

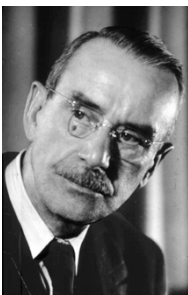
Background Image: "Dead Man by the Sea" by Oskar Zwintscher Der Tote am Meer

*Thomas Mann: A
Death In Venice*

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"Cruelty is one of the chief ingredients of love, and divided about equally between the sexes: cruelty of lust, ingratitude, callousness, maltreatment, domination. The same is true of the passive qualities, patience under suffering, even pleasure in ill usage." (*The Beloved Returns*, 1939)

*Thomas Mann
(1875-1955)*



- "Literature is death and I shall never understand how one can be a slave to it without hating it".
- **Volksgeist** "spirit of a people"
 - "A man lives not only his personal life, as an individual, but also, consciously or unconsciously, the life of his epoch and his contemporaries." (from *The Magic Mountain*, 1924)
- **Four-year love affair with Paul Ehrenberg (1899)**
 - Germany, Nazis and Homosexuality
- **Buddenbrooks -1901**
 - Sold one million copies 1st year.
- **1905: Marries Katia Pingsheim**
- **Death in Venice (DER TOD IN VENEDIG) - 1912**
 - Speaks of his own struggles with his sexuality.
- **The Magic Mountain-1924**
- **Nobel Prize for literature-1926**
- **Doktor Faustus -1947**

Morality and Love

- **Voltaire's plague of love:** "The name of love is given boldly..." (see Mann 1862)
 - Love was "born in some islands where men lived in innocence." (1841)
- **Existentialism**
 - Existence precedes Essence: No metaphysical moral knowledge, truth, or objective values or ideals.
 - rejects that which requires faith for salvation or actualization;
 - rejects belief in final purpose, that the universe is built upon non-random events and that everything is structured towards an eventual conclusive revelation.
- **Schopenhauer:** Desire is the cause of all things.
- **Friedrich Nietzsche (b. 1844-d. 1900)**
 - **Moral codes** arise from social origins.
 - Each individual must create his or her own morality.
 - Aschenbach's heroes (Mann 1845)
 - Sublimate and control passions in order to emphasize inherent creativity.

Oppositions

- Nietzsche's Will to power and Ascetic ideals
 - To deny wealth, power, sex, drinking, sensuality, etc. is to deny all that the privileged classes possess.
 - The ascetic has to contend with the fact that he secretly desires these things.
 - Aschenbach's "unused and forgotten" desires (Mann 1841)
- Nietzsche's Apollonian / Dionysian Conflict
 - Apollonian: principle of individuation; the basis of all analytic distinctions; pure form. (1845)
 - Aschenbach's "sober conscientiousness" (1842)
 - Dionysian: corresponds roughly to Schopenhauer's conception of Will & is directly opposed to the Apollonian. (1847)
 - All forms of enthusiasm and ecstasy are Dionysian because in these states man surrenders individuality and submerges himself in a greater whole.
 - Dionysian: the red haired stranger (1841); "fiery impulses" (1843)
- Aschenbach's conflict
 - Aschenbach "had pandered to the intellect..." (1846).
 - Intellect and reason are flipside of passion and desire (1847, 1849)

The Grotesque in Literature (from Wolfgang Kayser)

- Grotesque: characterized by distortions or striking incongruities in appearance, shape, or manner; the fantastic and bizarre.
- Entering the "estranged world" (1848).
 - Coffin-like Gondola carries him across. (1852)
- A pregnant moment: Tadzio (1855)
- The world ceases to be reliable, we feel unable to live in this changed world. (1857, 1861)
- Unlike the gothic, the grotesque instills fear of life rather than death.
 - Aschenbach "chooses" (1859, 1861, 1864-5)

Arthur Schopenhauer's Philosophy (1788-1860)

- Ding an sich
 - "thing in itself" perceived as knowable directly in one's own self as volitional activity (will). (Mann 1840)
- The Will is not the individual psychological will, but a universal metaphysical principle: spaceless, timeless, uncaused.
 - Manifests itself in the individual as impulse, instinct and craving. (1842)
 - Appears as consciousness and body.
 - Everything in the world becomes an expression of the Will.
 - Aschenbach's missed boat and lost luggage (1863, 1864)
- The world is Will and Idea: no independent material existence.
 - Right from unconscious matter up to the self-conscious man, the Will alone reigns supreme.
- Will appears unconscious in something and conscious in another; it's the strife, activity, yearning observed everywhere. (Mann 1842)
- "Love... interrupts at every hour the most serious occupations, ...".
