sonderbar ergriffen" (46) and it is "mit einer kurzen Regung des Bedauerns" (47) that he discovers that he is seated at dinner some distance from the Polish family. His abstract ramblings on beauty during the meal are said to resemble:-

"gewissen scheinbar glücklichen Einflüsterungen des Traumes ..., die sich bei ernüchtertem Sinn als vollständig schal und untauglich erweisen" (48).

Indeed, it does not seem to be abstract ideas which fill his sleep that night. On the contrary, this is said to be "anhaltend tief, aber von Traumbildern verschiedentlich belebt" (49).

The following morning sees the first of Aschenbach's futile attempts at flight from Venice. On this occasion he goes only as far as thinking about departure. Thoughts of Tadzio at breakfast cause him to feel "plötzlich aufgeheitert" (50), and on the appearance of the youth the writer:-

"erstaunte ... aufs neue, ja erschrocken über die wahrhaft gottähnliche Schönheit des Menschenkinds" (51).

His reaction is noticeably more emotional and his comparison of Tadzio with Eros causes doubt as to whether Aschenbach's interest is even at this early stage as professionally disinterested as he would wish to believe. The doubt is given added weight by Aschenbach's thoughts:-

"Wahrhaftig, erwarteten mich nicht Meer und Strand, ich bliebe hier solange du bleibst" (52).

Already subtle links are being made between the beautiful youth and the death figures in the work. The red stitching on Tadzio's jacket parallels the red hair or garments of the latter, and his skin has the yellow hue of sickness and decay:-

"das Haupt des Eros, vom gelblichen Schmelze parischen Marmors, mit feinen und ernsten Brauen, Schläfen und Ohr vom rechtwinklig einspringenden Geringel des Haares

dunkel und weich bedeckt" (53).

Having decided to remain in Venice, Aschenbach goes to the beach and a description of his feelings towards the sea follows that is typical of Mann and immediately evocative of death:-

"Er liebte das Meer aus tiefen Gründen: aus dem Ruheverlangen des schwer arbeitenden Künstlers, der vor der anspruchsvollen Vielgestalt der Erscheinungen an der Brust des Einfachen, Ungeheuren sich zu bergen begehrt; aus einem verbotenen, seiner Aufgabe gerade entgegengesetzten und ebendarum verführerischen Hange zum Ungliederten, Masslosen, Ewigen, zum Nichts. Am Vollkommenen zu ruhen, ist die Sehnsucht dessen, der sich um das Vortreffliche müht, und ist nicht das Nichts eine Form des Vollkommenen?" (54).

The sudden appearance of Tadzio as a focal point before the shapeless, infinite mass of the sea again makes clear his link with death:-

"die Horizontale des Ufersaumes [ward] von einer menschlichen Gestalt überschritten, und als er seinen Blick aus dem Unbegrenzten einholte und sammelte, da war es der schöne Knabe, der, von links kommend, vor ihm im Sande vorüberging" (55).

Behind him, whom Aschenbach sees as the personification of perfect form, lies nothingness and death.

The writer's actions that day have all the marks of a growing obsession. He is continually drawn from his work to watch the boy, picking him out by the red stitching on his suit. The theme of apparent vitality symbolised by the many references to the colour red is continued in the "grosse vollreife Erdbeeren" (56) that Aschenbach eats later. Ironically it is a similar indulgence that will later give him cholera. Gradually the emphasis of Aschenbach's interest in the young Pole is shifting. His imaginary warning to Tadzio's friend indicates emotional involvement and it is clearly no longer a question of abstract thoughts on the nature of beauty:-

"Es war sehr warm geworden, obgleich die Sonne die

Dunstschicht des Himmels nicht zu durchdringen vermochte. Trägheit fesselte den Geist, indes die Sinne die ungeheure und betäubende Unterhaltung der Meeresstille genossen. Zu erraten, zu erforschen, welcher Name es sei, der ungefähr 'Adgio' lautete, schien dem ernstesten Mann eine angemessene, vollkommen ausfüllende Aufgabe und Beschäftigung" (57).

The sound of the boy's name is said to contain "etwas zugleich Süßes und Wildes" (58). The Munich traveller also had in his appearance "etwas Wildes" (59). The echoing sounds, which Aschenbach can scarcely make out, are reminiscent of the incomprehensible whisperings of the gondolier and the drunken babblings of the man on the boat, thus forming again a link between the young boy and the death figures who haunt Aschenbach's journey to Venice.

The writer's decision to remain in the city is strengthened by the sight of the boy:-

"Aschenbach lauschte mit geschlossenen Augen auf diesen in seinem Innern antönenden Gesang, und abermals dachte er, dass es hier gut sei und dass er bleiben wolle" (60).

Continually aware of the boy's presence on the beach, Aschenbach is moved by what he interprets as paternal interest. Noticeably, the first mention of the word 'Herz' (61) is made in connection with the writer here, and on return to his room:-

"er verweilte dort drinnen längere Zeit vor dem Spiegel und betrachtete sein graues Haar, sein müdes und scharfes Gesicht ... rief alle äusseren Erfolge seines Talentes auf, die ihm irgend einfallen wollten ..." (62).

The pursuit of his art, we have already been told, has taken its toll on Aschenbach, as can be seen in his weary, elderly face.

His journey to Venice that afternoon takes Aschenbach "über die faul riechende Lagune" (63). Here Mann begins the process of identifying Aschenbach's inner state with the city of Venice:-

"er fieberte, das Blut pochte im Kopf. Er floh aus den

drangvollen Geschäftsgassen über Brücken in die Gänge der Armen. Dort behelligten ihm Bettler, und die üblen Ausdünstungen der Kanäle verleiteten das Atmen" (64).

The city begins to reveal its other face, that of decadence and decay.

Aschenbach's final attempt at flight, which is triggered by this excursion, is once again half-hearted. He immediately regrets his decision to leave and is irritated by the attempts of the hotel staff to hurry him. The reason is obvious despite his rationalisations.

He passes Tadzio as he leaves the hotel:-

"und was folgte, war eine Leidensfahrt, kummervoll, durch alle Tiefen der Reue" (65).

His emotional state during the journey is revealing:-

"Der Reisende schaute, und seine Brust war zerissen. Die Atmosphäre der Stadt, diesen leis fauligen Geruch von Meer und Sumpf, den zu fliehen es ihn so sehr gedrängt hatte, - er atmete ihn jetzt in tiefen, zärtlich schmerzlichen Zügen" (66).

It is the farewell to the dubious side of Venice, ironically seen by Aschenbach as "ein Abschied für immer" (67), that causes his regret, the farewell to the elements in his nature revealed by his feelings for Tadzio.

The revelation that his luggage has been sent to the wrong destination occasions in Aschenbach "eine abenteuerliche Freude, eine unglaubliche Heiterkeit" (68), and on his return to the hotel he is said to experience the emotions "eines entlaufenen Knaben" (69). His apparent rejuvenation begins but is to prove the path which leads to death.

His first sight of Tadzio after the return strips Aschenbach of his illusions of professional or fatherly interest in the boy:-

"Aber im gleichen Augenblicke fühlte er, wie der lässige Gruss vor der Wahrheit seines Herzens hinsank und verstummte, - fühlte die Begeisterung seines Blutes, die Freude, den Schmerz seiner Seele und erkannte, dass ihm um Tadzios willen der Abschied so schwer geworden war" (70).

The description of Aschenbach which follows is in complete contrast to an earlier observation about his life-style:-

"'Sehen Sie, Aschenbach hat von jeher nur so gelebt' - und der Sprecher schloss die Finger seiner Linken fest zur Faust -; 'niemals so' - und er liess die geöffnete Hand bequem von der Lehne des Sessels hängen" (71).

Now his relaxed stance heralds dissolution and his open-armed gesture an embrace of death:-

"Dann hob er den Kopf und beschrieb mit beiden schlaff über die Lehne des Sessels hinabhängenden Armen eine langsam drehende und hebende Bewegung, die Handflächen vorwärtskehrend, so, als deute er Öffnen und Ausbreiten der Arme an. Es war eine bereitwillig willkommen heissende, gelassen aufnehmende Gebärde" (72).

Aschenbach's days, from this point onwards, are spent in glorious sunshine, notably close to the sea under "rostfarbene Segeltücher" (73). The effects of Tadzio's presence are ascribed to the influence of the city of Venice. But, as the reader has seen, Venice has another highly dubious aspect, which is also, by implication, inherent in Aschenbach's relationship with the youth. The former's time is divided between the sea and trips in a gondole, both symbolic of death. These sunlit days are dominated for Aschenbach by the figure of Tadzio usually, significantly, "am Rande des Meeres" (74) and the 'u' sound of the boy's name resounding over the beach:-

"So erhob Fremdheit des Knaben Rede zur Musik, eine übermüthige Sonne goss verschwenderischen Glanz über ihn aus, und die erhabene Tiefsicht des Meeres war immer seiner Erscheinung Folie und Hintergrund" (75).

Death is never far from Aschenbach. The description of Tadzio, even at this stage, has a skeletal quality:-

"die Sonne erleuchtete den Flaum des oberen Rückgrats, die feine Zeichnung der Rippen, das Gleichmass der Brust traten durch die knappe Umhüllung des Rumpfes hervor, seine

"Achselhöhlen waren noch glatt wie bei einer Statue, seine Kniekehlen glänzten, und ihr bläuliches Geäder liess seinen Körper wie aus klarerem Stoffe gebildet erscheinen" (76).

Aschenbach's apparently philosophical discussion of beauty is full of sensual innuendo and has prophetic undertones:-

"Würden wir nicht vergehen und verbrennen vor Liebe, wie Semele einstmals vor Zeus?" (77).

Under the influence of Eros the writer produces the few pages which represent some of his best work:-

"Nie hatte er die Lust des Wortes süsser empfunden" (78).

But the time he spends on this is described as "gefährlich künstlich" (79); the production of such work of art has its price, and Aschenbach is left exhausted by the effort. Mann's idea of the dubious nature of artistic production is made explicit:-

"Allein es war wohl an dem, dass der Alternde die Ermüchterung nicht wollte, dass der Rausch ihm zu teuer war. Wer enträtselt Wesen und Gepräge des Künstlertums! Wer begreift die tiefe Instinktverschmelzung von Zucht und Zügellosigkeit, worin es beruht! Denn heilsame Ermüchterung nicht wollen zu können, ist Zügellosigkeit" (80).

Aschenbach's only concern now is that the Polish family might leave Venice. He expends all the energies which previously would have gone into work "in Rausch und Empfindung" (81). The description of the rising sun which follows is analogous with the description of Aschenbach's passion, and, after an innocent beginning, increasingly comes to contain sexual symbols of a pronounced Dionysian kind:-

"Ein Rosenstreuen begann da am Rande der Welt ... Purpur fiel auf das Meer, das ihn wallend vorwärts zu schwimmen schien, goldene Speere zuckten von unten zur Höhe des Himmels hinauf, der Glanz ward zum Brande, lautlos, mit göttlicher Übergewalt wälzten sich Glut und Brunst und lodernde Flammen herauf ... Stärkerer Wind erhob sich, und die Rosse Poseidons liefen ... Stiere auch wohl ..., welche mit Brüllen anrennend die Hörner senkten. Zwischen dem Felsengeröll des entfernteren

Strandes jedoch hüpfen die Wellen empor als springende Ziegen. Eine heilig entstellte Welt voll panischen Lebens schloss den Berückten ein ..." (82).

Aurora is given the epithet "Jünglingsentführerin" (83); Aschenbach gives way to the darker side of his nature and lurks in the shadows to watch Tadzio at sunset or follows him through seedy alleyways. His passion for Tadzio comes to a climax one evening when the boy does not return for dinner. Meeting him unexpectedly on the terrace afterwards and unable to compose his expression Aschenbach is devastated by the boy's smile, a smile described as 'verhängnisvoll' (84). Significantly the declaration of love which this elicits from the older man is whispered only when he has reached "mit hastigen Schritten das Dunkel des rückwärtigen Parkes" (85). The description of Tadzio here points out again:-

"seine Haut war marmorhaft gelblich geblieben wie zu Beginn" (86).

Aschenbach's discovery that Venice is gripped by cholera immediately follows his whispered confession of love, a discovery which is made during one of his now frequent visits to the hairdresser. Pursuing Tadzio around Venice:-

"er [witterte] plötzlich in der Luft ein eigentümliches Arom, von dem ihm jetzt schien, als habe es schon seit Tagen, ohne ihm ins Bewusstsein zu dringen, seinen Sinn berührt,- einen süßlich-offizinellen Geruch, der an Elend und Wunden und verdächtige Reinlichkeit erinnerte" (87).

His immediate reaction is that the secret should not be revealed:-

"dieses schlimme Geheimnis der Stadt, das mit seinem eigensten Geheimnis verschmolz" (88).

He bases his reasoning on the fact that public awareness of the epidemic might cause the Polish family to leave and, ironically, "dass er nicht mehr zu leben wissen werde, wenn das geschähe" (89).

By this time Aschenbach is following Tadzio everywhere, always with the smell of the sick city in the background. He even revels in the

atmosphere of decadence:-

"Haupt und Herz waren ihm trunken, und seine Schritte folgten den Weisungen des Dämons, dem es Lust ist des Menschen Vernunft und Würde unter seine FüÙe zu treten" (90).

Oftentimes Aschenbach pursues the boy in an ominously black gondola. Now the call of the gondolier has become "halb Warnung, halb Gruss" (91) and the sun shines through an oppressive haze. Venice is clearly a symbol for a place where art once flourished, a symbol of Aschenbach's own development:-

"Das war Venedig, die schmeichlerische und verdächtige Schöne, - diese Stadt, halb Märchen, halb Fremdenfalle, in deren faulige Luft die Kunst selbst einst schwelgerisch aufwucherte und welche den Musikern Klänge eingab, die wiegen und buhlerisch einlullen" (92).

Despite rare moments of half-reflection, Aschenbach succumbs to this dubious aspect of Venice. The guitarist who appears with the band at the hotel one evening completes the series of death figures in the work. The ambiguous nature of his song reflects the character himself:-

"die verdächtige Figur [schien] auch ihre eigene verdächtige Atmosphäre mit sich zu führen" (93).

✓ The air of vitality given by the shock of red hair does little to conceal the overall impression of corruption and decay. Descriptions of the previous figures are echoed here:-

"Dem weichen Kragen des Sporthemdes ... entwuchs ein hagerer Hals mit auffallend gross und nackt wirkendem Adamsapfel. Sein bleiches, stumpfnäsiges Gesicht ... schien durchpflügt von Grimassen und Laster, und sonderbar wollten zum Grinsen seines beweglichen Mundes die beiden Furchen passen, die trotzig, herrisch, fast wild zwischen seinen rötlichen Brauen standen ... und ein Lächeln tückischer Unterwürfigkeit entblöÙte seine starken Zähne" (94).

The word 'herrisch' recalls particularly the attitude of the stranger at the Munich cemetery, just as the statement that the musician seems "nicht venezianischen Schlages" (95) acts as a reminder that the former too had "ein Gepräge des Fremdländischen und Weitherkommenden" (96) and that the gondolier appeared not to be of Italian stock. The use of "brutal und verwegen gefährlich" (97) echoes the phrase used of the gondolier, a man "von ungefälliger, ja brutaler Physiognomie" (98), whilst the continual, ambiguous play of the tongue in the corner of the mouth is immediately evocative of the man on the boat. The hat he wears is dirty and the atmosphere of death and decay is completed by the smell of disinfectant which exudes from the guitarist.

The confrontation between Aschenbach, Tadzio and the guitarist, the last of the death figures, makes clear the link between Aschenbach's attachment to the boy and his ensuing death. The musicians sing first of love. The second song is of dubious nature and the last is based on mocking laughter. Apparently the antithesis of Tadzio, the guitarist in fact represents his other face. He is described in exactly the same words as the young boy previously:-

"er stand, abgetrennt von den Seinen" (99).

Aschenbach has made the mistake of trying to participate in life, a step which Mann sees as disastrous for the artist. By doing so he has in essence summoned death. His call to the musician to question him about the cholera epidemic represents his closest contact yet with the death figure. It is important that he pays the guitarist with "ein ungebührlich bedeutendes Geldstück" (100). It is the unpaid debt to the gondolier. Aschenbach is now ready for his journey to death. Appropriately the farewell song of the musician revolves around "Hohngelächter" (101). His raised finger, pointed at the terrace

where Aschenbach sits, prefigures the stance with which Tadzio sends Aschenbach to his death.

The 'buhlerisch' musician of Venice has performed his task:

Aschenbach is frozen into corpse-like immobility:-

"Aschenbach ruhte nicht mehr im Stuhl, er sass aufgerichtet wie zum Versuche der Abwehr oder Flucht. Aber das Gelächter, der heraufwehende Hospitalgeruch und die Nähe des Schönen verwoben sich ihm zu einem Traumbann, der unzerreissbar und unentrinnbar sein Haupt, seinen Sinn umfassen hielt" (102).

The inevitability of Aschenbach's fate is again made explicit and he himself begins to think of his own mortality:-

"Im Hause seiner Eltern, vor vielen Jahren, hatte es eine Sanduhr gegeben - er sah das gebrechliche und bedeutende Gerätchen auf einmal wieder, als stünde es vor ihm" (103).

The sentence is an ironic echo of one from the beginning of the work:-

"diese Besorgnis, die Uhr möchte abgelaufen sein, bevor er das Seine getan und völlig sich selbst gegeben" ... (104).

The following day Aschenbach learns the truth about the cholera epidemic from the English travel agent. The young man's description of the place of origin of the disease corresponds exactly with the writer's Munich vision. In spite of his intentions he has travelled to the tiger. There is no turning back. The idea that he might warn the Polish family of the imminent danger receives but brief consideration:-

"Aber er fühlte zugleich, dass er unendlich weit entfernt war, einen solchen Schritt im Ernste zu wollen. Er würde ihn zurückführen, würde ihn sich selbst wiedergeben; aber wer ausser sich ist, verabscheut nichts mehr, als wieder in sich zu gehen" (105).

Subconsciously he realises the implications of his actions. His thoughts turn to the graveyard in Munich:-

"Was galt ihm noch Kunst und Tugend gegenüber den

"Vorteilen des Chaos?" (106).

Through his delirious dream that night the 'u' sound of Tadzio's name echoes and the smell of sickness and foul waters pervades. The Apolline vision ends in a Dionysian orgy. Tadzio's curly hair is an attribute shared by both gods. Aschenbach's observation becomes active participation:-

"Aus diesem Traum erwachte der Heimgesuchte
entnervt, zerrüttet und kraftlos dem Dämon verfallen"
(107).

When he awakes the last vestiges of restraint are gone and he visits the hairdresser. Rouge and red tie mark his apparent rejuvenation, but he has become like the old man on the boat, even carrying the "Strohhut mit einem mehrfarbigen Bande umwunden" (108). Beneath the rouge the seeds of decay and death are already present, as they are in the "Erdbeeren, überreife und weiche Ware" (109) which he buys and eats during his pursuit of Tadzio through Venice. Just as the latter has led Aschenbach into the plague-ridden alleys of the city, so he now stands, ironically still wearing the red sash of life, pointing Aschenbach's way to death: Hermes leading the souls of the dead to the underworld:-

"er [wandelte] ... mit flatterndem Haar dort draussen
im Meere, im Winde, vorm Nebelhaft-Grenzenlosen ...
Ihm (Aschenbach) war aber, als ob der bleiche und
liebliche Psychagog dort draussen ihm lächle, ihm
winke; als ob er, die Hand aus der Hüfte lösend,
hinausdeute, voranschwebe ins Verheissungsvoll-
Ungeheure. Und wie so oft, machte er sich auf,
ihm zu folgen" (110).

Aschenbach's death may be viewed, therefore, as the result of an outburst of suppressed emotions. Constance Urdang also offers an interesting interpretation of the work. She sees symptoms of Mann's interest in the Faust theme in both Tonio Kröger and Der Tod in Venedig, and indeed the idea has much to offer in the understanding of Mann's

treatment of the death theme, particularly in the latter work.

In such an interpretation the mysterious strangers may be seen as a temptor figure who can appear in a multitude of disguises, and Aschenbach's dream as his Walpurgisnacht. The price for creativity being renunciation of participation in life, Aschenbach is forbidden the warmth of human contact. His relationship with Tadzio breaks his 'pact', and he must pay the price. We are reminded of the devil's statement to Leverkühn in Mann's later work:-

"Liebe ist dir verboten, insofern sie wärmt.
Dein Leben soll kalt sein - darum darfst du keinen
Menschen lieben" (111).

The idea expressed in Doktor Faustus can also be found in Tonio Kröger. Kröger insists at one point that it is an

"Irrtum, dass man ein Blättchen pflücken dürfe, ein
einziges, vom Lorbeerbaum der Kunst, ohne mit seinem
Leben dafür zu zahlen" (112).

He sees lack of emotional involvement in life as the price the artist pays for creativity. Gustav von Aschenbach forgets this fact in his intoxication with Tadzio and the price he, therefore, pays for his mistake is life itself.

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DER ZAUBERBERG

"Keine Metamorphose des Geistes ist uns besser vertraut als die, an deren Anfang die Sympathie mit dem Tode, an deren Ende der Entschluss zum Lebensdienste steht."

(Thomas Mann - Von Deutscher Republik)

Thomas Mann's der Zauberberg is very much a dialectic novel.

The antithesis of Nature and Spirit, Life and Death which lies at the basis of Thomas Mann's writings is examined and re-appraised in greater detail than in any previous work. Of the vast amount of criticism on this novel a very high proportion centres on the discussion of whether the work represents, in the final analysis, a rejection of Mann's previous fascination with death. It is my intention to show that, whilst der Zauberberg contains much that is unmistakably reminiscent of Mann's earlier works, it does, in its conclusion, present us with a new affirmation of the Life principle, a sense of balance to an extent not found in his previous writings. Indeed, the novel may, in many ways, be seen as a form of self-analysis, raising to the level of consciousness the preoccupation with disease and death that informed the earlier works. One thing should be borne in mind from the outset: the author makes it clear at various points in the work that the forces which effect Castorp's development are not necessarily those which have a formative influence on everyone. Castorp himself remarks to Madame Chauchat:-

"Zum Leben gibt es zwei Wege: Der eine ist der gewöhnliche, direkte und brave. Der andere ist schlimm, er führt über den Tod ..." (1).

Hans Castorp has much in common with previous Mann heroes and shares the burgher background of characters such as Hanno Buddenbrook and Tonio Kröger. Whilst he cannot be said to be an artist in the strictest sense,

he has shown himself a passable painter, and could not be called a model burgher. His teeth are "etwas weich ... und [hatten] mehrfach Schaden gelitten" (2), an unmistakable non-bourgeois trait in Mann's work, and Castorp's approach to the practical life is very reminiscent of earlier artistic characters:-

"Angestrengte Arbeit zerrte an seinen Nerven,
sie erschöpfte ihn bald ..." (3).

In view of his future development he might be said to be an artist whose work is his own life.

Though generally 'at home' in his native North German city he has a tendency to daydream that is not the mark of a man solidly rooted in burgher life; in life in general, in fact, since the two concepts are usually synonymous in Mann's work. Castorp is called by the author:-

"den jungen im Leben noch wenig fest wurzelnden Menschen" (4).

Indeed, what links Hans Castorp most clearly with earlier characters in Thomas Mann's work is that he stands on a peculiarly familiar footing with death. Having lost both parents at a very young age, he then experiences, while still a child, the death of his grandfather:-

"Denn es war ja nun schon das drittemal binnen so kurzer Zeit und bei so jungen Jahren, dass der Tod auf den Geist und die Sinne - namentlich auch auf die Sinne - des kleinen Hans Castorp wirkte; neu war ihm der Anblick und Eindruck nicht mehr, sondern bereits recht wohl vertraut ..." (5).

Already, like Hanno Buddenbrook, the child senses the dual nature of death:-

"Es hatte mit dem Tode eine fromme, sinnige und traurig schöne, das heisst geistliche Bewandnis und zugleich eine ganz andere, geradezu gegenteilige,

sehr körperliche, sehr materielle, die man weder als schön, noch als sinnig, noch als fromm, noch auch nur als traurig eigentlich ansprechen konnte" (6).

He is aware that the flowers, in particular, serve the purpose of disguising this second, more dubious, aspect of death.

It is precisely Hans Castorp's comprehension of the dual nature of death that makes him the ideal person to benefit from the experience of the magic mountain. But his tendency to emphasise the dignified, spiritualising side of death, while choosing to gloss over its more dubious aspects, proves a danger for him, causing him to fall prey to a fascination for death. Whilst, however, it is true that the hero loses his way, both in reality and metaphorically, during his stay on the mountain, and ventures far into the realms of death, he nevertheless carries within himself a counterweight to its attraction. We might see a symbol of this in the family christening bowl which reminds the child not merely of the transience of life but provides him with a sense of continuity and stability. As he watches his grandfather bending over the basin:-

"ein schon erprobtes Gefühl kam ihn an, die sonderbare, halb träumerische, halb beängstigende Empfindung eines zugleich Ziehenden und Stehenden, eines wechselnden Bleibens, das Wiederkehr und schwindelige Einerleiheit war, ..." (7).

It is this counterweight in Hans Castorp which provides his safeguard during his experiences at the sanatorium, a counterweight represented also by his solid bourgeois background and by his respect for the life principle of active work, even if he himself cannot follow that path. Mann himself continually emphasises his hero's 'middle stance' and one must bear in mind that his acclimatisation to existence on the mountain consists in 'never quite acclimatising'.

For, whilst Hans Castorp ventures into realms of experience where

his ancestors would never have set foot, and, in doing so, is seen by many critics as confirming the ascendancy of the death principle in Mann's work, it must be noted that the alternative path he is offered is seen as sterile and unfulfilling:-

"Wenn das Unpersönliche um ihn [den Menschen] her, die Zeit selbst der Hoffnungen und Aussichten bei aller äusseren Regsamkeit im Grunde entbehrt, wenn sie sich ihm als hoffnungslos, aussichtslos und ratlos heimlich zu erkennen gibt und der bewusst oder unbewusst gestellten, aber doch irgendwie gestellten Frage nach einem letzten, mehr als persönlichen, unbedingten Sinn aller Anstrengung und Tätigkeit ein hohles Schweigen entgegengesetzt, so wird gerade in Fällen redlicheren Menschentums eine gewisse lähmende Wirkung solches Sachverhalts fast unausbleiblich sein, die sich auf dem Wege über das Seelisch-Sittliche geradezu auf das physische und organische Teil des Individuums erstrecken mag" (8).

It is important, therefore, to understand that life, or the form in which he has experienced it, has offered Hans Castorp no worthy ultimate goal, no sense of meaning, but has presented him with a void. Thus we see that life provides Hans Castorp's (and Thomas Mann's) starting point. If, in answer to its failure to provide him with a sense of meaning, the hero ventures into the realms of death and flirts with the temptations which it offers, I hope to show that he returns from his experiences with a more positive and balanced attitude to life.

It soon becomes evident that Hans Castorp's journey to visit his cousin in a T.B. sanatorium is no ordinary journey. In this, as in other aspects, a parallel may be drawn between Der Zauberberg and Mann's earlier work, der Tod in Venedig. A dream-like quality prevails in both. The hero, in both cases, begins his journey by regarding it as a regrettable necessity but, like Gustav von Aschenbach, Hans Castorp soon experiences a strange distortion of normal concepts:-

"Gleich ihr [der Zeit] erzeugt er [der Raum] Vergessen, er tut es aber, indem er die Person des Menschen aus ihren Beziehungen löst und ihn in einen freien und ursprünglichen

Zustand versetzt, - ja, selbst aus dem Pedanten und Pfahlbürger macht er im Handumdrehen etwas wie einen Vagabunden" (9).

The word 'Vagabund' has connotations of the artist (and death) in Mann's work, representing as it does the antithesis of the burgher who stands firmly on the side of life.

For both Aschenbach in der Tod in Venedig and Hans Castorp in der Zauberberg the journey leads to a confrontation with death. In both instances it is not only home that is left behind but also an adherence to the concept of 'Ordnung'. Heller's remarks on der Zauberberg might stand as a summary of either work:-

"The whole book is about form and dissolution, the disciplined effort of living and the relaxing lure of death, the honours of achievement and the advantages of dissoluteness" (10).

Whilst Aschenbach, however, is led to death by the classically beautiful Tadzio, whose presence veils death's sinister aspect, Hans Castorp's experience is somewhat different. The veil of beauty found in der Tod in Venedig is totally lacking in the later work. From the outset Castorp is confronted by the more distasteful aspects of death.

Almost the first piece of information which Hans Castorp learns on his arrival on the mountain is that the corpses from a neighbouring sanatorium are dispatched for burial by sleigh in bad weather. Joachim's remark that:-

"Das ist den Leichen doch einerlei" (11),
is totally alien to his cousin's feeling that every possible mark of respect should be accorded to the sick, dying or dead. The same attitude to death, opposed to Hans Castorp's own, is shown again in Joachim's report of Behrens' remarks on the previous occupant of room thirty-four:-

"Behrens meinte gleich, dass sie fertig sein würde, bis du kämest, und dass du das Zimmer dann haben könntest" (12).

Castorp's final experience of that first evening at the sanatorium is the meeting with the Herrenreiter. The man is an embodiment of death. His cough, which makes every other cough Hans Castorp has ever heard seem like a healthy expression of life, sounds like "ein schauerlich kraftloses Wühlen im Brei organischer Auflösung" (13).

It causes Castorp to remark:-

"Es ist ja gerade, als ob man dabei in den Menschen hineinsähe, wie es da aussieht, - alles ein Matsch und Schlamm ..." (14).

The experience does not detract from his interest in the morbid. Just as Gustav von Aschenbach on his journey to Venice very soon exhibits tendencies towards dissoluteness, so Hans Castorp quickly shows his fascination with disease and death. His native reserve and sense of form have already shown signs of weakening in his uncharacteristic exhortation to Joachim to feel his burning cheeks, and his eyes at dinner on that first evening have "einen erregten Glanz" (15).

Castorp's discussion with Joachim at table prefigures the long passages that will follow in the novel on the nature of time. It is seen throughout the work as an element that is a necessary component of and precondition for life. Joachim's remark that in the sanatorium:-

"es ist gar keine Zeit, und es ist auch kein Leben" (16), emphasises that the existence at the Berghof represents a type of death. The cousins' exchange with Dr. Krokowski after the meal, and the latter's enquiries whether Hans Castorp intends to utilise the available medical services, draws from the young man a protest:-

"Nein, ich danke tausendmal!" sagte Hans Castorp

und wäre fast einen Schritt zurückgewichen" (17).

It is reminiscent of Aschenbach's "unvernünftiges Erschrecken" (18) and of his illusion that it is possible to give in to his longing to travel with the proviso:-

"Nicht gar weit, nicht gerade bis zu den Tigern" (19).

That night Hans Castorp's dreams are vivid, like those of Aschenbach on his first night in Venice, and, prophetically, are of death. He sees his cousin Joachim on a sleigh guided by the Herrenreiter.

Three incidents on the following morning emphasise again that death holds sway on the magic mountain. On waking, Hans Castorp hears music, which, Mann writes, his hero loves:-

"da sie ganz ähnlich auf ihn wirkte wie sein
Frühstücksporter, nämlich tief beruhigend,
betäubend, zum Dösen überredend ..." (20).

The vocabulary makes it clear that music, as is usual in Mann's work, is not a force working on behalf of life. The first person Castorp sees that morning is the mother of 'tous les deux':-

"vollständig schwarz gekleidet und um das wirre
schwarzgraue Haar einen schwarzen Schleier gewunden"
(21).

Ironically, Hans Castorp's own visit to the Berghof is to parallel that of this woman's second son: an apparent brief visit to a relative leading to the diagnosis of tuberculosis in the visitor and a prolonged stay for him. Castorp has the impression:-

"als verdunkele ihre traurige Erscheinung die
Morgensonne" (22),

and at the same time becomes aware of the noises from the Russian couple in the neighbouring room. Love and death are interconnected, as in other works by Mann. The incidents might have acted as warnings to Hans Castorp but do not do so. The numbing attraction of death which,

unchecked, can blot out the 'sun' of life is already exerting its pull on him, as he chooses to react with a sense of awe and piety, closing his eyes to death's alternative face.

The events of the first morning confirm the impression that Hans Castorp will succumb to the intoxication of death. Behrens' remark, on meeting the young man, proves very accurate:-

"Sie wären ein besserer Patient als der, da möchte ich doch wetten" (23).

The ensuing discussion with Joachim about smoking is interesting.

Castorp explains his liking for the habit thus:-

"Es ist genau, wie wenn man an der See liegt, dann liegt man eben an der See, nicht wahr, und braucht nichts weiter, weder Arbeit noch Unterhaltung" (24).

The analogy of the narcotic effect of smoking with that of the sea clearly marks the former as a force in opposition to life, a fact which is emphasised by Joachim's designation of smoking as 'schlapp' (25). Such vocabulary is common in Mann's works in connection with death. That Hans Castorp finds it difficult to smoke on the mountain is due to the death-like atmosphere of the place which needs no other narcotic to life. Castorp reacts to his cousin's statement that he may do as he wishes as he, Hans, is healthy, with the retort:-

"Ja, gesund bis auf die Anämie" (26),

as if he resents his healthy status.

The difference in the attitude of the two cousins to death becomes clear in the discussion that follows and which is initiated by Hans Castorp's enquiries about the number of deaths which occurs in the sanatorium. In contrast to Joachim, who views sickness and death as "eine Art Bummelei" (27), Castorp is appalled at the story of Behrens' attitude to those who refuse to die quietly:-

"Ein Sterbender ist doch gewissermassen ehrwürdig ...
... Ein Sterbender ist doch sozusagen heilig ... Das lasse
ich mir nicht ausreden, dass ein Sterbender etwas Vornehmeres
ist als irgend so ein Lämmel, der herumgeht und lacht und
Geld verdient und sich den Bauch vollschlägt" (28).

It is at this point that Hans Castorp makes the acquaintance of Settembrini who is to become a major protagonist in the education of the young man, fighting against precisely the ideas which the latter has just expressed to Joachim. Settembrini's feelings about the Berghof and its inhabitants reveal themselves at once. He calls Behrens and Krowkowski, Rhadamanth and Minos, lawgivers in the underworld, and the analogy is continued in his remark to Hans Castorp:-

"Sie hospitieren hier nur, wie Odysseus im Schattenreich? Welche Kühnheit, hinab in die Tiefe zu steigen wo Tote nichtig und sinnlos wohnen -" (29).

The Italian's disapproval is obvious. The world of the sanatorium represents to him a world of darkness and death, a 'medieval' world, opposed to the forces of reason for which he stands.

The effect on Castorp of his new experiences is evident in the discussion with Joachim that evening on the nature of time:-

"Er war durchaus nicht gewohnt, zu philosophieren, und fühlte dennoch den Drang dazu" (30).

Joachim is moved to remark:-

"Ich glaube, es greift dich an hier bei uns?" (31),

a remark more telling than he knows. The emphasis on the comfort of the rest-cure armchair is reminiscent of the effect of the gondola seat on Aschenbach in der Tod in Venedig; its soporific effect is a notable aspect of the death-like existence at the Berghof. Castorp's 'Ocean Steamships', symbol of his interest in the active practical life of the flatland, lies unheeded throughout the rest cure. The beer he drinks

at the following meal has an unusually strong effect:-

"das Frühstücksbier, sonst nur von mässig benebelnder Wirkung auf seine Natur, [betäubte und lähmte] den jungen Mann heute vollständig ..." (32).

The hero is beginning to succumb to the lure of sanatorium existence. Already he looks forward to the next rest-cure.

Castorp's newfound philosophical preoccupations continue, notably in connection with the palpitations which he has experienced continually since his arrival at the Berghof:-

"Aber wenn einem das Herz nun ganz von selber klopft, ... das finde ich ganz unheimlich, ... es ist ja so, als ob der Körper seine eigenen Wege ginge und keinen Zusammenhang mit der Seele mehr hätte, gewissermassen wie ein toter Körper ... Man sucht förmlich nach einem Sinn dafür, einer Gemütsbewegung, die dazu gehört ..." (33).

The discussion, with its suggestion of psychological causes for physical symptoms, prefaces the first mention between the two cousins of Marusja, the Russian girl at their table. Joachim's face distorts

"zu einem Ausdruck, der dem jungen Hans Castorp einen unbestimmten Schrecken einflösste und ihn veranlasste, sofort den Gegenstand zu wechseln und sich nach anderen Personen zu erkundigen, wobei er Marusja und Joachims Ausdruck rasch zu vergessen versuchte, was ihm völlig gelang" (34).

Joachim's refusal to give way to the attraction of dissolution and death that Marusja represents is to act first as an example and later as an implied criticism of his cousin's behaviour. It is not insignificant that the following chapter narrates Hans Castorp's discovery of the culprit responsible for the continual door slamming at meals: Madame Chauchat, who represents for Hans a parallel temptation to that of Marusja for Joachim. As Castorp registers the woman's high cheeks and narrow eyes:-

"Eine vage Erinnerung an irgend etwas und irgendwen

berührte ihn leicht und vorübergehend" (35).

The discovery afterwards of blood on his handkerchief is only one of the many links made between the ensuing discovery of Castorp's illness and his attraction to Madame Chauchat, in itself but another facet of his fascination with death.

Hans Castorp's previous leanings to the rewards of indiscipline and the freedom it gives is shown by both his musings on Herr Albin's threats of suicide and also memories of his feelings at not being allowed to move into the next class at school:-

"Hauptsächlich schien ihm, dass die Ehre bedeutende Vorteile für sich habe, aber die Schande nicht minder, ja, dass die Vorteile der letzteren geradezu grenzenloser Art seien. Und indem er sich probeweise in Herr Albins Zustand versetzte und sich vergegenwärtigte, wie es sein müsse, wenn man endgültig des Druckes der Ehre ledig war und auf immer die bodenlosen Vorteile der Schande genoss, erschreckte den jungen Mann ein Gefühl von wüster Süßigkeit, das sein Herz vorübergehend zu noch hastigerem Gange erregte" (36).

The passage also bears a remarkable similarity to Gustav von Aschenbach's thoughts on the advantages of dissoluteness in der Tod in Venedig (37). Castorp's resentment of the restriction placed on one by health (life, duty) is increased by his omission from Dr. Krokowski's rounds. His announcement to his cousin of his intention to leave parallels Aschenbach's continual thoughts of departure from Venice because of his inability to acclimatise.

The physical discomfort Castorp experiences is symptomatic of a decreasing resistance to the forces which are tempting him. The discomfort increases, mounting to a sort of intoxication at the climax of which he again sees Madame Chauchat:-

"Sie erinnert mich an irgend etwas, doch kann ich nicht sagen an was" (38).

Significantly, someone is playing the piano in the background. At this moment Settembrini appears again:-

"und wieder empfand Hans Castorp etwas wie Ernüchterung beim Anblick dieses fein und spöttisch gekräuselten Mundwinkels unter der Biegung des schwarzen Schnurrbartes" (39).

But, despite the sobering effect of Settembrini's appearance, Hans Castorp cannot remember his age, mumbles incomprehensible sentences and is forced to confess:-

"Mir ist, als dürfte ich meinen fünf Sinnen nicht mehr recht trauen" (40).

Settembrini, realising the danger of the situation, puts forward a suggestion:-

"Wie wäre es denn da, wenn Sie darauf verzichteten, hier älter zu werden, kurz, wenn Sie noch heute nacht wieder aufpackten und sich morgen mit den fahrplanmäßigen Schnellzügen auf- und davonmachten?" (41).

As in the case of Aschenbach, however, the decision to leave is forestalled by the sight of the 'loved one':-

"Zufällig blickte er ins Nebenzimmer bei diesen Worten und sah dort Frau Chauchat von vorn, ihre schmalen Augen und breiten Backenknochen. Woran, dachte er, woran und an wen in aller Welt erinnert sie mich nur" (42).

Castorp argues in exactly the same way as Aschenbach that it would be totally unreasonable to give in to his physical inability to acclimatise and leave, and Settembrini's warnings are in vain. Castorp's later refusal to take the evening rest-cure on the balcony, to retain some vestige of distance between himself and the inhabitants of the sanatorium, lacks conviction in view of his emotional state:-

"Dazwischen aber berührte ihn plötzlich ein ganz absonderlich ausschweifendes Gefühl der Freude und Hoffnung" (43).

The feelings correspond to those of Aschenbach after his abortive attempt to leave Venice (44). That Castorp has succumbed to the influence of the Berghof can be seen by his sudden insight into the reason for Joachim's reaction to his mention of Marusja and her physical appearance:-

"Hans Castorp verstand und durchschaute, was es bedeutete, verstand und durchschaute es auf eine so neue, eingehende und intime Art" (45).

That night he dreams, again prophetically, of borrowing a pencil from Madame Chauchat:-

"denn nun hatte er es und wollte es festhalten, woran und an wen sie ihn eigentlich so lebhaft erinnerte" (46),

and of turning Settembrini away. The Russian woman dominates his dreams. The temptation she offers is clearly that of dissoluteness:-

"Da durchdrang ihn wieder von Kopf bis zu Fuss jenes Gefühl von wüster Süßigkeit, das in ihm aufgestiegen war, als er zur Probe sich des Druckes der Ehre ledig gefühlt und die bodenlosen Vorteile der Schande genossen hatte, - dies empfand er nun wieder in seinem Traum, nur ungeheuer viel stärker" (47).

Castorp's disorientation is strengthened by the indistinctness of the seasons on the mountain, which further cuts off the young man from the normal world, although he clings to his refusal to buy a fur sack as a sign that he still has not succumbed completely to the 'life' of the Berghof.

A walk to the village with Joachim results in one of the many philosophical discussions with Settembrini, who totally opposes Hans Castorp's remarks on illness. The younger man has remarked:-

"Das ist so sonderbar, - krank und dumm -, ...
Ich meine, es reimt sich nicht, es passt nicht zusammen,
man ist nicht gewöhnt, es sich zusammen vorzustellen.
Man denkt, ein dummer Mensch muss gesund und gewöhnlich
sein, und Krankheit muss den Menschen fein und klug und

besonders machen" (48).

Settembrini's reply, totally opposing this attitude, is unparalleled in Mann's earlier writings:-

"Nun denn, nein! Krankheit ist durchaus nicht vornehm, durchaus nicht ehrwürdig, - diese Auffassung ist selbst Krankheit oder sie führt dazu ... Krankheit, weit entfernt, etwas Vornehmes, etwas allzu Ehrwürdiges zu sein, um mit Dummheit leidlicherweise verbunden sein zu dürfen, [bedeutet] vielmehr Erniedrigung" (49).

To Settembrini, the humanist, for whom reason must always predominate, sickness means an overemphasis of the physical:-

"Ein Mensch, der als Kranker lebt, ist nur Körper, das ist das Widermenschliche und Erniedrigende" (50).

Joachim's comment that Hans Castorp has recently expressed similar thoughts occasions the Italian to remark:-

"Der begabte junge Mensch ist kein unbeschriebenes Blatt, er ist vielmehr ein Blatt, auf dem gleichsam mit sympathetischer Tinte alles schon geschrieben steht, das Rechte wie das Schlechte, und Sache des Erziehers ist es, das Rechte entschieden zu entwickeln, das Falsche aber, das hervortreten will, durch sachgemäße Einwirkung auf immer auszulöschen" (51).

That he has taken upon himself the role of Hans Castorp's educator is evident, but that it will be easy for him to develop what he considers to be 'das Rechte' in the young man is not so clear. Castorp's comments on the Italian after the latter's departure reveal his attitude:-

"Er hat sogar etwas Strenges, - es wird einem öfter ganz ungemütlich, weil man sich - sagen wir mal: kontrolliert fühlt, doch, das ist gar keine schlechte Bezeichnung" (52).

Settembrini represents form, self-control, life directed by reason, a stance which appears to hold little attraction for Hans Castorp compared to the lure of dissoluteness.

Once more that evening Castorp neglects his 'Ocean Steamships',

and, lying on his strangely comfortable rest-cure chair, muses on the nature of time. The link between a sense of time and life itself is again stressed:-

"... das Erlebnis der Zeit, - welches bei ununterbrochenem Gleichmass abhanden zu kommen droht und mit dem Lebensgeföhle selbst so nahe verwandt und verbunden ist, dass das eine nicht geschwächt werden kann, ohne dass auch das andere eine kümmerliche Beeinträchtigung einföhre" (53).

The statement is important comment on existence at the Berghof where the sense of passing time is annihilated and on Castorp himself, whose notion of time, like that of the other sanatorium inhabitants, is beginning to weaken.

The conversation between Castorp and the mother of 'tous les deux' provides an interesting example of the former's fascination with death. The chapter is headed, significantly, 'Er versucht sich in französischer Konversation'. Hans Castorp practises the language in which he is to speak of love to Clawdia Chauchat, in a conversation with the black-clothed Mexican woman on the subject of death. A further link between Clawdia and death can be seen in the fact that Castorp meets her in the corridor one day immediately after his first glimpse, through a half-open door, of a dying man. It is obvious at every step that the young man feels quite 'at home' with death. He explains to his cousin:-

"... wenn die Leute ernst und traurig sind und der Tod im Spiele ist, das bedrückt mich eigentlich nicht ... sondern ich fühle mich dabei in meinem Element ..."
(54; cf. this thesis, p. 100).

Settembrini's increasing anxiety about Hans Castorp's tendencies to sympathy with the morbid come to the fore again at the concert, where he warns Castorp about the dubious narcotic effect of music:-

"Musik allein ist gefährlich. Für Sie persönlich, Ingenieur, ist sie unbedingt gefährlich ... Die Musik weckt die Zeit, sie weckt uns zum feinsten Genuss der

Zeit, sie weckt ... insofern ist sie sittlich ... Aber wie, wenn sie das Gegenteil tut? Wenn sie betäubt, einschläfert, der Aktivität und dem Fortschritt entgegenarbeitet? Auch das kann die Musik, auch auf die Wirkung der Opiate versteht sie sich aus dem Grunde" (55).

Music, love and death. These linked themes run continuously through der Zauberberg. In the chapter 'Hippe' the focus of Hans Castorp's love is made clear:-

"ihm war, als ob an seinem hitzigen Kopf, dem schlechten Geschmack, den er meistens im Munde hatte, und dem willkürlichen Klopfen seines Herzens viel weniger die Schwierigkeiten der Akklimatisation schuld seien, als solche Dinge wie das Treiben des russischen Ehepaares nebenan, die Reden der kranken und dummen Frau Stöhr bei Tische, des Herrenreiters weicher Husten, den er täglich auf den Korridoren vernahm, die Äusserungen Herrn Albins, die Eindrücke, die er von den Verkehrssitten der leidenden Jugend empfangen hatte, der Gesichtsausdruck Joachims, wenn er Marusja betrachtete, und dergleichen Wahrnehmungen mehr" (56).

Castorp has fallen prey to a longing for the dissolute, formless aspect of death, personified in the figure of Madame Chauchat. It is as he lies corpse-like that he experiences the vision of his childhood love, Pribislav Hippe, of whom the Russian woman reminds him:-

"Man hätte sagen können, ein lebloser Körper liege hier oben beim Giessbache auf der Bank ..." (57).

The description of the Polish youth uses vocabulary and phrases constantly applied to Madame Chauchat and it is no coincidence that the youth's surname means 'scythe', an attribute of the medieval image of death, nor that both his and the Russian woman's eyes are said to "[verdunkeln] auf eine schmelzende Weise ins Schlierig-Nächtige" (58).

Castorp's nosebleed points to his illness as a symptom of his long-felt attachment to Hippe/Chauchat, his longing for death:-

"So hatte er sich an sein stilles und fernes Verhältnis

zu Pribislav Hippe im Herzen gewöhnt und hielt es im Grunde für eine bleibende Einrichtung seines Lebens" (59).

That Madame Chauchat's posture, as she sits immediately in front of Hans at Dr. Krowkowski's lecture, is described as "zusammengesunken und schlaff" (60) gives further emphasis to this link between the Russian woman and death.

The lecture on love as a contributory factor to disease provides a perfect description of Castorp's own case:-

"...die unterdrückte Liebe sei nicht tot, sie lebe, sie trachte im Dunklen und Tiefgeheimen auch fernes sich zu erfüllen, sie durchbreche den Keuschheitsbann und erscheine wieder, wenn auch in verwandelter, unkenntlicher Gestalt ... In Gestalt der Krankheit!" (61).

Despite the fact that Mann does not make Krowkowski a likeable character one may nevertheless see in the latter's statements a projection of the author's own ideas, particularly with reference to his hero's flirtation with death:-

"Seelische Widerstände und Korrektive seien es, anständige und ordnende Instinkte von - fast hätte er sagen mögen bürgerlicher Art, unter deren ausgleichender und einschränkender Wirkung die verkehrten Bestandteile zum regelrechten und nützlichen Ganzen verschmelzen ... In einem anderen Falle dagegen gelinge er nicht, dieser Prozess, wolle und solle er nicht gelingen, und wer ... vermöge zu sagen, ob dies nicht vielleicht den edleren, seelisch kostbareren Fall bedeute?" (62).

Momentarily Hans Castorp considers the possibility of "bürgerliche Widerstände" (63) but, despite an involuntary thought that love for a sick woman can offer little future and, considered reasonably, must prove unproductive, he cannot accept the normal 'burgher' attitudes and life-style. Only an adventure with death, Mann gives us to understand, can prove productive and instructive for a personality such as Castorp's:-

"Es konnte hinsichtlich seiner von keinerlei

bürgerlichen Widerständen die Rede sein" (64).

Yet, despite this statement, and consistent with the theme that the hero never totally acclimatizes to the realm of death, Castorp combats and controls his tremor, one of the major symptoms of his psychological state, by adopting the posture of his burgher grandfather. Indeed, he is not totally untroubled by pangs of conscience though he begins to indulge in the type of ambiguous conversation for which he has previously despised the Berghof patients, excusing himself on the grounds that he is merely a visitor. Like Aschenbach in Venice, he begins to dread the end of his stay and Mann's description of Castorp at this stage has much in common with that of the elderly writer intoxicated by Tadzio (65; cf. this thesis, p. 69):-

"und dass sie [Clawdia] etwas, ja möglichst viel davon bemerkte, lag zügelloserweise durchaus in Hans Castorps Absichten. Wir nennen das zügellos, weil er sich über die Vernunftwidrigkeit seines Falles völlig im klaren war. Aber um wen es steht, wie es um ihn stand oder zu stehen begann, der will, dass man drüben von seinem Zustande Kenntnis habe, auch wenn kein Sinn und Verstand bei der Sache ist. So ist der Mensch" (66).

Castorp knows that his feelings for Clawdia would not find favour "vor dem Tribunal der Vernunft - seines eigenen vernünftigen Gewissens" (67), but cannot overcome the dubious attraction she offers. Echoes of der Tod in Venedig can be seen again in the deceptively healthy appearance of the Russian woman:-

"die gesunde Farbe der Wangen, die bei Frau Chauchat ja aber Gesundheit nur vortäuschte" (68),

and in Castorp's divided reactions to his emotional state which once more are similar to those of Aschenbach:-

"dass der längst vergessene Pribislav ihm hier oben als Frau Chauchat wieder begegnete und ihn mit Kirgisenaugen ansah, war wie ein Eingesperrtsein mit Unumgänglichem

oder Unentrinnbarem, - in beglückendem und ängstlichem Sinn Unentrinnbarem. Es war hoffnungsreich und zugleich auch unheimlich, ja bedrohlich, und ein Gefühl der Hilfsbedürftigkeit kam den jungen Hans Castorp an" (69).

He cannot find support in his cousin's resistance to the similar distracting appeal of Marusja. For the young Russian girl represents to Joachim, as Clawdia does to Castorp, the lure of freedom and abandonment of discipline:-

"Seine [Joachims] tägliche Flucht aus der Geselligkeit wirkte zwar ehrenhaft, aber nichts weniger als beruhigend auf diesen [Hans Castorp], und dann kam es ihm augenblicksweise auch vor, als ob Joachims gutes Beispiel in bezug auf die Pflichttreue im Kurdienst, die kundige Anleitung dazu, die er ihm zuteil werden liess, ihr Bedenkliches hätten" (70).

In his search for willpower to resist temptation Castorp thinks of Settembrini. The Italian's opposition to everything that Clawdia represents reminds the young man of an occasion when he went for an evening row on a lake. Having reached the middle of the lake Castorp had noted how the moon had already risen over the Eastern shore, whilst the West was still flooded by daylight. The scene provides an exact analogy of the hero's present position: poised between East and West, Clawdia and Settembrini, death and life, dissolution and form, freedom and duty:-

"Hans Castorp wusste, warum er Herrn Settembrini zuhörte, nicht ausdrücklich, aber er wusste es. Etwas wie Pflichtgefühl war dabei ... etwas wie eine Gewissensvorschrift also, und zwar, um genau zu sein, die Vorschrift und Mahnung eines irgendwie schlechten Gewissens, bestimmte ihn, dem Italiener zuzuhören ..." (71).

It is evident, however, that Castorp's readiness to listen to Settembrini does not entail total adherence to the Italian's ideas. Having listened to the humanist he feels his conscience absolved:-

"so hatte er wohl gar Herrn Settembrini nur zu dem Zwecke gelauscht, von seinem Gewissen einen Freibrief zu erlangen, den es ihm ursprünglich nicht hatte ausfertigen wollen.

Was oder wer aber befand sich auf dieser anderen, dem Patriotismus, der Menschenwürde und der schönen Literatur entgegengesetzten Seite, wohin Hans Castorp sein Sinnen und Betreiben nun wieder lenken zu dürfen glaubte? Dort befand sich Clawdia Chauchat, - schlaff, wurmstichig und kirgisenäugig; und indem Hans Castorp ihrer gedachte ..., war es ihm wieder, als sässe er im Kahn auf jenem holsteinischen See und blicke aus der glasigen Tageshelle des westlichen Ufers vexierten und geblendeten Auges hinüber in die nebeldurchspinnene Mondnacht der östlichen Himmel" (72).

The decision is made, despite Castorp's reluctance to admit it to himself. He adopts the language of the inhabitants of the sanatorium, reckons how much it would cost per year to stay there, tells himself he is upset at the thought of leaving Joachim alone and draws attention to the continued appearance of blood on his handkerchief. Wrapped in blankets, as in a shroud, he lies on the balcony in all weathers, neglecting his 'Ocean Steamships' and giving himself up to the music that drifts up from the valley.

Castorp's cold plays the equivalent role to Aschenbach's misdirected suitcases: it provides the excuse for the fulfillment of his desire to stay in the place which offers him the advantages of freedom and dissoluteness; and just as Aschenbach, on returning to his hotel, sits at his window and greets Tadzio silently from there, so Hans Castorp, after securing his 'permit' to remain at the Berghof, lies on his balcony and

"Zuweilen lächelte er, und es war, als lächle er jemandem zu" (73).

The smile which Clawdia gives him as he gets up from the dining table to go for his medical examination removes his last doubts about staying and seems to seal his fate.

Behrens arrives to perform the examination, joking about death. The hero is welcomed as an initiate into the brotherhood of illness by

the doctor who uses Castorp's name for the first time. The diagnosis provides no real surprises, the scar from the old illness conjuring up at once Castorp's attachment to Pribislav Hippe and the fresh spot his new attachment to Clawdia.

His dual reaction to his new status offers a slight hope of his retaining a sense of balance:-

"Bald erschütterte, wie er so dalag, ein tolles, tief aufsteigendes Triumphgelächter von innen her seine Brust, und sein Herz stockte und schmerzte von einer nie gekannten, ausschweifenden Freude und Hoffnung; bald wieder erblasste er vor Schrecken und Bangen, und es waren die Schläge des Gewissens selbst, mit denen sein Herz in raschem, fliegendem Takt gegen die Rippen pochte" (74).

The inner laughter occasioned by Castorp's submission to the lure of indiscipline reminds one of the 'Hohngelächter' of the guitarist at Aschenbach's hotel in Venice and the laughter of Hanno Buddenbrook as he helps to write his father's funeral notices. In each instance a character (Aschenbach, Thomas) has rejected duty and discipline and taken flight into the freedom offered by death. Castorp's expression to his cousin of his feeling of being 'at home' on the mountain makes it clear that his fascination with death threatens his sense of balance:-

"Jedenfalls liege ich hier schon seit gestern und überlege mir ... wie ich mich zum Ganzen verhielt, zum Leben, weisst du, und seinen Aufforderungen. Ein gewisser Ernst und eine gewisse Abneigung gegen robustes und lautes Wesen lag immer in meiner Natur, - wir sprachen neulich davon, und dass ich manchmal fast Lust gehabt hätte, geistlich zu werden, aus Interesse für traurige und erbauliche Dinge, - so ein schwarzes Tuch, weisst du, mit einem silbernen Kreuz darauf oder R.I.P. ... das ist eigentlich das schönste Wort und mir viel sympathischer als 'Hoch soll er leben'" (75).

Settembrini's visit to Castorp on his sick-bed is an attempt to lead the latter back to the path of reason. Symbolically on his arrival he presses the light switch and floods the room with light. Castorp's

blushing reaction stems from the fact that he is preoccupied at the time with thoughts of Clawdia. The ensuing conversation soon develops into a discussion of Castorp's attitude to life and death. The Italian utters one of his sternest warnings yet about the younger man's attitude:-

"die einzig gesunde und edle, übrigens auch - ich will das ausdrücklich hinzufügen - auch die einzig religiöse Art, den Tod zu betrachten, die ist, ihn als Bestandteil und Zubehör, als heilige Bedingung des Lebens zu begreifen und zu empfinden, nicht aber ... ihn geistig irgendwie davon zu scheiden, ihn in Gegensatz dazu zu bringen und ihn etwa gar widerwärtigerweise dagegen auszuspielen ... Denn der Tod als selbständige geistige Macht ist eine höchst niederliche Macht, deren lasterhafte Anziehungskraft zweifellos sehr stark ist, aber mit der zu sympathisieren ebenso unzweifelhaft die greulichste Verirrung des Menschengestes bedeutet" (76).

Despite the warning, and the discomfort caused by his own conscience, the stay in bed serves only to intensify Castorp's obsession with the pleasure Clawdia promises. He is plagued by:-

"Gedanken oder Halbgedanken, die den Bildern und Gesichtern ihre zu weit gehende Süßigkeit eigentlich erst verliehen, und die sich auf Madame Chauchats Nachlässigkeit und Rücksichtslosigkeit bezogen, auf ihr Kranksein, die Steigerung und Betonung ihres Körpers durch die Krankheit, ... an der er, Hans Castorp, laut ärztlichen Spruches nun teilhaben sollte" (77).

Castorp's latent sympathy with death, evident from the moment of his arrival on the mountain, is fully awoken by the incident in the tomb-like X-ray room. Here he is made to understand for the first time on a conscious level that he is destined to die:-

"Und Hans Castorp sah, was zu sehen er hatte erwarten müssen, was aber eigentlich dem Menschen zu sehen nicht bestimmt ist und wovon auch er niemals gedacht hatte, dass ihm bestimmt sein könne, es zu sehen: er sah in sein eigenes Grab" (78).

The experience gives impetus to his flight into chaos. He writes home to seal his 'freedom', and permits himself to adopt the slovenly posture

of Clawdia and slam doors like her: sensations which he finds most agreeable.

But the nature of his passion for the Russian woman does not consist solely in a pursuit of the physical, of dissoluteness, of the attainable. He seeks also in it the unattainable, the answer that life has refused to yield, a sense of meaning:-

"Und was fehlte, war eben ein gemüthhaftes Mittel, das ihre extremen Bestandteile verbunden hätte. Sie bezog sich einerseits ... auf ihren Körper ... und sie war andererseits etwas äusserst Flüchtigtes und Ausgedehntes, ein Gedanke, nein, ein Traum, der schreckhafte und grenzenlos verlockende Traum eines jungen Mannes, dem auf bestimmte, wenn auch unbewusst gestellte Fragen nur ein hohles Schweigen geantwortet hatte ... und wir äussern die Mutmassung, dass Hans Castorp die für seinen Aufenthalt bei Denen hier oben ursprünglich angesetzte Frist nicht einmal bis zu dem gegenwärtig erreichten Punkt überschritten hätte, wenn seiner schlichten Seele aus den Tiefen der Zeit über Sinn und Zweck des Lebensdienstes eine irgendwie befriedigende Auskunft zuteil geworden wäre" (79).

Settembrini's increasingly insistent warnings meet with intensified resistance which reaches a climax when he catches Castorp lurking in the hall to see Clawdia, on the pretext of waiting for post:-

"Diesmal war es ein Gefecht ... Einflüsse aus der Nähe 'stärkten' ihn [Castorp]. Da war ein Pädagog, und dort draussen war eine schmaläugige Frau" (80).

The discussion which follows highlights Mann's ability to see the anti-thesis inherent in every concept. The body (Matter), which in early works of Mann stood clearly on the side of Nature/Life, is itself seen here to have a dual aspect. This re-examination of attitudes which in earlier work appeared inflexible is the hallmark of der Zauberberg:-

"Man muss ihn [den Körper] ehren und verteidigen, wenn es sich um seine Emanzipation und Schönheit handelt, um die Freiheit der Sinne, um Glück, um Lust. Man muss ihn verachten, sofern er als Prinzip der Schwere und der Trägheit sich der Bewegung zum Lichte entgegengesetzt, ihn verabscheuen, sofern er gar das Prinzip der Krankheit und des Todes vertritt, sofern sein spezifischer

Geist der Geist der Verkehrtheit ist, der Geist der Verwesung, der Wollust und der Schande ..." (81).

This reappraisal of concepts which ran through Mann's earlier work is very clear if we examine Hans Castorp's education on the magic mountain. For the young man's interest in Clawdia's body, in itself a symbol of death, awakens in him, via the conversation with Behrens about her portrait, a new interest in the life process. "Leben ist Sterben" (82), the doctor tells Castorp, pointing out that life and death, apparently the negation of each other, are, in fact, inextricably interwoven. The statement is seen by Castorp, however, as possible justification for his leanings to the morbid and he exclaims:-

"Und wenn man sich für das Leben interessiert ... so interessiert man sich namentlich für den Tod. Tut man das nicht" (83).

Behrens' retort and the ensuing exchange represent Castorp's first real attempt consciously to ask the questions on the meaning of life which he has been unconsciously asking for a long time, and to which he has received no satisfactory answer:-

"Na, so eine Art Unterschied bleibt da ja immerhin. Leben ist, dass im Wechsel der Materie die Form erhalten bleibt.

'Wozu die Form erhalten,' sagte Hans Castorp" (84).

This last question indicates the extent to which the young man has abandoned the 'flatland' notions of order, discipline and duty. The conversation marks the beginning of a new interest in the nature of the life process, and, as the mountains lie in the death-like grip of Winter, Castorp pursues his new studies.

He discovers the paradox that, although consciousness is indeed a function of live matter, mind is unable, in the final analysis, to

explain itself:-

"Bewusstsein seiner selbst war also schlechthin eine Funktion der zum Leben geordneten Materie, und bei höherer Verstärkung wandte die Funktion sich gegen ihren eigenen Träger, ward zum Trachten nach Ergründung und Erklärung des Phänomens, das sie zeitigte, einem hoffnungsvoll-hoffnungslosen Trachten des Lebens nach Selbsterkenntnis, einem Sich-in-sich Wühlen der Natur, vergeblich am Ende, da Natur in Erkenntnis nicht aufgehen, Leben im letzten sich nicht belauschen kann" (85).

The lesson which issues from all these studies is that both life and death are inexplicable by science and inaccessible to reason beyond a certain point. A second lesson, which has yet to have its full impact on Castorp, is that of the indivisibility of Matter and Spirit, Life and Death. Each of the young man's attempts to understand life leads him back to the concept of death:-

"Krankheit war die unzüchtige Form des Lebens. Und das Leben für sein Teil? War es vielleicht nur eine infektiöse Erkrankung der Materie, - wie das, was man die Urzeugung der Materie nennen durfte vielleicht nur Krankheit, eine Reizwucherung des Immateriellen war? Der anfänglichste Schritt zum Bösen, zur Lust und zum Tode war zweifellos da anzusetzen, wo, hervorgerufen durch den Kitzel einer unbekanntes Infiltration, jene erste Dichtigkeitzunahme des Geistigen, jene pathologisch üppige Wucherung seines Gewebes sich vollzog ..." (86).

The image of life which remains with Castorp is that of Clawdia Chauchat, bearer of death. As an inescapable fact of life, Mann is telling us, death has to be confronted, and one's attitude to it clarified. For Hans Castorp, certainly, no other course seems possible. The question remains as to whether the young man is capable of surviving such a confrontation.

In total opposition to custom at the Berghof Castorp decides to pay last respects to the Herrenreiter, whose death is announced at the beginning of the chapter 'Totentanz':-

"Er tat es aus Trotz gegen das herrschende System

der Verheimlichung, weil er das egoistische Nichts-wissen; Nichts-sehen-und-hören-Wollen der anderen verachtete und ihm durch die Tat zu widersprechen wünschte" (87).

This visit and the later ones to the dying patients of the sanatorium are apparently an attempt on the part of Hans Castorp to do justice to what he sees as the dignified aspect of death. Also they represent his 'studies' into the nature of death:-

"Ich finde, die Welt und das Leben ist danach angetan, dass man sich allgemein schwarz tragen sollte, mit einer gestärkten Halskrause statt eures Kragens, und ernst, gedämpft und förmlich miteinander verkehren im Gedanken an den Tod, - so wär' es mir recht, es wäre moralisch" (88).

However, in maintaining his emphasis on the dignified status with which he feels sickness and death endow a person, he chooses to ignore their other facets: this, in spite of the fact that he is confronted by these facets in the everyday life of the sanatorium, the stupidity of Frau Stöhr, and indeed the behaviour of some of the dying patients themselves. The Propów incident is a case in point:-

"Auch seine Erscheinung aber war nicht danach angetan, Hans Castorps Ehrfurcht vor dem Leiden zu stärken; auch sie, in ihrer Art, vermehrte die Eindrücke unernster Liederlichkeit, denen er sich widerstrebend hier oben ausgesetzt fand und denen er durch eine den herrschenden Sitten widersprechende nähere Beschäftigung mit den Schweren und Moribunden entgegenzuwirken wünschte" (89).

But neither the frivolity of some of the dying nor such 'undignified' symptoms in patients as the coughing of blood detract from Castorp's belief in reverence as the correct stance towards sickness and death. Only in the case of Leila Gerngross' death does he show the slightest rebellion against the sovereignty which this attitude holds over his thoughts at this time:-

"In diesem Fall sträubte sein Verständnis sich beim ersten Augenschein gegen den Sinn der dort drinnen herrschenden Geschäftigkeit" (90).

Settembrini understands quite well that Hans Castorp is the moving force behind the visits to the dying of the two cousins, but his admonitions to the young man go unheeded:-

"Aber wenn auch Hans Castorp nach wie vor bereit war, ihm [Settembrini] ein Ohr zu leihen, seine Lehren unverbindlicherweise hörens-wert zu finden und sich zum Versuche pädagogisch beeinflussen zu lassen, so war er doch weit entfernt, um irgendwelcher erzieherischer Gesichtspunkte willen auf Unternehmungen zu verzichten, die ihm ... noch immer auf unbestimmte Art förderlich und von bedeutender Tragweite erschienen" (91).

Indeed, knowing that his actions are irreproachable from a Christian viewpoint, the "beglückende Ausdehnung seines Wesens" which Castorp experiences through the visits is further enhanced by "ein gewisses diebisches Vergnügen" (92). From Anton Karlowitsch, who has surely come closest of all these people to actually experiencing death, Castorp learns not only the details of the experience but also, symbolically, obtains information about Russia, the forbidden fruit, representative of the Asiatic principle, of death.

So Castorp steeps himself as much as possible in experiences of 'death'. Even while watching the sleigh rides his mind is preoccupied with thoughts of coffins, and his cultivation of Karen Karstedt, with whom he makes an excursion to the cemetery, is almost a link with a walking corpse for, in her case, her body is already decomposing:-

"Denn allerdings bedeutete ihm der Verkehr mit der armen Karen eine Art von Ersatz - und unbestimmt förderlichem Hilfsmittel, wie alle seine charitativen Unternehmungen ihm dergleichen bedeuteten. Aber zugleich waren sie doch auch Zweck ihrer selbst, diese frommen Unternehmungen, und die Zufriedenheit die er empfand ... war, wenn auch von Übertragener und beziehungsweise, so doch zugleich auch von unmittelbarer und reiner Art; sie entstammte einem Bildungsgeiste, entgegengesetzt demjenigen, den Herr Settembrini pädagogisch vertrat, indessen wohl wert, das Placet experiri daraufzuwenden, wie es dem jungen Hans Castorp schien" (93).

The flirtation with death reaches its climax in the Walpurgisnacht celebrations and Hans Castorp's eventual confrontation with Clawdia Chauchat. Sensing the temptation for the young man Settembrini sends him a warning:-

"Allein bedenkt! Der Berg ist heute zaubertoll
Und wenn ein Irrlicht Euch die Wege weisen soll,
So müsst Ihr's so genau nicht nehmen"
[Faust I, 3868/70] (94),

becoming even more explicit in his reference to Clawdia as Lilith, Adam's first wife, who is "gefährlich für junge Männer" (95). But Castorp's answers, his 'leave-taking' of Settembrini (of reason), make it clear that the young man intends to pursue to the limit his symbolic confrontation with death, his flirtation with the powers of disorder and evil. His decision to fulfill his sensual longings is clear. The Italian is left calling hopelessly after Castorp as the latter goes off to enact the scene he has visualised so many times in his mind and for which he has been prepared by his previous acquaintance with Hippe. Significantly he is described as

"totenbleich, so bleich wie damals, als er blutbesudelt
von seinem Einzelspaziergang zur Konferenz gekommen
war" (96).

So he has the conversation with Clawdia for which he has practised with the mother of 'tous les deux':-

"Das ist für mich wie ein Traum, musst du wissen,
dass wir so sitzen, - comme un rêve singulièrement profond,
car il faut dormir très profondément pour rêver comme
cela ... Je veux dire: C'est un rêve bien connu,
rêvé de tout temps, long, éternel, oui, être assis près
de toi comme à présent, voilà l'éternité."

...

"Tu es chez toi dans l'éternité, sans aucun doute,
tu la connais à fond." (97)

...

"La mort. Terrible mot, n'est-ce pas? Mais c'est
étrange, il ne m'impressionne pas tellement aujourd'hui,
ce mot ... L'idée de la mort ne m'effraie pas. Elle

me laisse tranquille ... Si c'est vrai son état [Joachim] ressemble beaucoup au mien et je ne le trouve pas particulièrement imposant. Il est moribund, et moi, je suis amoureux" (98).

The talk is of Hans Castorp's love, of death and of the freedom which it brings. Informing him of her intended departure, Clawdia says:-

"j'aime la liberté avant tout ... C'est la maladie qui me la rend" (99).

The freedom of which she talks is that of surrender to experience and impulse:-

"il nous semble qu'il est plus moral de se perdre et même de se laisser dépérir que de se conserver" (100).

Castorp's final declaration of love makes clear that it is the lure of this freedom which lies at the root of his intoxication:-

"Oh, l'amour n'est rien, s'il n'est pas de la folie, une chose insensée, défendue et une aventure dans le mal ... Oh, l'amour, tu sais ... le corps, l'amour, la mort, ces trois ne font qu'un. Car le corps, c'est la maladie et la volupté, et c'est lui qui fait la mort, oui, ils sont charnels tous deux, l'amour et la mort, et voilà leur terreur et leur grande magie!" (101).

The first part of der Zauberberg closes with the climax of Hans Castorp's love affair with death. Fittingly the souvenir of that confrontation is Clawdia's X-ray, symbol of the inevitability of death and dissolution. At the beginning of the second volume Mann himself raises the question of whether Castorp can survive such an encounter and return to 'life':-

"Und wenn der Genius ihn, Hans Castorp, im Laufe des mitgeteilten Gesprächs und ausserhalb seiner einen 'joli bourgeois au petit endroit humide' genannt hatte, was etwas wie die Übersetzung der Redensart Settembrinis vom 'Sorgenkind des Lebens' gewesen war, so fragte es sich eben, welcher Bestandteil dieser Wesensmischung sich als stärker erweisen würde: der bourgeois oder

das andere ..." (102).

Settembrini evidently fears that Castorp's 'return' may not be possible:-

"... die Unterirdischen wissen, dass, wer von den Früchten ihres Reiches kostet, ihnen verfallen bleibt" (103).

The author, however, offers a more optimistic outlook:-

"denn trotz der Trophäe, dem makabren Angebinde, das er [Castorp] auf dem Herzen trug, hing er an Herrn Settembrini, legte grosses Gewicht auf sein Dasein, und der Gedanke, gänzlich und auf immer von ihm verworfen und aufgegeben zu sein, wäre denn doch beschwerender und schrecklicher für seine Seele gewesen als das Gefühl des Knaben, der in der Schule nicht mehr in Betracht gekommen war und die Vorteile der Schande genossen hatte" (104).

Castorp's first conversation with Settembrini since Walpurgisnacht gives even the Italian cause to hope that all is not lost for his 'pupil', though he wishes Castorp's experiments might follow a course more to his own liking. Nevertheless the statement that:-

"es ist immer noch der Zustand des Experimentes" (105)

emphasises that Castorp is not completely lost in his fascination for death. His innate sense of balance seems to come into play again. Spring reappears on the mountain with a new outburst of life and Castorp's astrological studies lead him to a new understanding of concepts of cyclical renewal and to praise for the achievements of humanity.

After the meeting with Naphta the hero is placed, symbolically, between the two opponents for control of his mind, the Jesuit and Settembrini. He maintains this position, despite occasional leanings to either side, in the ensuing philosophical battle between the two older men which occupies the major part of this section of the work. Settembrini's reluctance to introduce Naphta stems from his fear of the

influence which the latter may have on Castorp, and in the discussion which follows the first meeting the reason for this fear is soon evident. Naphta declares:-

"Der Dualismus, die Antithese, das ist das bewegende, das leidenschaftliche, das dialektische, das geistreiche Prinzip. Die Welt feindlich gespalten sehen, das ist Geist" (106).

In his antithetical concept of the world the Jesuit stands firmly on the side of Spirit opposed to Nature, of quietism in opposition to the principle of an active practical life:-

"Arbeit, Arbeit - ... ich [wage] es an Zeiten zu erinnern, ... wo das Gegenteil seines [Settembrinis] Ideals in unvergleichlich höheren Ehren stand" (107)

The temptation this attitude presents for Castorp is obvious and he concedes:-

"Beschaulichkeit, Abgeschiedenheit. Es hat was für sich, es lässt sich hören ... Wenn ich mir's überlege und soll die Wahrheit sagen, so hat das Bett, ich meine damit den Liegestuhl, verstehen Sie wohl, mich in zehn Monaten mehr gefördert und mich auf mehr Gedanken gebracht als die Mühle im Flachlande all die Jahre her ..." (108).

If Clawdia Chauchat offered the advantages of dissoluteness, Naphta's opinions provide fuel for Castorp's tendency to reverence sickness and death and their 'spiritualising' effect. Inevitably the Jesuit's offer of his services as a teacher to Castorp do not find favour with the Italian. In keeping with Mann's idea that Castorp takes the 'middle stand' the young man sees failings in the arguments of both Settembrini and Naphta and likewise points with which he agrees.

The debate between the two protagonists, for supremacy over Hans Castorp's mind, continues with the visit of the two cousins to Naphta, affirming that the latter stands on the side of Spirit

opposed to Nature. The Pieta which dominates the Jesuit's room is symbolic of this, representing the weakness of the flesh and the supremacy of the spirit:-

"Es handle sich um bewusste Emanzipation des Geistes vom Natürlichen, dessen Verächtlichkeit durch die Verweigerung jeder Demut davor religiös verkündet werde ... aber Settembrini [erklärte] die Vernachlässigung der Natur und ihres Studiums für menschlich abwegig ... und [begann] gegen die absurde Formlosigkeit, der das Mittelalter und die ihm nachahmenden Epochen gefrönt hätten, das griechisch-römische Erbe, den Klassizismus, Form, Schönheit, Vernunft und naturfromme Heiterkeit ... in prallen Worten zu erheben ..." (109).

Naphta's childhood experiences, we discover, have conditioned him to see as inseparably linked

"die Vorstellung der Frömmigkeit ... mit der der Grausamkeit ... der Anblick und Geruch sprudelnden Blutes mit der Idee des Heiligen und Geistigen..." (110).

The body represents for him the prison of the spirit and physical torment, spiritual elevation:-

"Denn unsterblich erschaffen, war er [der Leib] vermöge der Verschlimmerung der Natur durch die Erbsünde der Verderbtheit und Abscheulichkeit anheimgefallen, sterblich und verweslich, nicht anders denn als Kerker und Strafwinger der Seele zu betrachten ... Wer wird mich befreien aus dem Körper dieses Todes. Das war die Stimme des Geistes, welche auf ewig die Stimme wahrer Menschheit war" (111).

To such an outlook torture is admissible, even admirable, and death represents the logical conclusion, freeing Spirit from the bonds of corrupt Matter. It is this death-bound principle of Naphta's thought, against which Settembrini continually warns Hans Castorp:-

"Prägen Sie sich ein, dass der Geist souverän ist, sein Wille ist frei, er bestimmt die sittliche Welt. Isoliert er dualistisch den Tod, so wird derselbe ... zur eigenen, dem Leben entgegengesetzten Macht, ... zur grossen Verführung, und sein Reich ist das der Wollust ... Er löst Sitte und Sittlichkeit, er erlöst von Zucht und Haltung, er macht frei

zur Wollust. Wenn ich Sie warne vor dem Manne, dessen Bekanntschaft ich Ihnen ungern vermittelte, ... so geschieht es, weil alle seine Gedanken wollüstiger Art sind, denn sie stehen unter dem Schutze des Todes, - ... (112).

In contrast, Settembrini supports the union of Spirit and Nature under the aegis of Reason.

Hans Castorp, walking between the two men:-

"stimmte bald dem einen, bald dem anderen zu oder machte, stehenbleibend ... etwas Eigenes, selbstverständlich höchst Unzulängliches geltend ..." (113).

On several occasions he utilises Settembrini's own arguments in supporting Naphta, on others is won over by the Italian:-

"soviel sei gewiss, dass Krankheit eine Überbetonung das Körperlichen bedeute, den Menschen gleichsam ganz und gar auf seinen Körper zurückweise und zurückwerfe und so der Würde des Menschen bis zur Vernichtung abträglich sei, indem sie ihn nämlich zum blossen Körper herabwürdige ..." (114).

The arguments continue to a point where Castorp finds it almost impossible to distinguish between the opposed positions. Settembrini, outraged at the Jesuit's 'medievalism', is often outargued. But the fact that Mann portrays the Italian as logically inferior to the Jew does not mean he supports the latter's ideas. He has Settembrini remark of his opponent:-

"Seine Form ist Logik aber sein Wesen ist Verwirrung" (115) and, with his usual irony, Mann portrays Naphta, despiser of the body, living in noticeable luxury. Even Spirit, it appears, (and Naphta is representative of Spirit) cannot manage without physical comforts. But in connection with the Jew, the clearest example of Mann's new outlook, his more positive philosophy on life, must surely be seen in the result of the duel between Naphta and Settembrini. The Italian humanist, respecter of life, fires into the air. Naphta, enraged,

commits suicide. Suicide is the logical climax of the Jesuit's ideas. He has continually expressed the conviction that life is a prison from which the soul finds release only in death. Spirituality is inextricably linked in his mind with physical suffering. Life has never been a matter of enjoyment for him. In his death we may see Mann's rejection of such an exclusive attitude.

During the period of the debates between Settembrini and Naphta, Hans Castorp experiences a vision in which the opposing principles which lie at the root of the disagreements are reconciled. The incident of this vision is related in the chapter 'Schnee'. This chapter in fact provides a synopsis of the whole novel and of Hans Castorp's development on the mountain.

It begins with a description of the mountains bound by snow, held in a death-like grip; a world in which Castorp also has succumbed to the lure of death. He lies on his balcony and drifts into sleep:-

"Der Blick, in ein wattiges Nichts gehend, brach sich leicht zum Schlummer. Ein Frösteln begleitete den Augenblick des Hinüberganges, doch gab es dann kein reineres Schlafen als dieses hier in der Eiseskälte, dessen Traumlosigkeit von keinem unbewussten Gefühl organischer Lebenslast berührt wurde, da das Atmen der leeren, nichtig-dunstlosen Luft dem Organismus nicht schwerer fiel als das Nichtatmen der Toten" (116).

The deadly element of this snowscape is further emphasised by Mann's comparison of it to the sea:-

"Jedoch liebte Hans Castorp das Leben im Schnee. Er fand es demjenigen am Meeresstrand in mehrfacher Hinsicht verwandt: die Urmonotonie des Naturbildes war beiden Sphären gemeinsam" ... (117).

The ski-ing trips which Hans Castorp undertakes, and which are mistakenly seen by Settembrini as a sign of a healthy desire for activity, are but another facet of the young man's fascination with death. In the

description of the mountain scenery the word 'death' occurs with symbolic frequency:-

"Es war schön im winterlichen Gebirge, - nicht schön auf gelinde und freundliche Weise, sondern so, wie die Nordseewildnis schön ist bei starkem West, - zwar ohne Donnerlärm, sondern in Totenstille, doch ganz verwandte Ehrfurchtsgefühle erweckend" (118).

...

"Gefühle des still bedrohlich Elementaren, des nicht einmal Feindseligen, vielmehr des Gleichgültig-Tödlichen waren es, die von ihr [dieser Welt] ausgingen" (119).

...

"es [war] ihm [Castorp] nicht geheuer ... dort in der Grösse, der schneidenden Totenstille" (120).

Only when Castorp returns from his excursions to the light of the chalets below does he become aware:-

"dass stundenlang ein heimlich-heiliger Schrecken sein Gemüt beherrscht hatte" (121).

His journeys provide for him, as have his flirtations with death at the sanatorium:-

"das Begeisterungsglück leichter Liebesberühungen mit Mächten, deren volle Umarmung vernichtend sein würde" (122).

These last two statements might stand as summaries of Castorp's experiences at the Berghof, and his fond thoughts of Settembrini as he sets off into the snow as a symbolic suggestion of hope of his return to 'life'.

The detailed description of the most significant trip draws attention to the similarity between the colour of the sky and the eyes of Hippe/Chauchat. Death prevails everywhere on the mountain, in each individual crystal of snow:-

"sie waren zu regelmässig, die zum Leben geordnete

Substanz war es niemals in diesem Grade, dem Leben schauderte vor der genauen Richtigkeit, es empfand sie als tödlich, als das Geheimnis des Todes selbst" (123).

Significantly there are no paths in this world of death, for death offers complete freedom. Castorp's realisation that he has deliberately set out to lose his way echoes the course of events since his arrival at the Berghof. The explanation given for his behaviour is once again the lack of a meaningful alternative in the life of the 'flatland':-

"so ist doch bei einigem menschlichen Nachdenken ungefähr zu begreifen, dass in den Seelengründen eines jungen Menschen und Mannes, der jahrelang gelebt hat wie dieser hier, manches sich ansammelt, ... was eines Tages als ein elementares 'Ach was!' oder ein 'Komm denn an!' von erbitterter Ungeduld, kurz eben als Herausforderung und Verweigerung kluger Vorsicht sich entlädt" (124).

Symbolically, the storm which threatens Castorp is at his back and blocks his way home. Thus he must turn and face the storm (death) if he is to succeed in returning:-

"Aber ein Weg war nicht vorhanden" (125).

Yet, in spite of the difficulties, the young man makes some sort of progress:-

"Allein ob das ein zweckmäßiges Fortkommen, ein Fortkommen in rechter Richtung war, und ob es nicht weniger falsch gewesen wäre, zu bleiben, wo man war (was aber auch nicht tunlich schien), das stand dahin, es sprach sogar die theoretische Wahrscheinlichkeit dagegen, und praktisch genommen schien es Hans Castorp bald, als sei mit dem Grund und Boden nicht alles in Ordnung" (126).

The decision to stand still in the storm echoes the decision to remain in the sanatorium. In both cases death threatens to engulf him. Thoughts of sitting down and succumbing completely are pushed aside by others of Settembrini calling him with his horn (the call to life).

Reason tells him to move as the Italian has warned him to leave the mountain, whilst his natural part inclines him to give way. The battle within him during the storm reflects his reactions to life at the Berghof:-

"meine Lage ist ja gewissermassen eine Krankheit ... Da gibt es sensorische Herabminderungen, Gnadennarkosen, Erleichterungsmassnahmen der Natur, jawohl ... Man muss jedoch dagegen kämpfen, denn sie haben ein doppeltes Gesicht, sind zweideutig im höchsten Grad; bei ihrer Würdigung kommt alles auf den Gesichtspunkt an. Sie sind gut gemeint und eine Wohltat, sofern man eben nicht heimkommen soll, sind aber sehr schlimm gemeint und äusserst bekämpfenswert, sofern von Heimkommen überhaupt noch die Rede ist, wie bei mir ..." (127).

As at the sanatorium in his mental adventures with death, Castorp loses his way and thinks he has rediscovered it, feeling, as after a discussion between Settembrini and Naphta, the need to struggle with the persuasive arguments of the latter:-

"trotz seiner verächtlichen Empörung gegen das Zugedecktwerden durch hexagonale Regelmässigkeit etwas in sich hineinfaselte, des Sinnes oder Unsinnnes ..." (128).

Castorp resists the craving to lie down and succumb. Thinking he has at last found his way home he discovers that he has, in fact, merely returned to the hay hut:-

"Man lief im Kreise herum, plagte sich ab, die Vorstellung der Förderlichkeit im Herzen, und beschrieb dabei irgendeinen weiten, albernen Bogen, der in sich selber zurückführte wie der vexatorische Jahreslauf. So irrte man herum, so fand man nicht heim" (129).

The drink of port he takes marks a resurgence of the narcotic temptation of death. Again it is the thought of Settembrini with the horn of life that brings him back to his senses. Thoughts of Clawdia and Hippe induce him to sink to the ground, others of Settembrini persuade him to stand up and attempt to walk. Propped against the hut and

poised appropriately between life and death he experiences his vision.

It is a vision of long-forgotten life behind which lies the reality of death, an Arcadian scene behind which a blood sacrifice takes place. But the attitude of the people in his dream leads him to conclude that the answer to the apparent antithesis of Life and Death lies not with Naphta, with his insistence on the supremacy of Death; nor with Settembrini, with his claim that Reason alone can unite the opposing principles. For to Castorp the conciliatory factor appears as Love:-

"Da habe ich einen Reim gemacht, ein Traumgedicht vom Menschen. Ich will dran denken. Ich will gut sein. Ich will dem Tode keine Herrschaft einräumen über meine Gedanken! Denn darin besteht die Güte und Menschenliebe, und in nichts anderem. Der Tod ist eine grosse Macht ... Er trägt die Würdenkrause des Gewesenen, und selber kleidet man sich streng und schwarz zu seinen Ehren. Vernunft steht albern vor ihm da, denn sie ist nichts als Tugend, er aber Freiheit, Durchgängerei, Uniform und Lust. Lust, sagt mein Traum, nicht Liebe. Tod und Liebe, - das ist ein schlechter Reim, ein abgeschmackter, ein falscher Reim! Die Liebe steht dem Tode entgegen, nur sie, nicht die Vernunft, ist stärker als er. Nur sie, nicht die Vernunft, gibt gütige Gedanken. Auch Form ist nur aus Liebe und Güte: Form und Gesittung verständig-freundlicher Gemeinschaft und schönen Menschenstaats - in stillem Hinblick auf das Blutmahl. Oh, so ist es deutlich geträumt und gut regiert! Ich will dran denken. Ich will dem Tode Treue halten in meinem Herzen, doch mich hell erinnern, dass Treue zum Tode und Gewesenen nur Bosheit und finstere Wollust und Menschenfeindschaft ist, bestimmt sie unser Denken und Regieren. Der Mensch soll um der Güte und Liebe willen, dem Tode keine Herrschaft einräumen über seine Gedanken" (130).

Castorp's vision is of unity and totality. Life and death are interwoven. Both must be revered. The dream is a rejection of the young man's former attitudes, his tendency to allow death supremacy over life.

In the storm the vision frees him from his bonds:-

"Sie hielt gewaltig schwer, die Befreiung aus den Banden, die ihn umstrickten und niederhalten wollten" (131).

He is able to find his way back to the Berghof. But the dream does not,

apparently, free him at this time from the bonds which hold him on the mountain and enable him to return to the world below. It is this fact that causes many critics of Mann's work to claim that der Zauberberg does not represent a rejection of the fascination with death prevalent in the author's earlier writings. Hans Castorp's vision, of such impact on the mountain side, begins to pale that same evening. He remains on the mountain, to be moved to action only five years later by the outbreak of the First World War.

I would argue that the vision does not fulfill its potential immediately since the hero lacks two vital experiences in his education which would make this possible. Just as his sympathy with death has been latent for many years before his visit to the sanatorium, so his new and positive attitude to life lies dormant until suitable conditions for its awakening occur. In the first place Castorp has no real experience of life in its vibrant form. Such an experience is provided only later by his confrontation with the Dutchman, Mynheer Peeperkorn. Secondly, the type of love of which Castorp dreams on the mountain side is alien to him. It is only years later, via his relationship with his cousin Joachim, that he will come to understand the true meaning of such love.

Joachim returns to the sanatorium in July. The reasons for his return give Castorp cause for thought:-

"Guter Joachim, wer wollte dir und deinem Biereifer zu nahe treten! Du meinst es ehrlich - aber was ist Ehrlichkeit, frage ich, wenn Körper und Seele nun mal unter einer Decke stecken? Sollte es möglich sein, dass du gewisse erfrischende Düfte, eine hohe Brust und ein grundloses Gelächter nicht hast vergessen können?" (132).

That Joachim returns at all does not augur well for the state of his health. It is perhaps also significant for his condition that he

brings greetings from Clawdia Chauchat who, as his mother says:-

"redet uns einfach an wie alte Freunde" (133).

Castorp reads the truth in his cousin's eyes. The fact that Joachim is dying becomes increasingly evident as his choking fits worsen and mention of these incidents is avoided more and more by the two cousins. Behrens gives an astute summary of Castorp's attitude to such matters when he is questioned by the young man about Joachim:-

"Sie wollen immer alles harmlos haben, Castorp, so sind Sie. Sie sind gar nicht abgeneigt, sich auch einmal mit Nichtharmlosigkeiten einzulassen, aber dann behandeln Sie sie, als ob sie harmlos wären ..."
(134).

Although Castorp knows that Joachim is dying and Behrens' remarks confirm this, it is the sight of his cousin talking to Marusja which

"erschütterte Hans Castorp mehr als irgendein Zeichen der Entkräftung, das er in diesen Wochen sonst an seinem armen Vetter wahrgenommen. 'Ja, er ist verloren!', dachte er" (135).

There is much to suggest that Joachim's return to the Berghof stems from an inability to resist the deadly attraction of the young Russian girl. He evidently consents to die.

Hans Castorp's reaction to the death of his cousin lacks the elaborate reverence he has exhibited in other cases. Most importantly, he sheds tears for the first time, the ironic scientific description of these serving only to emphasise the emotion of which they are symptomatic. Casting aside his traditional reserve Castorp kisses the corpse of his cousin in a final leave-taking. The full impact of the event is to strike him only years later.

Time passes; Hans Castorp, under the shroud-like white sheet of the barber, has hair and nails cut, which continue to grow "like

those of a dead man". To all intents and purposes, one might say, Castorp is 'dead'. Despite occasional attempts, at atonement for his lingering on the mountain, brief periods when he stares at his watch, Castorp shows little inclination to worry about time or life:-

"Soll man es dem jungen Hans Castorp aufs Entschuldigungskonto setzen und annehmen, es habe ihn in seiner lästerlichen Zeitwirtschaft, seinem schlimmen Getändel mit der Ewigkeit bestärkt, dass, was ein melancholischer Schwadronneur seines militärischen Veters 'Biereifer' gemannt, letalen Ausgang genommen hatte" (136).

Mynheer Peeperkorn's arrival at the sanatorium brings Hans Castorp his first real confrontation with life. In the Dutchman's presence the figures of Settembrini and Naphta are dwarfed. His unfinished sentences, majestic gestures and indulgence in pleasure represents the plenitude of life itself; he offers half answers and remains a mystery:-

"Er hatte nichts gesagt; aber sein Haupt erschien so unzweifelhaft bedeutend, sein Mienen- und Gestenspiel war dermassen entschieden, eindringlich, ausdrucksvoll gewesen, dass alle und auch der lauschende Hans Castorp höchst Wichtiges vernommen zu haben meinten ..." (137).

Only the waterfall, nature itself, is able to lessen the impression he makes. It is interesting that the Dutchman comes to the Berghof with Clawdia Chauchat. 'Death' brings Castorp his symbolic encounter with 'life'. Castorp himself expresses such an idea in more general terms in talking to Clawdia:-

"... denn der Tod, weisst du, ist das geniale Prinzip, die res bina, der lapis philosophorum, und er ist auch das pädagogische Prinzip, denn die Liebe zu ihm führt zur Liebe des Lebens und des Menschen ... Zum Leben gibt es zwei Wege: der eine ist der gewöhnliche, direkte und brave. Der andere ist schlimm, er führt über den Tod, und das ist der geniale Weg!" (138).

Life, in the figure of Peeperkorn, requests of Castorp that for its sake he give 'death' a chaste kiss:-

"Küsse diese reizende Frau zum Schluss auf die Stirn, junger Mann! ... Tut es auf mein Wohl und mit meiner Erlaubnis!" (139).

Because of his previous relationship with 'death' he is invited to join in brotherhood with 'life' and address it with the familiar 'du' form.

If, in Naphta's view, Spirit is the superior principle, the opposite is true of Pieter Peeperkorn. To the Dutchman the physical is all important:-

"und während er mit dem Kopfe scherzhaft in jene cerebrale Richtung deutete, hörte man ihn sagen: 'Ei, ja, ja ja - perfekt. Das ist - Das sind - Da zeigt sich nun - Das Sakrament der Wollust, verstehen Sie - '" (140).

In his presence the intellectual arguments between Settembrini and Naphta lack spark. He is able to dwarf the two protagonists with a few words. In the non intellectual sphere he reigns supreme:-

"Wenn es nicht länger um Witz und Wort und Spiritus, sondern um Sachen, um Irden-Praktisches, kurz, um Fragen und Dinge ging, in denen Herrschernaturen sich eigentlich bewähren: dann ... [ergriff] Peeperkorn das Zepter, bestimmte, entschied, beorderte, bestellte und befahl ... Was Wunder, dass er nach diesem Zustand trachtete und aus der Logomachie in ihn hinüberstrebte" (141).

If Naphta may be said to represent Spirit without Life, Peeperkorn may be seen to represent Life without Spirit. It is interesting that both characters commit suicide: Naphta in the duel and Peeperkorn because he is condemned to impotence. We may see in this fact evidence of Mann's rejection of one-sided views and his support of the notion of totality. Just as Spirit without Life is unthinkable, so too is Life without Spirit. The two irreconcilable opposites of the early work (Spirit/Naphta and Life/Peeperkorn) die in the cause of a new harmony. Castorp's meeting with the Dutchman makes a renewal of

his relationship with Clawdia unthinkable. He exchanges with her the chaste kiss that Peeperkorn requested and she leaves.

The lethargy into which Hans Castorp now sinks is relieved only by Behrens' purchase of a gramophone. Castorp quickly assumes control of the instrument and spends a great deal of time listening to a selection of records, each of which has a special significance.

The first record from 'Aida' is the story of Radames' refusal to renounce his love for the barbarian slave, Aida. Forsaking fatherland and honour he announces that he cannot give her up and is condemned to be buried alive. He discovers that Aida awaits him in the vault, determined to die with him. We may interpret the significance of this music thus: Joachim, a fugitive from responsibility, is condemned by Behrens to be 'buried alive' in the sanatorium and is joined in his living grave by a willing Hans Castorp. The second piece of music, 'L'après-midi d'un faune', reflects experience of the ensuing period as a time of exultant joy and the arousal of latent erotic desire; in Castorp's case a desire focused on death. In the record from 'Carmen' Castorp/Don José betrays Joachim/duty for Clawdia/Carmen who promises him liberty. Joachim, in 'Valentine's farewell', the fourth record of Castorp's selection, prays for his cousin, the 'sister' who is left behind when he dies.

The final piece of music, Schubert's 'Lindenbaum', represents Hans Castorp's love of death:-

"Will man glauben, dass unser schlichter Held nach so und so vielen Jährchen hermetisch-pädagogischer Steigerung tief genug ins geistige Leben eingetreten war, um sich der 'Bedeutsamkeit' seiner Liebe und ihres Objektes bewusst zu sein? Wir behaupten und erzählen, dass er es war. Das Lied bedeutete ihm viel, eine ganze Welt ... Welches war diese dahinter stehende Welt, die seiner Gewissensahnung zufolge eine Welt verbotener Liebe sein sollte? Es war der Tod" (142).

This song and the fact that Hans Castorp sings it on the battlefield at the end of the novel is used by some critics as a second piece of evidence to suggest that fascination with death stands as the final note of this work. Yet an examination of the remainder of the music chapter shows that Mann considers the possibility of a conquest of this love of death:-

"Ja Selbstüberwindung, das mochte wohl das Wesen der Überwindung dieser Liebe sein, - dieses Seelenzaubers mit finsternen Konsequenzen! Hans Castorps Gedanken oder ahndevolle Halbgedanken gingen hoch, während er in Nacht und Einsamkeit vor seinen gestutzten Musiksarge sass, - sie gingen höher als sein Verstand reichte ..." (143).

If Castorp dies on the battlefield, singing this song, it is a death, I would argue, of the type Mann writes of at the end of this chapter:-

"Es war so wert, dafür zu sterben, das Zauberlied! Aber wer dafür starb, der starb schon eigentlich nicht mehr dafür und war ein Held nur, weil er im Grunde schon für das Neue starb, das neue Wort der Liebe und der Zukunft in seinem Herzen ..." (144).

In looking for evidence of ideas of self-conquest and love at the end of der Zauberberg we might well begin with the séance chapter, which immediately follows the music chapter. For it is Joachim Ziemssen, whom Elly Brand, at Hans Castorp's request, conjures up from the dead. The record of Valentine's prayer, which makes his apparition possible, appears as mysteriously as Madame Chauchat's X-ray during a previous séance. The complete contrast between these two objects, both of which appear from nowhere during Castorp's final attempt to penetrate the mystery of death, is highly significant. The X-ray tells of a love doomed to unproductiveness, to end in dissolution; whilst the record, symbol of Joachim's loving heart, is evidence of a love of which Castorp once dreamed on the mountain side, a love which conquers death:-

"Und ruft mich Gott zu Himmelshöhn
Will schützend ich auf dich herniedersehn
O Margarethe" (145).

The sterile X-ray compares poorly with Joachim's living heart which Castorp long ago watched beating; Clawdia's portrait by Behrens pales in comparison with the living

"schlanken, gelblich-brünetten Jünglingsoberkörper" (146)

of Joachim that Castorp had seen in the examination room. The hero's plea to Joachim's ghost, "Verzeih!" (147) is unprecedented in Mann's work. It is as if for the first time ever he fully realises the import of his fascination with death, fully learns the lesson of his vision, as if only now he is really saying "ich sehe dein Herz" (148) to his cousin. It is Hans Castorp who switches on the light and puts an end to the experiments of the séance.

It seems to me fitting then, that it is as a soldier that Hans Castorp should leave the magic mountain. The criticism that he has never before shown evidence of patriotism is irrelevant. Indeed, the very fact that he is not likely to have been conscripted into the army points to some strong personal motivation. Joachim, in many ways, died Hans Castorp's death. Perhaps this is the root of Castorp's plea for forgiveness. Thus the latter's return to the flatland as a soldier, in Joachim's place, possibly to die in return his cousin's death, is an atonement, a self-conquest.

Should further support be needed for the argument that it is the relationship between the two cousins which provides Castorp's final salvation, other evidence may be found in the text. It is Joachim who for so long is the silent companion of Castorp's Berghof experiences; Joachim, to whom Castorp first voices many of his philosophical ideas; Joachim indeed who even first converses with

Madame Chauchat in Castorp's place and who brings his cousin news of her after her departure. Castorp's reaction to Joachim's first departure from the sanatorium also adds weight to the argument.

He is horrified:-

"denn allein finde ich nie und nimmermehr den Weg ins Flachland zurück" (149).

He realises that Joachim's departure possibly represents his only chance to leave the mountain and reasons:-

"dass eine Hand ihm geboten war, jetzt, wo das Unmögliche vielleicht noch nicht so unmöglich war, wie es später sein würde, - eine Stütze und Führung für ihn, durch Joachims wilde Abreise, auf dem Wege ins Flachland, den er von sich aus in Ewigkeit nie zurückfinden würde" (150).

In the guise of the war Joachim's offer of support for Castorp to leave the mountain is made again. Castorp's possible death on the battlefield should not then be seen as defeating the message of his vision. It is in a note of optimism that Mann writes:-

"Augenblicke kamen, wo dir aus Tod und Körperunzucht ahnungsvoll und regierungsweise ein Traum von Liebe erwuchs..." (151).

Only because of his experiences on the magic mountain does Hans Castorp learn to reject the 'Weltentzweiung' which the arguments of Settembrini and Naphta represent. Had he remained in the flatland his passive attitude to life would have persisted. At the Berghof he is provoked into defining and examining critically his attitudes, and his experiences provide ample evidence of a new development in Thomas Mann's thought. In the final analysis, one-sided attitudes are criticised in favour of the notion of totality. Castorp learns that life and death are inseparable.

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CONCLUSION

In the early works of Thomas Mann life and death, 'nature' and 'spirit', appear as antitheses. Insofar as characters in these works seek in death release from the pains of their existence and/or the freedom of expression which they are unable to find in life (e.g. Hanno Buddenbrook), Thomas Mann may be said to exhibit a tendency to negate life and show a marked sympathy with death. But it must be emphasised that these characters all stand outside normal society and that it is their inability to find within that society a valid existence which occasions their fascination with death.

Thomas Mann does not usually allow his characters flight into the belief in an existence after death. They are coping with life as transience. It seems to me then that Mann's work represents a study of the nature of man, of his search for a means of self-expression in the world in which he lives and for a rapport between himself as an individual and society at large. Mann shows us people looking for a sense of meaning to life and, not least, people struggling for a harmony between the two elements of their own being. Criticism of Thomas Mann's work, such as that of Kasdorff which places all of its emphasis on lack of self-esteem as the root cause of the deaths of Mann's characters, seems to me to miss the point; and insistence that the lack of evidence of a belief in an after-life in the work is a basic flaw appears to me as misguided.

It must be emphasised that Thomas Mann's attitude towards his own characters is, from the outset, ambiguous. He is perfectly capable, even in the earliest short stories, of making his characters and their predicaments grotesque and so out of reach of our sympathy. An ironic

approach was always one of Mann's weapons against excessive sympathy with a character and any "inartistic" sentimentality. Despite the apparent predominance of sick and world-weary characters it is nearly always possible to find foils to these people in Mann's writings; moving in the background are always those who are able to get on with practical, everyday life untroubled by excessive doubt. In Buddenbrooks the flower-girl, love of Thomas' youth, appears at many points in the novel and acts as a foil to the senator. The fall of the Buddenbrook family is paralleled by the rise of the Hagenströms. Inherent in the structure of Mann's works is a sense of equilibrium. Even Tadzio in der Tod in Venedig has a healthy playmate, Jaschu. The mutual longing of the two Mann types which offers such hope in Tonio Kröger can be found in embryo form, for example, in der Wille zum Glück.

Ambiguity is always present in Thomas Mann's work. Hanno's death, at the end of Buddenbrooks, may be seen in part as an indictment of the society into which he was born and not merely as the boy's failure to respond to the challenge of life. Whereas, in this work, it is the artistic or 'spiritual' side of man which seeks expression and can find it only in the freedom of death, it is man's other aspect, his emotional and animal side, which in der Tod in Venedig finds an outlet in the voluptuous embrace of death. Mann's repeated use of the artist figure in his works stems from his own experience but also gives heightened intensity to the conflicts with which he is dealing.

Although the subject matter of his writings is often dissolution and death, Thomas Mann's style is always carefully structured. I agree with Hatfield when he writes of der Zauberberg:-

"Mann's insistence on literary form is a parodistic response to his own theme ... but also a militant measure in defence of form" (1).

This 'defence of form' is evident in even the earliest writings and in itself offers proof of a positive attitude to life. Even here Mann is aware of the danger that over-formalisation entails, resulting in sterility and rigidity, another form of death.

In der Zauberberg the promise of balance which lies behind Mann's earlier writings is fulfilled. Previous concepts are reversed and re-examined and finally harmony between extremes is reached. In this extensive work Mann deals with the problems of life and death, 'nature' and 'spirit', in unparalleled depth. Apparently opposites, life and death are inextricably bound together. Nowhere is the folly of isolating the two concepts more clearly expressed than in the passage beginning "Was war das Leben ..." (2). Mann struggles with the paradox that, although we must die we cannot experience death, for we have only direct knowledge of our own thinking being. In his works he has shown numerous differences in forms of death and the multiplicity of meanings arising from this. In der Zauberberg he attempts again to understand death's significance. The sanatorium with its chronically sick patients makes ideal subject matter, for in illness the boundary between life and death becomes indistinct. Here too, Mann concludes, categorisation is impossible. Sickness does not always have a spiritualising effect but can debase man or simply make him obsessed with the physical.

Hans Castorp learns the lesson that man is the lord of the counter-positions, that 'nature' and 'spirit' combine to make him what he is, and that he must come to terms with both life and death. Both principles must be given their due. Death must not be allowed to dwarf life. But neither can death be rationalised away as Settembrini would have it. Castorp has learned on the magic mountain to reach out beyond the bounds of his individuality, has had an emotional contact with life and learnt

to call its representatives 'du'. If he should die on the battlefield he will at least die with a sense of purpose and not merely as the result of a passive retreat from life. Der Zauberberg must surely be seen as an important stage in the evolution of Thomas Mann's thought.

In conclusion, I would like to draw attention to one of Mann's own comments which, it seems to me, summarises the overall meaning of his work:-

"Es war eine romantische Jünglingstäuschung und Jünglingsallüre, wenn ich mir ehemals einbildete, ich opferte mein Leben der 'Kunst' und meine Bürgerlichkeit sei eine nihilistische Maske; wenn ich, freilich mit aufrichtiger Ironie nach beiden Seiten hin der Kunst, dem 'Werk' vor dem Leben den Vorrang gab und erklärte, man dürfe nicht leben, man müsse sterben, 'um ganz ein Schaffender zu sein'. In Wahrheit ist die 'Kunst' nur ein Mittel, mein Leben ethisch zu erfüllen. Mein 'Werk' - sit venia verbo - ist nicht Produkt, Sinn und Zweck einer asketisch-orgiastischen Verneinung des Lebens, sondern eine ethische Äusserungsform meines Lebens selbst" (3).

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