The Magic Mountain Study Guide

The Magic Mountain by Thomas Mann

BOOKRAGS

Contents

Plot Summary

Hans Castorp, an "ordinary" young German orphan from Hamburg about to begin a dull shipbuilding apprenticeship, visits his tubercular cousin Joachim Ziemssen at the International Sanatorium Berghof in the Swiss Alps in the years before World War I. Hans comes for a stay of three weeks - but ends up staying seven years, after he himself is diagnosed with TB (or is it really love?). With an international clientele, the Berghof is a microcosm of a frivolous, distracted Europe on the eve of cataclysm. The sanatorium's "enchanted" patients amuse themselves with love affairs, fads, and distractions as they await a cure (or death) in a world where time means something very different from time in the "flatlands." Hans Castorp falls hopelessly in love with a fellow patient, and is inspired to plunge into new worlds of study, tugged in different directions by love, idleness, learning, and passion.

Things become more complicated when two self-appointed mentors begin to struggle over Hans' German soul. Lodovico Settembrini is a witty and impassioned writer, activist and Freemason, glowing with Enlightenment ideals that may be as threadbare as the one set of clothes he owns. Leo Naphta is a brilliant, sarcastic Jewish-born Jesuit who combines asceticism and luxury, reverence for the medieval past with communistic and nihilistic ideas about violence and absolute terror. Their arguments lay out the stark choices facing Hans, and by implication, his generation of Germans: West or East. Culture or civilization? Democracy or violence? Hans finally declares himself to his love, the Russian Clavdia Chauchat, only to learn that she is leaving the following day. His cousin Joachim, whom other patients consider the "best of the lot," finally leaves without authorization, to take up the soldier's career he has always wanted, only to be forced to return to die. Joachim's death symbolizes the death of everything good and honorable in the German military tradition. Hans, his ties to his extended family now broken, waits for Clavdia's return. However, when she returns, Clavdia brings an unexpected traveling companion and unforeseen complications. In their wake, Hans abandons himself to the passing years. Eventually, the Berghof patients can no longer ignore currents from the outside world that will wake them from their enchanted sleep, and Hans makes a fatal choice.

Chapter 1

Chapter 1 Summary

As Hans Castorp, an "ordinary young man," climbs the Alps in his narrow-gauge railroad car, he gets dizzy from the thin air and panoramas that spread out before him. He arrives in Davos-Platz, the town below the Berghof Sanatorium, and is greeted by his cousin, Joachim Ziemssen, a vigorous-looking, handsome young man with brown eyes and hair and military bearing. After Hans makes a remark about heading back home, Joachim explains that time is different in the mountains, and that "a man changes a lot of his ideas up here." Joachim himself might have to stay another six months in addition to the five he has already spent. Joachim gives a peculiar vehement shrug when discussing his ongoing symptoms, and shows Hans his "blue Henry," the sputum bottle that most Berghof patients carry. When Joachim explains that during the winter, a neighboring sanatorium brings down bodies of deceased patients by bobsled, Hans breaks into sudden, disbelieving laughter.

As he settles into his room, Hans learns that an American woman has just died in his room, although it has been fumigated. He is horrified when he hears a peculiar sickly cough from an Austrian horseman down the hall.

During Hans' welcome meal in the sanatorium's restaurant, Joachim expresses satisfaction that Hans has come, although the cousins are customarily reserved with each other. Hans turns the conversation away from home and toward the sanatorium and its patients. Joachim tells him about some patients, like the ignorant Frau Stohr whose comical mispronunciations provide endless amusement. When Hans suddenly grows drowsy, Joachim steers him back to the main building, where he introduces Hans to Dr. Krokowski. After Hans tells him he is a healthy visitor, Dr. Krokowski smiles and says he has never met a perfectly healthy person.

Chapter 1 Analysis

In this chapter, Hans Castorp breaks from his normal routine and becomes disoriented. He immediately encounters the Berghof's realities: an easy familiarity with death and illness, and a cavalier attitude about time, as shown by Joachim's casual revelation that Dr. Behrens just gave him another six months to recover. Dr. Krokowski's greeting prefigures Hans' stay.

Chapter 2

Chapter 2 Summary

This chapter tells Hans' "back story." Both Hans Castorp's parents die between Han's fifth and seventh years of life, his mother from an embolism and his father from pneumonia. For a year and a half, Hans is raised by his grandfather, Hans Lorenz Castorp, a stern, impressive Calvinist businessman whom Hans watches intently. Sometimes after dinner, Hans follows his grandfather into the den, where he asks to be shown the family baptismal bowl, engraved with the names of the family patriarchs for the last few hundred years. Listening to his grandfather recite the names of his ancestors fills Hans with a dreamy, reverential feeling. Hans Lorenz is a strict traditionalist who believes only the aristocracy should govern and who deplores most signs of "progress." He also has a head tremor that he conceals by burying his chin in his old-fashioned collar. Young Hans comes to believe that the "real" image of his grandfather is the one in the painting of him in his civic costume as town councilor, with an old-fashioned "Spanish" ruffed collar. Hans also reveres the image of his grandfather in his coffin, feeling that he has somehow reverted to his "real" self, the self in the picture. Hans' feelings about his grandfather in his coffin introduce one of the novels' major themes, the relation between death and spirituality.

Hans is now raised by his great-uncle Tienappel and his two sons Peter and James. Consul Tienappel is a hardworking businessman and the executor of Hans' parents' estate from the sale of their business. Hans blends easily into the life of the privileged upper class of the seaport town of Hamburg, being "neither a genius nor an idiot." Despite having to repeat a semester, he moves ahead thanks to a talent for mathematics. Although Hans outwardly respects work, he does not really love it. He likes living well and smoking his Maria Mancini cigars, and conceals a dreamy streak. After the concentrated study of his college exams wears him down, his family doctor recommends a visit to the Alps to see his cousin Joachim and benefit from the mountain air.

Chapter 2 Analysis

This chapter establishes Hans Castorp's character. Outwardly, he is an ordinary, hard-working, conventional member of the German upper-middle-class. His being an orphan doesn't seem significant at first, since he is cared for by a loving if strict extended family. However, he harbors secret currents: a love of idleness and dreaming, and a reverence for death and its circumstances, which establish in his mind an image of his grandfather that combines death and holiness. In short, Hans is easily influenced by his surroundings and the people around him — clay waiting to be shaped.

Chapter 3

Chapter 3 Summary

On his first full day, Hans looks out from his room and notices a tragic-looking old woman in black pacing in the garden. He hears sounds of lovemaking from the room next door and blushes, a blush that stays on his face for the next days and weeks.

At first breakfast, Joachim explains that the woman in black is called Tous-les-deux (both of them) by the patients, because she does not speak German and that is all the French she knows. It means that both of her sons are dying of tuberculosis at the sanatorium. After Hans is introduced to his tablemates, including Frau Stohr, he is annoyed by someone slamming the door behind his back, but he can't see whom.

When Dr. Behrens and Dr. Krokowski visit their table, Dr. Behrens notices that Hans is anemic and suggests that while visiting, Hans ought to follow the same schedules and rest cures as the patients, and live as if he had TB himself.

Chapter 3 Analysis

Hans' simultaneous sight of the mourning woman in black with the sounds of love-making establishes one of the most important themes of the novel: the intimate and complicated connections between sex and death. It is only one of many such images. Dr. Behrens' suggestion that Hans live as a patient further prefigures Hans' stay.

Chapter 3, continued

Chapter 3, continued Summary

On a walk along a mountain path after first breakfast, Hans notices with annoyance that his beloved Maria Mancini cigars have lost their flavor. He is further annoyed when a female patient coming down the path makes a peculiar whistling sound at him as other patients laugh. Joachim later explains that the patient, Hermine Kleefeld, has had a lung operation in which one lung is temporarily filled with nitrogen to let it heal, allowing her to whistle with her pneumothorax. The group with her calls itself the Half-Lung Club. Joachim struggles to explain to Hans that illness and death aren't taken seriously "up here," and that "it's more like loafing around." Deaths of patients are kept very discreet, with bodies removed during meals and at night. Joachim tells of a Catholic patient, a young girl names Barbara Hujus, who screamed when she saw the priest arriving for last rites.

The cousins meet another patient at a bench on the path, Lodovico Settembrini, who converses with witty, mocking and learned banter. He compares Behrens and Krokowski to Minos and Rhadamanthus, judges of the dead in Greek mythology; calls Joachim "lieutenant" to his secret delight; and compares the healthy Hans to Odysseus visiting the shades of the Greek underworld. He mocks Behrens for inventing the "summer season" and publicizing it in articles. Hans volunteers that work does not always agree with him, and that he only feels healthy when he is doing nothing. Settembrini interrupts his learned banter to flirt with a village girl who crosses his path.

Chapter 3, continued Analysis

This section of Chapter 3 introduces Lodovico Settembrini, one of the book's most important characters. Many of his mythological reference express the truth about Hans and other characters. However, his threadbare outfit, always the same, indicates that this tradition may be worn out. He represents Apollo - that is, the Western humanistic tradition of reason, progress, light and harmony. However, he is amusing not only because of his deliberate wit, but because of his inconsistencies. From the beginning, Hans defers to him, but is secretly amused and reserved about some of Settembrini's arguments.

Chapter 3, continued

Chapter 3, continued Summary

Hans and Joachim return to the Berghof, where Joachim takes his regular rest-cure. This requires lying on the balcony wrapped in a blanket. As Joachim takes his temperature, Hans delights in the folding chaise-lounge on the balcony and speculates aloud about the nature of time. Joachim wonders how much Hans has been affected by his stay. During second breakfast, Hans notices that Joachim lowers his eyes whenever one of their tablemates, an attractive Russian girl names Marusya who giggles a lot and has a prominent chest, looks at him. Hans stares disapprovingly at the Russian couple who are responsible for the lovemaking noises in the next room when the door slams again, to his irritation.

Hans continues to feel feverish and unwell as the cousins walk down into Davos before the next rest cure. As they watch tourists playing tennis, Joachim says many patients disobey the rules mandating strict regular rest periods to play forbidden sports and card games in the town.

At dinner that night, Hans turns to see who slams the door - and finds that it is an attractive woman with red-blonde hair who sits at the "Good Russian" table. He learns from his tablemates that she is a Russian named Clavdia Chauchat, and that her husband, an official in the Russian province of Daghestan, has never visited the Berghof. Clavdia reminds Hans of something or someone, but he can't remember what or who. Frau Stohr gossips about several patients who are romantically involved. Another patient at the table, Dr. Blumenkohl, suddenly leaves the table to use his "Blue Henry."

While the now-feverish Hans lies on his balcony after the meal, he overhears a Herr Albin in the garden teasing some female patients by flourishing a gun and announcing that he intends to kill himself should his illness not improve. Hans puts himself in Herr Albin's place, imagines how it must feel to be free of all responsibility - and is terrified by a "sense of dissolute sweetness" at the thought.

At supper, Hans feels even more ill after drinking his beer. Settembrini visits their table and, when Hans begins to babble because of the beer and his fever, says the climate apparently doesn't agree with him and recommends he leave the next day. Settembrini tells a warning story of a female patient who became cured, but didn't want to leave the Berghof. She tried to fool Behrens with false thermometer readings, but he found her out by using a "silent sister," a thermometer with no markings.

Chapter 3, continued Analysis

Settembrini's warning story foreshadows Hans' long stay "up here." So does a feverish dream Hans has that night in which Behrens says Hans has a "talent" for sickness and

assigns him a stay of several years. His discovery of Clavdia Chauchat as the woman who slams the door introduces another major character who will become Hans' love interest. This section also shows that for many patients, their illness is merely an excuse for an extended irresponsible vacation.

While Herr Albin is not a major character, his overheard banter prefigures the later suicide of an important character, for which Herr Albin will provide the guns. Hans' feeling of "dissolute sweetness" is a big part of his attraction to Clavdia, whose door slamming initially irritated the correct, "normal" part of him.

Chapter 4

Chapter 4 Summary

On Hans' third day, a snowstorm blankets the area, even though it is still August. While visiting Davos so Hans can purchase camelhair blankets for his rest-cure deck chair outdoors, the cousins run into Settembrini, who bitterly rails against the weather and the Berghof's habit of keeping the rooms cold. Settembrini fondly remembers his father's warm study filled with books, and then complains wittily about his ignorant tablemates who have no interest in literature or humanism. This last remark leads Hans to mention Frau Stohr, and to say that there is something sacrilegious about sickness combined with stupidity, since sickness has something holy about it. Settembrini violently disagrees, calling this view a relic from medieval times, which regarded sickness and infirmity as passports to heaven.

Later, Hans repeats to Joachim that there's something edifying about death, and that he does better in situations connected with death then in ordinary life, although most people become uncomfortable. Joachim says he likes Settembrini's self-respect and rigor, but Hans says he feels somehow criticized for buying the blankets.

Even though it is only his third day, Hans is becoming accustomed to the Berghof routine of rest cures and five sumptuous meals a day, interspersed with walks on the mountain or into town. As he lies in his deck chair wrapped in his new blankets, Hans muses on the nature of time. When we take a vacation, the first few days seem much longer than the last few weeks, and the same thing happens when we return to our ordinary routine. Settling into a new place heightens the sense of time, and distorts it at the same time. He later tries to explain to Joachim that it already feels like he's been here an eternity.

During the first few weeks, Hans only meets a few people. One is Sister Berta, a lonely private nurse who desperately tries to engage the cousins in long conversations. Hans finally meets Tous-les-deux, the Mexican mother in mourning, and speaks to her in broken French. Hans complacently tells Joachim that death is really his element - he is not at all uncomfortable around dying people.

Chapter 4 Analysis

This section of Chapter 4 shows Hans settling in and becoming comfortable with the Berghof's life. Even though he is still officially a visitor, he is proving attracted to this way of life, to the point where Settembrini has to warn him against it. One sign of his "getting used to not getting used to" the life is the distortion of his-time-sense, another major theme of the novel. The narrator's long asides try to duplicate in the reader the feeling that Hans gets from dreaming on his balcony - or, later, from "playing king" in his secret meadow.

Chapter 4, continued

Chapter 4, continued Summary

That Sunday, while the cousins listen to a band concert on the verandah, Settembrini contrasts the written word as the "bearer of the human intellect" with music. Settembrini has a "political" distaste for music, since it inflames the emotions - even though he enthusiastically agrees with Joachim that music, like all art, can also perform the reasonable function of measuring time and can awaken the intellect. He even tells Hans that music is especially dangerous for him personally.

The following Monday, Hans takes a long hike in the mountains instead of resting before attending Dr. Krokowki's lecture. He sings love songs at the top of his voice, but still feels feverish. After stopping by a brook, he suffers a sudden nosebleed. The loss of blood causes him to hallucinate that he is back in middle school, where, he now remembers, he developed a fascination with another boy named Pribislav Hippe, whom he secretly observed for almost a year before finally getting the nerve to ask him for a mechanical pencil. Like Clavdia, Hippe had slanted "Kirghiz" or Asiatic eyes.

Hans returns late from his walk to Kr. Krokowski's lecture, and is distracted by Madame Chauchat's glance at him with Pribislav's eyes. Nevertheless, he listens intently to Dr. Krokowski's lecture about love and the forces opposed to it, mainly shame and disgust. As Hans becomes preoccupied with Madame Chauchat's arms in gauzy sleeves, Krokowski explains that when bourgeois convention seemingly results in the triumph of chastity, repressed sexual forces go underground and reappear as illness. At the end of the lecture, Dr. Krokowski spreads his arms in a gesture that remind Hans of Christ, and invites everyone to take psychoanalytic sessions with him.

Chapter 4, continued Analysis

Settembrini's warnings against music as "politically suspect" introduce an important theme. Settembrini represents the Apollonian forces of reason, harmony, proportion, and civilization - the word rather than music. Nevertheless, he frequently simplifies and exaggerates. As he admits, music can be either Dionysian or Apollonian. Music's ordering of time is another important theme. In their debate about music with Settembrini, Joachim credits music with at least ordering the flow of time and earns Settembrini's approval.

Hans' memories of Pribislav Hippe, and his identification of him with Clavida Chauchat, already establish her as a Dionysian figure, since Dionysios was often represented as a hermaphrodite (i.e., having both male and female characteristics). Hippe, too, was an ambiguous figure - or at least, Hans' feelings for him were ambiguous. Hans takes so long to approach Hippe because he feels that such personal feelings should be shielded

from definition and from ordinary life. Krokowski's lectures reinforce the theme of the connections between sex and death, as Hans stares at Clavdia's back.

Chapter 4, continued

Chapter 4, continued Summary

On Tuesday, Hans receives his first weekly bill. During a visit to the sanatorium's business offices, Hans learns from Joachim that Dr. Behrens arrived ten years earlier with his sick wife, whom he buried. Besides being an excellent diagnostician and well-known surgeon, he is an amateur painter who received the mocking aristocratic title "Hofrat" from a tubercular nobleman who used to sneak off to town for gambling.

Hans' tablemate, the elderly spinster Fraulein Engelhart, notices Hans' interest in Clavdia Chauchat and talks about her as a way of taking part vicariously in a love affair, since she has given up on one for herself. Hans notices that Clavdia doesn't wear a wedding band. The spinster tells him that Madame Chauchat lives apart from her husband by choice. He and Fraulein Engelhart tease each other as if it's she who is infatuated, both knowing the game they are playing. Hans' infatuation begins to be noticed by other patients, who turn to watch, as Hans turns pale and blushes when Clavdia bangs the dining hall door. Since many of the patients are involved in affairs with each other, they are recognizing that Hans is becoming one of them.

As his third week begins, Hans becomes convinced that Madame Chauchat is aware of a mysterious connection between the two of them. He begins to see the tensions between himself and her as the real "reason" for his visit.

Settembrini increasingly becomes an annoyance to him, always appearing just when Hans is preoccupied with Madame Chauchat. Settembrini makes fun of the patients' infractions of Berghof policy and seems to be as conversant with gossip as Frau Stohr, whom he teases. However, with the cousins, he talks earnestly about his grandfather, an Italian patriot who conspired against Austria until he was forced to flee by Metternich's police. In comparing Settembrini's grandfather to his own, Hans is reminded of an experience he once had on a boat ride in a Holstein lake, when the sun was setting and one side of the horizon looked like day, while the other looked like night. Neither of the cousins like it when Settembrini identifies German-speaking Austria with the "Asiatic" forces of stasis, opposed to the progressive forces of enlightenment and liberal politics that Settembrini sees battling for Europe's soul.

During Hans' third week, the head nurse, Adriatica von Mylendonk, asks Hans about his persistent cough and urges him to take his temperature. When he tells his tablemates that it is elevated, they urge him to Dr. Behrens examine him. At Joachim's next examination, Behrens tells Hans that he too is infected, that he had an earlier infection that he didn't know about, and that it would be dangerous for him to leave. The alpine air is not only good against illness, but also good for illness, in the sense that it sometimes lets latent illness break out.

Chapter 4, continued Analysis

The "two grandfathers," along with Hans' remembered two horizons on the boat ride, are both images that contrast the Dionysian and Apollonian, night and day, activism and dreaminess, life and death. They are also images of two possible "ancestries" for Germany - Western and Eastern, light and dark, classical or Asiatic. The image of Hans on the lake, suspended between the two horizons of night and day, represents his spiritual condition throughout the novel. During his whole stay at the Berghof, Hans is suspended between these two horizons. This chapter ends with Han's formal admission to the Berghof as a patient.

Chapter 5

Chapter 5 Summary

Hans has four weeks of mandated bed-rest. One day when he is dreaming about Clavdia in the dark, Settembrini visits his room and suddenly turns on the light. He warns Hans about patients who became so used to the Berghof life that they were unfit for anything else and because "lost to life." when Hans talks about his reverent feelings for death, Settembrini replies with unusual seriousness that Hans must be careful, because "once separated from life" death "is a very depraved force" whose attractions are strong.

Bed-rest over, Hans accompanies Joachim to get their x-rays. They unexpectedly encounter Madame Chauchat in the waiting room. Hans stares at her until she becomes uncomfortable. When he sees Joachim's beating heart in the x-ray, Hans experiences religious awe and remembers a family member who was reputed to have the "gift" of seeing those doomed to die as skeletons.

As October approaches, the cousins overhear Hermine Kleefeld and other patients complaining about their stay and prospects. Settembrini tells the cousins not to believe the complaints, and warns against a mood of pretended cynicism and irony among the patients. It conceals a "swamp plant" of "flirtation with inertia, nihilism, and vice". Hans uneasily wonders how much Settembrini knows about his attraction to Clavdia. Later he writes a third letter home telling his relatives his stay is indefinite, and not to expect too many letters.

As he watches Madame Chauchat's always-late, door-slamming entrances to the dining hall, Hans wonders whether her carelessness and laziness are moral failings identical with her illness, as Settembrini has hinted. The connection between infatuation and illness seems to be reinforced when, after a failed attempt to get Madame Chauchat's attention, Hans' temperature declines. However, after he encounters Madame Chauchat on the mountain path and she speaks civilly to him, his temperature climbs again.

Chapter 5 Analysis

Hans' bed-rest is his symbolic death and rebirth as a regular Berghof patient. The scene in which Settembrini turns on the light is very important, a crucial scene, because it establishes him as a symbolic "Apollo", exponent of reason and light, who urges Hans Castorp to resist the urge toward the Dionysian forces of idleness, sickness, and death. This section reinforces the connection between Hans' attraction to Clavdia and his religious feelings for death and sickness. Part of the issue is the relation between the physical and spiritual. Does Hans' attraction to Clavdia cause his temperature to spike, or is it the other way around?

Chapter 5, continued

Chapter 5, continued Summary

Hans is by now aware of affairs among several of the patients, who use the space extending beyond the connecting balconies to visit each other. Similarly, many patients are now aware of Hans' infatuation, since he hardly hides his feelings. His blushes and staring are a regular object of amusement in the dining-hall.

While waiting for Sunday mail, Hans and Settembrini fall into an open argument. Settembrini triumphantly reveals that he belongs to the International League for the Organization of Progress, which works for human self-perfection. He is contributing to an international encyclopedia this group is publishing on the causes and cures of human suffering. Settembrini again warns Hans against adopting "Asiatic" ideas about time and suffering, and urges Hans, despite his diagnosis, to leave the Berghof so he can live as a civilized European in the flatlands. Hans accuses Settembrini of offering hypocritical advice, since Settembrini himself avoided the League's conference in Barcelona on his doctor's orders. Settembrini retorts that his illness is much worse than Hans', and vows that when he can't delude himself about his prospects any longer, he will leave the Berghof and lodge in the village below. However, Hans, he says, must resist the lure of the "swamp" of fever and idleness, which Settembrini compares to the lure of Circe, the enchantress in Homer's Odyssey who turned men into pigs.

Later that October, Hans and Joachim meet Dr. Behrens on the path outside. In revenge for Joachim's having drawn him away for a walk from the verandah where he can watch Madame Chauchat, Hans gets Dr. Behrens to invite them to his apartments to see his paintings, knowing he has a portrait of Clavdia there. Hans praises it and even trails it around the room with him. When Behrens makes coffee, Hans notices that his coffee mill has phallic patterns, and blushes. He asks Behrens to explain about the composition of skin and the biochemical processes behind sweating and blushing - all the things he has been doing in response to Clavdia.

As winter arrives, Hans' fever has been going up, and he thinks it is because of his new studies. Inspired by his visit with Behrens, he has ordered textbooks in embryology, physiology, biology and anatomy, in French, English and German, without telling Joachim. Hans plunges into the question, What is Life?, and studies everything from the joining of sperm and egg, to cell composition, the makeup of proteins and organic molecules, and the processes of both growth and decay. Wrapped up in his fur sleeping bag and winter coat, he falls asleep on the balcony with his fantasy image of Clavdia enhanced by his new detailed knowledge of cell biology and biochemistry.

Chapter 5, continued Analysis

Settembrini now openly appoints himself a mentor to Hans Castorp, even to the latter's annoyance. However, is Hans' attraction to Clavdia really leading him into idleness? The way Hans plunges into study, even scientific study, of new fields because of his infatuation with Clavdia indicates that Settembrini's distinctions may be a bit simplistic. Plato had said that all study is motivated by love, and Hans' feeling for Clavdia is certainly opening him up to many influences, not simply idleness.

Chapter 5, continued

Chapter 5, continued Summary

During the Christmas holidays, Dr. Behrens' handsome son Knut visits, causing jealous spats among some lady patients. Hans is relieved when both Clavdia and Settembrini leave a Christmas concert, so that he can concentrate on the music.

After the holidays, the Austrian horseman whose cough Hans Castorp heard on his first day dies. Hans and Joachim visit the widow to comfort her. Hans decides to begin openly visiting dying patients and their relatives. He and Joachim become known for their kind attentions and gifts of flowers. They are particularly moved by a dying girl named Leila Gerngross, whose distraught parents thank them. Another patient, Frau Zimmermann, is nicknamed "Lady Overblown" because she allowed a doctor in Zurich to overfill her pneumothorax with nitrogen, making her condition much more serious. The cousins meet Anton Ferge, an insurance salesman in Russia who never tires of describing his pleural shock during a pneumothorax operation. They visit Tous-les-Doux's remaining son, and take young Karen Karstedt, a private patient of Behrens, on social outings in the town, even to the graveyard where she will soon be buried. Frau Stohr, whom they meet in town, crudely but accurately hints that Hans is substituting Karen for Clavdia.

Chapter 5, continued Analysis

For Hans, his and Joachim's visits to dying patients have a blameless appearance of Christian charity. Nevertheless, they are also a way of reinforcing his reverence for death in a way that secretly responds to Settembrini's arguments about people whose stay "up here" is frivolous, such as Widow Hessenfeld, who gambles and admits she could leave if she wished. Hans is not simply taking a vacation from life and its responsibilities, like the patients who sneak out to skate in town, play cards, or go to taverns. Hans' reverence for death is serious, and so, he believes, is his love for Clavdia.

Chapter 5, conclusion

Chapter 5, conclusion Summary

As Walpurgis Night (Mardi Gras) night approaches, Settembrini reproaches Hans for playing fast and loose with time in his conversation. The patients visit the carnival in town, and at dinner, the management decorates the tables with paper lanterns. Patients appear in costume, including two dressed as a Blue Henry and a Silent Sister. Settembrini sends Hans a joking note, warning him to beware the spells of Walpurgis Night. In irritation, Hans realizes he has no pencil to write a return note. Suddenly Clavdia Chauchat enters dressed in a stunning brown silk gown that leaves her arms bare. Settembrini calls her "Lilith" - according to legend, Adam's first wife who became a witch. Having had a few drinks, Hans scolds Settembrini for "turning the lights on" again, and uses the familiar "you" with him, at which Settembrini takes offense. However, Hans thanks Settembrini for all his conversation and advice, in a long speech that Settembrini says sound like a farewell.

Dr. Behrens performs a parlor trick of drawing a pig blindfolded in one long stroke, and other patients laughingly try it. After Hans tries with comical result, he blames the pencil and suddenly approaches Clavdia to ask her for one, again using the familiar form of "you" under the custom of the holiday. He urges her to try the drawing trick, but now the crowd has dispersed, so they talk in French instead. Clavdia gently mocks Hans, calling him a typical German bourgeois and a "curious little dreamer," while Hans tries to probe her relationship with Behrens. When she asks him why he has not approached her during the previous seven months, he says he did not want to use formal pronouns with her.

Hans is crushed when Clavdia tells him she is leaving the Berghof the next day. Although she may return, she suggests that Hans himself will probably leave before she does. He asks her about the Russian man who visits her occasionally, and she says they have innocent talks about morality, among other things. Clavdia says that morality is to be found, not in virtue, but in losing yourself in sin and danger. She again teases Hans for being a simple, decent fellow. In a long, passionate speech, Hans protests that his fever is really the result of his lover for her, an "eternal" love that worships her body, which he describes medically (and comically) using terms from his textbooks. She leaves, but asks Hans to return her pencil and predicts that his fever will rise this evening. Thus, she invites him to her room.

Chapter 5, conclusion Analysis

This chapter is a key turning point. It occurs at the exact center of the novel. After almost a year of preparation and study, of shielding his feelings from the everyday as with Hippe, Hans finally declares himself to Clavdia, and it is strongly suggested that they spend the night together in her room. However, has all his preparation worked

against him? Clavdia hints that he might have been successful had he approached her earlier. She declares that her idea of love is an adventure in which one loses oneself in sin and danger. She also predicts Joachim's death if he leaves to join his regiment.

Chapter 6

Chapter 6 Summary

Hans is not present when Clavdia Chauchat leaves by carriage, but they have exchanged X-ray plates as tokens. Is Hans merely the "sweet bourgeois with a little damp spot" on his lungs, as Clavdia mockingly called him on Walpurgis Night? Or is he what Settembrini calls him, "life's problem child"? His fever has indeed gone up as Clavdia said it would, and Behrens now gives him injections twice a week to bring it down. Hans still tries to ascertain whether Behrens had a relationship with Clavdia that went beyond the medical. During one session, Behrens urges Hans to restrain Joachim's impatience to return to his military career, but Hans protests that it's not easy when he sees examples of unauthorized departures every day.

After weeks of silence, Settembrini finally greets Hans, and asks him how he liked the pomegranate - referring to the Greek myth of Persephone in Hades, which Hans does not quite understand. At Easter, Settembrini approaches the cousins again, and gently reproaches Hans with having symbolically said good-bye to him on Mardi Gras night. Then he confides that he is leaving the Berghof, although not the valley. Since his condition has not improved, he will lodge with a ladies' tailor in the village below.

As spring approaches, several patients leave without authorization, such as Frau Salomon of Amsterdam, who is getting worse but who can't stand the sanatorium any more. Marusya's great-aunt takes her on an unauthorized trip below, leaving Joachim even more impatient to leave himself. Joachim, who has been at the Berghof over a year now, gets snappish with Hans. He is annoyed by Hans' references to Dr. Krokowski's botany lectures, partly because he is has accidentally discovered that Hans is now being analyzed by Dr. Krokowski.

Chapter 6 Analysis

Hans' approach to Clavdia is "spiritually" connected to Settembrini's removal to a more distant location in the valley, although he is still near. He symbolically says goodbye to Settembrini during his Walpurgis Night encounter with Clavdia. Settembrini's joke about the pomegranate refers to the myth of Persephone, who was kidnapped by Hades, the god of death and the underworld. Although she hates being captive, during her stay, she eats a pomegranate from the underworld. Thus, she can never leave entirely, but must return periodically. With Hans, the genders are reversed.

Of course, there is a strong reference as well to the Genesis story of Adam and Eve. Even though it is Clavdia who leaves and Hans who stays, he suffers an exile from his beloved after having his "eyes opened," as with Adam and Even in Genesis. That is why there is something comical about all the work he did in preparation for his meeting with

Clavdia, whose results he tries to use in his speech to her. In the Genesis story, work is the result of transgression.

Chapter 6, continued

Chapter 6, continued Summary

Among the new subjects he has found, Hans Castorp studies botany and astronomy, and begins referring to the zodiac in conversation. Joachim grumpily says Hans has picked up too many grand ideas while lying on his balcony.

One day the cousins see Settembrini with a companion on the mountain path. He pretends not to see them, but when he can't avoid it, introduces them to his companion. Leo Naphta rents rooms in the same building as Settembrini. Naphta is a small, skinny, caustically ugly man with a haughty manner and a high-pitched laugh that sounds like cracked porcelain. The four walk along together, as Settembrini and Naphta trade polite but barbed arguments with learned references that Hans and Joachim can hardly understand. Settembrini mockingly calls Naphta a princeps scholasticorum, and Naphta calls Settembrini a Voltairean. They begin debating whether spirit and nature are opposed to each other. During a pause in the debate, Settembrini explains to the bewildered cousins that Naphta taught classical languages at a nearby prep school, until his health forced him into the mountains five years earlier.

When Naphta and Settembrini argue at length about whether work or leisure is superior, the cousins both listen intently. Hans finally intervenes to praise something ascetic in the military life that Joachim is so impatient to resume. When Naphta and Settembrini argue about the meaning of a soldier's life, the debate becomes heated, to the point that the two cousins become embarrassed. After a pause, Settembrini waves off the tension, explaining that he and Naphta often argue in good fellowship. They move on to current events, such as the political jockeying in the Balkans and whether revolution will happen in Turkey. When Naphta mocks Settembrini's distaste for war, the latter replies that he has always supported wars for national liberation, such as Italy's struggle against Austria. Naphta makes fun of progressive idealism and the utopian notion of a world-state and international law court, arguing that those who champion them, like Rousseau, only bastardized medieval Catholic notions of a universal divine law. Finally, the four arrive at the tailor's cottage, and the cousins promise to visit again.

As Joachim and Hans head back, Hans wonders what Naphta meant when he called Settembrini "Master of the Lodge." He suspects that Settembrini might be afraid of some things that Naphta is not afraid of. Joachim derides Naphta's "Jewish" appearance.

Hans Castorp's letters and postcards home are getting less frequent. He reports that the injections have been discontinued. In a little alpine meadow with blue columbine flowers, Hans "plays king," as he called it in childhood, musing over his recent experiences.

Hans realizes that Settembrini does not want him to see Naphta again, but he feigns innocence and visits Naphta's room in town. The cousins are surprised to find that although the cottage itself is poor, Naphta's rooms are lavishly decorated in red and purple silk brocade, with rich upholstered chairs. Hans admires a graphic Pieta. Before tea can begin, Settembrini appears. The cousins guess that, besides guarding them from Naphta's influence, the poverty-stricken Settembrini probably welcomes the chance for free food. The two men begin to argue over the Pieta. When Settembrini says that classicism alone furthers the human enterprise, Hans Castorp uses some of Settembrini's own arguments against him, quoting what he had earlier said about Plotinus' contempt for his body and Voltaire's protest against the absurdity of the Lisbon earthquake. Settembrini gently scolds Hans, and then criticizes the medieval period and its tortures. Naphta replies that at least the Church tortured to save souls, unlike the French Revolutionaries. When Settembrini praises scientific knowledge and truth, Naphta claims that whatever serves man is true. Settembrini protests that this is mere pragmatism, that Naphta is justifying a totalitarian state. Naphta replies that youth's deepest desire is not for freedom, but for obedience. The present age will bring forth terror and an iron law of obedience. Settembrini asks who will be the agent of this terror. Naphta says that today the proletariat is the instrument of the Kingdom of God, and it must necessarily exercise terror in its righteous task of confronting capitalist rot. Settembrini's humanistic conception of "freedom" has resulted only in the dehumanizing rule of money.

Settembrini finally breaks off the debate and invites the cousins upstairs to see his plain garret. He warns them against Naphta's influence, even though he debates with him as a fellow intellectual. Hans is surprised to learn that Naphta is a Jesuit. He has not been ordained due to his health. Even though he is a Jesuit, says Settembrini, Naphta constantly tries out new intellectual combinations, hence his communism. Han suggests that maybe the combinations go with his illness. Settembrini finally warns them that Naphta is actually an intellectual servant of the kingdom of death and lust.

Chapter 6, continued Analysis

This section introduces another important character, Leo Naphta, who becomes Settembrini's antagonist for Hans Castorp's soul. He represents not so much Dionysios as Hades, although that takes some time to become apparent. Naphta's ideas are a weird mixture of reverence for the Church and the medieval past with communistic, even nihilistic ideas about absolute spirit, violence and terror. Although he never mentions Friedrich Nietzsche, many of Naphta's arguments are strongly influenced by Nietzsche's, which Thomas Mann had read. One of Nietzsche's most important themes is that the will to power is the strongest human motivation. The learned debates between Naphta and Settembrini are laid out in page after page, placing before the reader, as well as Hans, the choices facing Europe.

Chapter 6, continued

Chapter 6, continued Summary

As Hans Castorp's one-year anniversary approaches, Joachim is more silent than ever. When an August snowstorm seems to rob them of summer, Joachim becomes even more irritable. Hans begins to be afraid that Joachim has decided to leave, and worries that he'll never find his way back to the flatlands without him.

During their monthly medical exam, Behrens is preoccupied by a scandalous three-way love affair among the patients that resulted in three expulsions. When Joachim announces that he has decided to leave and his mother approves, Behrens asks Hans if he too is leaving. Hans says he will trust the Director's decision. However, when Behrens says Hans can leave, despite his persistent temperature, Hans protests that he can't mean it. Behrens flies into a rage, saying he is not the owner of a cathouse. A few days later, Hans visits Behrens to see if his permission was serious. Behrens, calm by now, merely says he always knew that Hans had more talent as a patient than his cousin. Joachim is beside himself with excitement to leave. At the station, the normally reserved Joachim calls Hans by his first name for the first time and begs him to follow him soon.

Two and half months later, Hans is assigned to Settembrini's old chair in the dining hall as new patients arrive. His new tablemates include Anton Ferge, who has somewhat recovered, and Ferdinand Wehsal, the Mannheimer with bad teeth who also loves Madame Chauchat, and who now follows Hans around pathetically.

Hans has been expecting a visit from his uncle James Tienappel. Hans picks him up at the train station, pointing out constellations on the way to the Berghof. James is uneasy at the Hans' calm, imperturbable manner. Hans does not inquire about anyone at home and seems unaffected by the weather. When Hans says that there is something exuberant about illness, and that he has been given six more months, James asks if Hans is crazy and threatens to have a talk with Behrens the next day, to which Hans blandly agrees. At dinner that night, as Hans calmly tells him about various patients and their symptoms, James suddenly bursts out laughing. The next day, James is alarmed when Behrens tells him that he, James, is anemic and should live like a patient while he is here. James' conference with Behrens is more about him than about Hans, and James begins noticing the cleavage of Frau Redisch, a Polish industrialist's wife. When Behrens explains decomposition one night at their table, it's too much; James leaves the next day without telling Hans.

Chapter 6, continued Analysis

This is another turning point, a stage in Hans moral and spiritual education. Even though he is given the opportunity to leave, Hans is now firmly entrenched in the

Berghof life, clearly by his own choice. He is becoming more his own person, able to resist Dr. Behrens' permission to leave, and efforts from home to reclaim him. He no longer needs Joachim's companionship to remain.

Chapter 6, continued

Chapter 6, continued Summary

As Hans continues to visit Leo Naphta, with and without Settembrini, and sometimes with Ferge and Wehsal, he learns about his life. Leo Naphta was born Jewish, his father being the village shohet or ritual kosher butcher, and an unorthodox Torah scholar who argued with the rabbi. Leo grows up associating holy religion with the sight of slaughtered animals and blood. During a pogrom, Leo's father is killed and crucified to the door of his burning house. His mother flees to another town and gets a job in a cotton mill to support Leo and his three siblings. Leo's brilliant, restless mind attracts the attention of the local rabbi, with whom Leo argues like his father. One day as Leo sits on a bench, he meets by chance a Jesuit, Father Unterpertinger, who takes an interest in the unusual boy. Leo proves an eager convert, and begins studies at a nearby Jesuit school. After several years, he joins the Jesuits as a novice. However, his passion for dialectics and introspection worsens his health. The climate at the Jesuit college in Holland disagrees with him, and he is sent to the Davos valley, where he teaches Latin at a school for tubercular boys.

One day all five patients have a prolonged debate during a walk to town and back. Settembrini begins by mocking Hans' visits with Karen Karstedt, who has recently died, and the other dying patients. When Naphta praises medieval stories of kings' daughter kissing lepers' sores as part of their devotion, Settembrini becomes disgusted, seeing this as another exaltation if illness. Ferge protests that Settembrini seems to be mocking his pleural shock. From a discussion of mental illness, Wehsal is inspired to bring up the subject of torture, of which Settembrini disapproves along with capital punishment. Naphta argues that the use of corporal punishment, even torture, in the medieval period was actually the result of rational processes that replaced trial by combat. Thus, humanists like Settembrini were actually the father of judicial torture! When Naphta says that man's deepest lust is the desire to kill and be killed, Settembrini subtly asks whether Naphta himself has a desire to kill. Naphta says that real religion has nothing to do with life, but with illness and death. Each man contradicts himself frequently until Hans Castorp's head spins, and they finally separate.

Chapter 6, continued Analysis

This chapter delves further in to the Nietzchean theme of the will to power. Although neither Settembrini nor Naphta are always consistent in their arguments, Naphta's inconsistencies are somewhat different from Settembrini's. He will do anything, torture any argument to win. His statement that man's deepest desire is to kill and be killed shows that, from his point of view at least, the will to power is also a will to death. It prefigures his suicide near the end of the novel.

Chapter 6, continued

Chapter 6, continued Summary

Hans Castorp's second winter is cloudy and gloomy, to the point where an artificial sun-lamp is bought by the management. Frau Salomon returns, this time to a "life sentence." A massive snowstorm fills the valley. Hans is inspired to take up skiing. Settembrini is thrilled, even though this activity is unauthorized, because it's an active pursuit. Hans learns the basics in a few days and is pleased to find how far he can travel. One day he explores a neighboring mountain. When more snow begins to fall, Hans becomes disoriented. When the snow becomes too thick to see through, he takes refuge behind a deserted shepherd's cottage. He is exhausted by now, and the drinks of port from the flask he has brought do not help.

As he slumps behind the cottage, Hans suddenly hallucinates a long vision of a beautiful, park-like classical landscape. A curtain of rain clears to reveal hardwood trees leading to a Mediterranean beach, with beautiful youths and maidens riding horses, dancing in rings, and practicing archery in Greek robes. Hans passes through the landscape, enjoying the sights and sounds, until he reaches a Greek temple by a beech grove. However, he grows uneasy as he enters the temple, and he is frozen in horror at what he sees inside - two hideous hags with withered breasts devouring pieces of a human infant over a bloody basin. When he comes to himself lying in the snow, he remembers his vision, and realizes its significance as he repudiates both Settembrini's and Naphta's contradictions, because man is superior to all contradictions of life or death. The sky is now clear and it is only five o'clock; his vision has only taken a few minutes. Hans skis straight down to the Berghof. By bedtime, he has almost forgotten the whole experience.

Chapter 6, continued Analysis

This is a key chapter. Hans Castorp's hallucinatory vision sums up the whole Apollonian-Dionysian conflict that is the book's main theme. Equally important is Hans' realization (even though he forgets it later) that this conflict is not to be decided by a choice for one or another. Such a choice is impossible. The two forces are mutually interdependent. The beautiful landscape cannot exist without the temple and its horrible secrets. The tension between them drives civilization, and man can never dispense with one or the other for good. Man himself is greater than either realm, and contains both. However, the fact that Hans soon forgets his vision, and his understanding of its significance, suggest that Thomas Mann believes that mankind can't bear to dwell on these truths. Hans probably speaks for Mann the author during his statements about the meaning of the vision.

Chapter 6, conclusion

Chapter 6, conclusion Summary

Joachim's letters to Hans Castorp gradually change. At first, they are ecstatic, as Joachim is excused from officer's school due to his university years, and becomes a lieutenant. In late spring, he gets a slight cold, but recovers. He worries about missing maneuvers in August. Finally, Hans hears from Joachim's mother that Joachim's persistent temperature rise means he must return to the Berghof. Hans is both delighted and disturbed. When Joachim arrives, he is excited, flushed, and talkative, disturbing his mother Luise, who punctures his mood by remarking that he is just as he was on the day of his promotion. Marusya and her great-aunt have returned from their unauthorized trip. At dinner, Frau Ziemssen mentions that she had met someone in Munich, a Frau Chauchat, who asked her to greet Joachim. Frau Chauchat was headed for a sanatorium in Spain, but expected to return to the Berghof within six months. Under pressure from Joachim and Frau Ziemssen, Behrens gives October as a possible discharge date for Joachim.

Joachim again visits Settembrini and Naphta with Hans. Hans has earlier learned from Naphta that Settembrini is a Freemason. Naphta mocks the Mason's rituals and beliefs, but warns Hans Castorp against him nevertheless. Settembrini is not shy about discussing his Masonry when Hans questions him. Settembrini warns Hans that Germany and its youth have tremendous questions to decide that will affect Europe's fate, and that Hans must take part in the decision. When Hans stubbornly refuses to answer, Settembrini says he is afraid that Germany will answer with deeds instead of words, and that Joachim and soldiers like him will be asked to come forward.

Joachim accompanies Hans, Ferge and Wehsal on a visit to town, where they run into Naphta and Settembrini near a tavern. As they are relaxing at a table, another heated argument erupts between the two mentors from an innocent joke about Virgil. When Settembrini teases Hans that his Beatrice (Clavdia) is soon returning, Naphta attacks Virgil. Even though he himself teaches Latin at a private school specializing in classical rhetoric, he claims that worn-out humanistic rhetoric will die out in the new proletarian age of violence that is coming. Hans is distracted by his worry about Joachim, who complains of a new cold and hoarseness.

After examining Joachim, the head nurse asks if he has ever swallowed the wrong way, and leaves him a compress. Joachim's October discharge "deadline" passes without comment. At dinner one day, Joachim chokes on his food and has to leave the table. After it happens a few more times, Joachim is summoned to Behrens for an unscheduled exam. Hans tries to find Behrens, and suspects the doctor is avoiding him. When he finally corners Behrens, Hans learns that Joachim has laryngeal tuberculosis and may have only six to eight weeks left to live. Joachim now eats only stews. He and Hans do not talk about what is between them. By November, Joachim is reduced to a strict liquid diet and total bed rest. Hans knows Joachim has accepted his fate when he

sees him one day indulging in intense conversation with Marusya at the evening social hour. Hans writes Joachim's mother to come. At her side, Hans is aware of how much Joachim has changed. Sometimes Joachim grows confused and speaks happily about returning to his regiment. Behrens tells Luisa Ziemssen that he is happy Joachim's heart is giving out, because he is avoiding unpleasant complications and will have a swift passing. Near the end, Joachim performs a curious gesture of scooping something near his right hip. His passing is swift and peaceful.

All the patients grieve for Joachim, although Frau Stohr says Beethoven's "Erotica" (instead of "Eroica") should be played at his funeral. During the funeral, Naphta whispers to Settembrini that he is glad to see he has some feeling for serious matters as well as progress. When Joachim's body begins to "smile" inside the metal coffin his mother has bought, Hans hastily closes the coffin.

Chapter 6, conclusion Analysis

The death of Joachim, whom the other Berghof patients consider the "best of the lot", represents the death of everything good and honorable in the German military tradition. It also removes another connection between Hans and the "flatlands" and concludes the chapter.

Chapter 7

Chapter 7 Summary

The narrator indulges in another long reflection on time and Hans Castorp's distortion of his time sense in the Berghof. Resisting his slide into timelessness, Hans sometimes stares at his ticking watch-hands. Musing about time, for Hans and the narrator, is like strolling by the endless seashore near Hamburg. However, Hans ends by giving himself up to his drift of timelessness, and the narrator hints that the fate of Joachim's unauthorized departure convinces Hans that he has no other choice but to stay.

When Clavdia Chauchat finally returns, Hans Castorp is thrown into confusion when she arrives with a traveling companion, a rich Dutch colonial planter from Java named Pieter Peeperkorn. They sit at the same table and share adjoining rooms in the luxury suite of the Berghof. Hans spies on Peeperkorn at the dining table, and sees him making poised, eloquent gestures with his massive hands as he "conducts" the conversation. Peeperkorn's conversation usually consists of oracular utterances and fragments of sentences, ending with "Sett-led! Settled, then!" An imposing man, tall with a halo of white hair and a kingly, craggy face, he seems to easily dominate the crowd of patients at the Berghof. Peeperkorn is periodically bedridden from his fever. Despite his best efforts, Hans cannot get any acknowledgment from Clavdia.

One evening after Berhens has entertained the patients with a musical parlor trick, Hans is gloomily reading the paper in the adjacent room when Clavdia asks him about Joachim. She is sorry to hear he has died, but rebukes Hans when he uses her first name. When Peeperkorn approaches, she introduces the two of them. Peeperkorn proposes drinks and games, and Hans fetches other patients. Twelve of them assemble in the salon and agree to play the card game vingt et un (twenty-one). Peeperkorn orders huge amounts of snacks and drinks. They moves on to other, riskier gambling games, and the crowd is mesmerized by Peeperkorn's regal manner. When he becomes enraged at the cold cuts he has ordered and paid for, Clavdia soothes him into ordering hot food. When Peeperkorn begins ranting about "life's feminine demands" upon one's "manly vigor," Hans realizes he is very drunk. When Hans' increasingly impertinent remarks seem to rouse Peeperkorn again to inarticulate rage, Hans calms him with a defense of alcohol. Peeperkorn flirts with every female at the table, even making the dwarf waitress Emerentia blush. When the guests leave at two o'clock, Clavdia and Hans have to support the drunken Peeperkorn to his room. However, when Peeperkonr asks Hans to kiss Clavdia on the brow at the door to their room, Hans refuses.

Chapter 7 Analysis

Clavdia has made the Dionysian side of life seems like an exciting, tempting adventure in immorality, but Peeperkorn shows that it has its comic and pathetic side as well - just

as, in Greek mythology, the attractive and androgynous Dionysios had as his companion in revelry Silenus, a lecherous and drunken satyr who was a comical figure. The fact that twelve Berghof patients participate in Peeperkorn's drunken feast may be a reference to the Last Supper, which this feast parodies.

Chapter 7, continued

Chapter 7, continued Summary

The day after the feast, Hans visits Peeperkorn, who is recovering from a fever attack. Peeperkorn welcomes Hans. He talks at length and coherently about the quinine he takes for his fever, and about tropical poisons and their uses in medicine. When he is not bed-ridden, Peeperkorn hosts other parties and outings to local sights, some including Naphta and Settembrini, Wehsal and Ferge. Except for Anton Ferge, the group is full of half-concealed tensions and rivalries, all swirling around Hans Castorp and his relationship with Clavdia. Peeperkorn's massive "royal" personality seems to diminish the two adversaries. Hans slyly points this out to Settembrini one day, who cannot understand why Hans pays more attention to Peeperkorn than to Clavdia. Hans tries to explain the attractions of Peeperkorn's personality, but Settembrini accuses him of making an enigma into an idol. Both Settembrini and Naphta resent Peeperkorn as interfering with their pedagogic rivalry over Hans.

One evening Hans and Clavdia talk in the salon. Clavdia threatens to leave when Hans praises her arms, and tells him she is not responsible for his waiting for her. When Hans asks her if she loves Peeperkorn, she replies that he loves her, and his love makes her grateful and devoted. She admits that she was annoyed when Hans became friends with Peeperkorn, but proposes an alliance to watch over Peeperkorn, after which she kisses him.

A few months later, in early spring, Hans is visiting Peeperkorn, who is unusually articulate and coherent. Peeperkorn's discussion of life's divine energies and their failures suggest that he is preoccupied with sexual impotence. Suddenly he asks Hans whether he was Clavdia's lover. He has particularly noticed that Hans uses awkward circumlocutions with Clavdia to avoid using the formal pronoun. It seems Peeperkorn pays close attention even when drunk. Hans admits that he and Clavdia spent one night together before she left. Peeperkorn smiles when Hans says that women do not enjoy seeing their lovers get along. He declares himself and Hans "brothers" and offer to let Hans use informal pronouns with him.

In May, Pieter Peeperkorn hosts an excursion to a famous waterfall in the nearby Fluela Valley, with Hans Castorp, Settembrini, Naphta, Ferge, Wehsal, and Clavdia. Ferdinand Wehsal, riding in the same carriage with Hans, tells him that his love for Clavdia is a burning torment. Wehsal dreams of Clavdia every night, and each dream ends with her slapping him. The day is beautiful and they picnic near the waterfall, whose thundering catract drowns out speech. However, suddenly Peeperkorn, who has been drinking as usual, begins talking and gesturing in front of the crowd, though no one can hear him. The next day, Hans is summoned when Peeperkorn is found dead in his bed. Behrens shows Hans a clever hypodermic needle shaped like snake's fangs, with a spring mechanism, by which Peeperkorn has committed suicide with tropical poison. Hans gives Clavdia the kiss on the brow he had refused the first night with Peeperkorn.

Chapter 7, continued Analysis

Hans' interactions with Peeperkorn and Clavdia show how he has grown. He manages to become an intermediary between the two of them, and even to become a "brother" to the "personality" Peeperkorn. In fact, he may have outgrown Clavdia, whose pursuit of romantic adventure leaves her at a dead end when Peeperkorn dies.

Chapter 7, continued

Chapter 7, continued Summary

Clavdia departs for good, and Hans drifts into listlessness as the years stretch out. Behrens decides that Hans' persistent fever is due to a strep infection rather than tuberculosis, and orders new injections. The life of the Berghof rolls on, with new fads and distractions succeeding each other among the patients. Amateur photography, stamp collecting, a card game called "elevens," geometric figure drawing and the study of Esperanto all have their day. Patients obsessed with various fads and schemes often confide in Hans Castorp.

After some time, Hans is finally roused out of his stupor by a new phonograph in the social room. Hans becomes its custodian and listens for hours to symphonic and operatic records - especially Aida, Carmen and Gounoud's Faust, whose plots are similar to his own experiences with Clavdia. Hans knows that his immersion in music, especially music preoccupied with love and death, would be called backsliding by Settembrini, but he no longer cares.

New patient Ellen Brand, a nineteen-year-old Danish girl, shows an uncanny talent for parlor games at the social hour. She is always able to find hidden objects and carry out written-down complicated tasks without being told, because, she finally confesses, she is "told" by a spiritual companion named Holger. Ellen attracts the interest of Dr. Krokowski, whose bi-weekly lectures have increasingly moved toward paranormal phenomena. Under his prodding at regular sessions, it emerges that Ellen has always had paranormal experiences. The other patients decide to have a séance with Ellen behind Dr. Krokowski's back. When Ellen falls into a trance, the patients ask "Holger" questions. Holger makes puzzling references to room 34 - Hans' room- and Hans' X-ray of Clavdia mysteriously appears on his lap. For a while, Hans avoids Ellen Brand, even after he hears that Dr. Krokowski is now conducting approved séances with her and select patients.

However, when Hans hears that Holger can make dead people appear, he takes part in one more séance. Twelve patients form a chain of hands, with Hans sitting across from Ellen and holding her hands, to safeguard against fraud. When Ellen finally falls into a trance and speaks for "Holger," Hans asks to see Joachim Ziemssen. After hours during which Ellen writhes and struggles, nothing happens. Hans finally suggests that Faust be played on the gramophone. After more struggle, Joachim's ghost appears in the darkened room, wearing a uniform that looks strange to everyone, with what looks like a cooking pot on his head. Hans chokes and whispers, 'Forgive me!" When Dr. Krowskoski tells him to speak to Joachim, he stands up, turns on the light, and takes the key from Dr. Krokowski without a word.

Chapter 7, continued Analysis

Dr. Krokowski (who may represent Sigmund Freud) shows how a seeming man of science becomes ensnared by occultism that represents the world of death, leading the Berghof patients after him. The seance that summons Joachim represents, in comic parodic form, the dark energies in Europe that will bring forth the most destructive war in history.

Chapter 7, Conclusion

Chapter 7, Conclusion Summary

As the years wear on, the Berghof patients become increasingly tense and on edge, prone to quarreling. A female Russian patient engages in a public fight with a saleswoman in town, worsening her condition. A student with thick lips, a long-time patient, suddenly abuses the dwarf waitress and throws a tantrum. A new patient, an anti-Semite who regularly tells anti-Semitic stories, gets into an actual fistfight with a Jewish patient, during which Hans sees hair standing on end and frothing at the mouth, things he thought only existed in books. At the Good Russian table, a Polish officer challenges another patient to a duel over his wife - an affair that makes international news.

Settembrini's and Naphta's debates become more bitter and intense. Naphta's health is getting worse and he is frequently bedridden, but the effect is to make him more argumentative, excitable and aggressive. At a tavern in a nearby town after an excursion, Naphta offensively turns his back on Settembrini and monopolizes Hans Castorp for a wild monologue that turns into an attack on the notion of freedom. Finally, Settembrini, who has been getting more and more agitated, accuses Naphta of "unsettling wavering youth" and challenges him in terms that everyone there understands require a duel. Although Hans Castorp is distressed, Settembrini is determined to see it through. The seconds (Ferge and Wehsal) obtain pistols from Herr Albin, and Hans suggests as a location the meadow where he "plays king." When Settembrini fires into the air rather than at Naphta, Naphta puts his own gun to his head and commits suicide.

After seven years at the Berghof, Hans has let his beard grow. The outside world has seemingly forgotten about him, and even Berhens no longer pays much attention to him. Old Consul Tienappel has died. Hans no longer writes to anyone, and has even deserted his Maria Mancinis for a local cigar. His still visits Settembrini, whose duel with Naphta has worsened his health and forced him to bed much of the time.

Europe is drawing close to World War I, and events below finally penetrate the magic fog at the Berghof and cause many patients to leave in "wild" departures. Settembrini says farewell to Hans, who leaves to fight for his country, taking Joachim's place. The final scene has Hans Castorp leading a company of soldiers to take a hill amid hellish shellfire, singing songs at the top of his voice that no one can hear from the operas he used to listen to at the Berghof.

Chapter 7, Conclusion Analysis

The ending is deeply ironic on many levels. The Berghof has represented the illusions of Europe's educated class, much of which refused to see or recognize signs of the

oncoming war. Many of the book's symbolisms have ironic reversals. Thus, the Berghof is compared to the underworld of Greek mythology, while the "flatlands" was taken to represent normality and ordinary bourgeois life. However, which world was really the kingdom of death? Hans (and many other patients) have only been playing with death. Hans has grown and learned from his experiences with Clavdia and the debates between Settembrini and Naphta. Nevertheless, what has he done with all his spiritual and moral learning? Only succumbed to the general irrationality of World War I.

The fact that Settembrini is still alive, though poor and sick, does offer some faint hope for the future, implying that Western values, though gravely weakened, may yet survive. Like Peeperkorn at the waterfall, Hans sings although no one can hear him.

Characters

Hans Castorp

An "ordinary" young man from Hamburg who has been raised by relatives after both of his parents died when he was young. Hans has a modest regular income, a talent for mathematics, and a solid but unexciting career as a shipbuilder ahead of him when he visits his cousin Joachim at a Swiss tuberculosis sanatorium for a three-week stay. He tends to chatter and has a talent for drawing that he has never developed, although it was his detailed drawing of a ship that got him interested in shipbuilding. Hans is ready to settle into a respectable middle-class life when he visits his cousin Joachim at the Berghof sanatorium. He can work hard when he has to, but really prefers the good life - his Maria Mancini cigars, brown Kulmbach beer every morning, and long Sunday brunches. The strongest memories of Hans' young life are of his strict, conservative grandfather in his coffin, along with a painting of the grandfather in his civic uniform, which includes an old-fashioned "Spanish" ruff. Hans has a habit he inherited from grandfather, of burying his chin in his stiff collar to conceal a slight tremor of his head and neck that occurs when he is especially tired, feverish, or has drunk too much. Hans also has buried memories of a student, Pribislav Hippe, to whom he was strangely attracted in middle school and from whom he once borrowed a mechanical pencil. Hans once had to repeat a grade in school, and secretly enjoyed the feeling of being released from responsibility.

Hans Castorp represents one side of the German soul. He is a German Everyman of his time and place: hard working, conscientious, middle-class and ordinary on the outside, but full of deep secret longings and unexpected attractions and talents. Lodovico Settembrini calls him "life's problem child," but Hans is also ready to learn and be influenced, which is why Settembrini becomes his mentor. He is initially unreflective about himself, which makes him unintentionally funny when he chatters on and on. His initial timidity about Clavdia eventually develops into an ability to charge ahead - but on his own terms. Hans' innocence and naiveté conceal a shrewd, calculating, determined streak that increasingly comes to the fore.

Lodovico Settembrini

A poor but elegant Italian humanist and Berghof patient, Lodovico Settembrini always appears in the same frayed outfit of checked pants and gray coat with beaver collar, twirling a walking stick. The son and grandson of writers and activists, he is a scholar, Freemason and freelance writer who collaborates on international encyclopedias and projects for human betterment. Settembrini appoints himself Hans Castorp's mentor. He calls Hans "life's problem child" and lecturing him in graceful prose about the inevitability of progress and enlightenment. When it is clear his TB will not improve, Settembrini leaves the Berghof to lodge in the village below. Although Hans usually defers to him when they are together, he resents Settembrini's attempts to dissuade him from his love

for the "Asiatic" Clavdia. Settembrini's black eyes, handlebar mustache and elegant shabbiness secretly remind Hans of an organ grinder.

Settembrini is the book's strongest "Apollonian" character, associated with light, the sun, reason, proportion, measure and enlightenment. His key symbolic act is his turning on of Hans' ceiling light when Hans is dreaming in the dark about Clavdia Chauchat. Settembrini represents Europe's liberal-humanist tradition, which Mann loves and sees as important, even though it is perhaps slightly sick (as represented by Settembrini's illness) and threadbare (as represented by Settembrini's single outfit). The question of whether or not Hans will be guided by Settembrini is really the question of whether Germany will allow itself to be influenced by Western, European values, or whether it will "turn to the East." It's important to realize that Settembrini is not completely consistent. He gives glowing speeches about Western progress and enlightenment - and makes leering passes at village girls. He wittily mocks the foibles of the Berghof patients, but is obviously up on all the latest gossip about them, despite his pretenses of scholarly detachment. He argues passionately against such "medieval" concepts at the death penalty and torture - but goes through with a duel when pushed too far. His arguments sometimes contradict themselves, as he denounces war as destined to wither, but approves of the Italians' wars of liberation against Austria.

Clavdia Chauchat

Hans Castorp's love interest, from his very first weeks at the Berghof, is a Russian patient in her late twenties who has had several stays at the Berghof. Clavdia Chauchat sits at the so-called "Bad Russian" table in the dining hall, bangs shut the dining-room door so that she can "present" herself to the other patients, rolls her bread into little pills, and has bad posture and slit-like "Tartar" eyes. Her never-seen husband, a Russian civil servant, lives in Daghestan and supports her pilgrimages from one sanatorium to another. Several other patients are also attracted to her. She leaves the Berghof after she and Hans spend one night together, but returns in the company of Pieter Peeperkorn, an alcoholic and tubercular Dutch planter.

The reader doesn't learn much about Clavdia's personality except through the imperfect lens of Hans' obsession with her. As a representative of the "Dionysian" impulse to lose yourself in emotion, she is (intentionally) not very clearly defined as a character. Instead, she's a screen on which Hans projects his fantasies. Clavdia lives apart from her husband by choice and has had several affairs with other men. She tells Hans during a climactic encounter she believes in a life of spontaneous erotic adventure. Hans persistently identifies her with Pribislav Hippe, a student who fascinated him in middle school and about whom he similarly fantasized. This further establishes Clavdia's "Dionysian" character, since in Greek mythology Dionysius was somewhat androgynous (had attributes of both men and women). Yet Clavdia's seemingly glamorous impulses lead her in the end to be nursemaid to a sick, impotent but rich old man.

Leo Naphta

Settembrini's antagonist for the soul of Hans Castorp, Leo Naphta, does not appear until the middle of the novel. He lodges in the same building as Settembrini. After Settembrini leaves the Berghof, the two pass their time with endless, bitter philosophical debate. The son of a Jewish ritual butcher who grew up associating the sight of slaughtered animals with religion, Leo converts to Catholicism after his father dies. His brilliant mind attracts the attention of a Jesuit he encounters by chance. After a long period of Jesuit study, Naphta gets tuberculosis, which keeps him from ordination and sends him to the Alps to recover. Naphta is an unorthodox Jesuit (and Catholic) who mixes praise of the Middle Ages and the Church Fathers' contempt for the body with communistic and nihilist ideas about holy violence and the necessity of terror. Although the building he lodges in is poor, his own room is richly decorated in scarlet and purple silk hangings, and includes garish medieval art.

Joachim Ziemssen

Hans Castorp's cousin Joachim Ziemssen's only desire is to be a soldier in the "flatlands." Military and correct but gentle, with beautiful brown eyes, he is considered by the other Berghof patients to be the "best of the lot". He represents another part of the German soul - the part that loves duty, honor, patriotism and military glory. Joachim is attracted to fellow patient and table-mate Marusya, a young Russian girl with an orange-scented handkerchief who giggles a lot. But he never converses with her for fear she will distract him from his military career. After Joachim leaves for the flatlands in a "wild" departure without the Director's approval, he is forced to return and finally dies of his worsened disease, after allowing himself a single open conversation with Marusya. After his death, near the end of the novel, Joachim's "ghost" appears during a séance conducted by several patients with the approval of Dr. Krokowski, Dr. Behrens' assistant. In a portent of the approaching World War I, Joachim wears a field-gray uniform, which looks strange and alien to Hans and the other patients.

Hofrat Behrens

The Director of the International Sanatorium Bergof is tall, with goggle-eyes, a lop-sided smile under a trim moustache, and big hands that "row" the air as he walks. Competent, highly educated, and speaking many languages, Behrens keeps up a constant flow of amusing patter as he examines patients, and sometimes performs parlor tricks for them during social hours. Behrens is not the owner of the Berghof, only the Medical Director. He became Director after his own wife died from TB at the Berghof. Hans wonders whether or not Behrens has had a relationship with Clavdia Chauchat because he has painted her portrait. The question is never answered, and is left open for the reader. Settembrini often jokingly calls him "Rhadamanthus," the judge of the dead in Greek mythology.

Dr. Krokowski

Dr. Behren's assistant, Dr. Krokowski, is a short, stocky man with a beard and a hearty manner who conducts psychoanalysis sessions on the patients. He offers regular Sunday lectures on the relationship between love and death, one of the book's major themes. Hans Castorp begins to see him for psychoanalysis sessions after he falls in love with Clavdia Chauchat, sessions that he conceals from both Joachim and Settembrini.

Although he is a doctor and thus, supposedly, a man of science, Krokowski also represents of the Dionysian principle. His psychoanalytical studio is dark and dusky, in contrast to the brightly lit sanatorium. Under cover of being scientific, his lectures on love and death cater to the preoccupations of the Berghof patients with sex. Near the book's end, he presides over the séances of Elly Brand, a young Danish girl, at one of which Joachim's ghost appears.

The Narrator

The ironic, detached yet sympathetic narrator's voice is a major part of this novel, commenting on Hans' character and summarizing vast tracts of learning in medicine, philosophy and political science that Hans studies in his room, or that he absorbs while listening to Ludovico Settembrini and Leo Naphta. It is a playful, ironic voice, rather like Settembrini's, often proceeding by way of questions and droll commentaries. The narrator often says that his story is like a fairy tale. He summarizes Hans' reactions to the landscape, the other patients, and the distortions in the flow of time on the mountain. However, he also speaks in his own voice before returning to Hans. The narrator often repeats phrases associated with each character, very much like musical themes in opera or orchestral pieces. For instance, Settembrini is a homo humanus who believes in consecrating the citizen's pike on the altar of humanity; Dr. Behrens offer advice sine pecunia (without charge); Joachim is an upright soldier whom Settembrini calls "lieutenant"; Clavdia has "Tartar eyes" or "Kirghiz eyes"; and so on. By summarizing ideas for pages in his own narrator's voice, rather than that of his characters, Mann tries to lay the ideas behind them directly in front of his readers.

Frau Stohr

A tablemate of Hans and Joachim, Frau Stohr is a chronic patient and a manufacturer's wife. Ignorant, pretentious and gossipy, she knows all about the doings of the Berghof patients. Despite his superior attitude towards her, Hans learns much from her gossip.

The Tienappels

After his grandfather's death, Hans is raised by his great-uncle, Consul Tienappel, a widower and prosperous Hamburg businessman, and his two sons Peter and James.

Consul Tienappel represents the solid normality of the "flatlands," hence his saying that he requires a "sensible barometric pressure" and would never be caught in the Alps. When Hans prolongs his stay at the Berghof, his cousin James eventually visits to persuade Hans to return home, but is successfully driven off by the strange culture of the Berghof, and the changes he sees as Hans has adapted to it.

Pieter Peeperkorn

Clavdia Chauchat returns to the Berghof as the "traveling companion" of Pieter Peeperkorn. Peeperkorn is a rich, alcoholic Dutch planter from Indonesia who suffers from a chronic tropical fever that flares up every four days. With his massive, "royal"-looking head surrounded by a halo of white hair and his free-spending ways, Peeperkorn mesmerizes the patients of the Berghof. He leads and sponsors a series of revels at which he usually becomes drunk. His oracular speech rarely consists of complete sentences, but the patients hand adoringly on his words. His drunken rants hint at sexual impotence. Peeperkorn and Hans have a frank discussion about Clavdia, during which they agree to become allies, knowing their friendship will annoy and irritate Clavdia. Peeperkorn commits suicide with a cleverly designed syringe that looks like snake's fangs.

Objects/Places

Maria Mancini Cigars

Hans Castorp's favorite brand, from Hamburg. They lose their taste during Hans' first weeks at the Berghof, part of his detachment from his ordinary Hamburg routines and pleasures.

Thermometer

Hans buys a thermometer from the head nurse. Every Berghof patient takes and records his or her temperature daily. Behrens jokingly call them "glass cigars".

X-ray Plates

Hans and Clavdia Chauchat exchange their X-ray plates as love tokens after they spend the night on Walpurgis-Night (Mardi Gras night).

Lounge Chair

Hans delights in his folding lounge chair in which he takes his outdoor rest cure on the balcony of his room, and spend hours dreaming about Clavdia.

Meadow

Hans finds an alpine meadow with blue flowers where he "plays king" (thinks) for hours. He suggests the meadow as the site for Naphta's and Settembrini's duel.

Polyhymnia

The name of the gramaphone (record player) that Hans Castorp becomes obsessed with during his last years at the Berghof. Also the name of the Greek Muse of Music.

International Sanatorium Berghof

The Swiss tuberculosis resort where Hans Castorp spend seven years after intending to spend just three weeks visiting his cousin.

Davos

The town just below the Berghof, Davos is also an international ski resort.

Hans' Fur-lined Sleeping Bag

Hans buys a fur-lined sleeping bag even before he is diagnosed, leading Settembrini to tease that he is becoming too used to the life at the Berghof.

Mechanical Pencil

Hans borrows a mechanical pencil from Clavdia Chauchat on Walpurgis Night, just as he did from Pribislav Hippe in middle school. He conflates Clavdia with Pribislav often in conversation with her.

Berghof's Dining Hall

The dining hall of the Berghof serves five sumptuous meals a day, which the patients eat heartily, their appetites increased by the mountain air and their illness.

Snake Syringe

Pieter Peeperkorn commits suicide with an ingenious syringe designed like a snake's head, with two needles like fangs. An expert on tropical poisons, Peeperkorn has loaded it with strychnine.

Herr Albin's Pistols

During his first week, Hans overhears Herr Albin showing his pistol to female patients and threatening to commit suicide if his condition does not improve. Herr Albin later provides the pistols for the duel between Settembrini and Naphta near the end of the book.

Clavdia's Portrait

Dr. Behrens has painted a portrait of Clavdia, leading Hans Castorp to wonder about his relationship with her. When he visits Dr. Behrens' apartment, he overpraises the portrait and drags it around with him.

Settembrini's Cane

Lodovico Settembrini always appears with a cane that he twirls; it is part of his elegant manner, even though he wears the same outfit everywhere.

Naphta's Apartment

Although the cottage he lodges in is small and plain, Leo Naphta's rooms are richly furnished in red and purple brocades and silks, and furnished with medieval works of art. Hans calls it his "silken cell."

The Waterfall

Pieter Peeperkorn hosts a picnic at a famous waterfall in a nearby valley, where he orates to the guests even though the thundering falls drown out all sound.

Dr. Krokowski's Analytical Den

Dr. Kroskowski donducts psychoanalysis on the Berghof patients - mostly the owmen, but also on Hans Castorp, who hides his visits from both Joachim and Settembrini. Dr. Krokowski's den is dark and murky, in contrast to the other brightly-lit Berghof rooms.

The Lake in Holstein

Hans remembers a boat ride on a lake in Holstein during sunset, when one side of the horizon looked like day and the other side looked like night. The two horizons represent Settembrini's grandfather vs. his own, and also the two main forces of the book, Apollo and Dionysios.

Social Sensitivity

During the years of World War I, Mann had come to the defense of what he perceived to be Germany's aristocratic, conservative, and romantic culture. Faced with the catastrophic outcome of the war and his nation's uncertain steps towards a democratic way of life, Mann quickly realized that Germany had to broaden its cultural base if it wanted to make a future for itself.

In a highly symbolic fashion, The Magic Mountain gives clear evidence of Mann's efforts to evaluate and mediate value conflicts without which neither artist nor society would be able to make a productive break with their stifling past. That no social consequences are drawn has in part to do with Mann's decision to locate his story in the years immediately preceding World War I.

Techniques

In order to make the education of his hero a realistic and demanding endeavor, Mann includes a welter of facts and fictions from the intellectual discourse of his time. Verbal duels of great intricacy are conducted over the span of many pages; scientific digressions assume the length of independent studies. The author succeeds almost always in containing these often amorphous pursuits by placing them into a tightly circumscribed locale and by distributing them among a small number of carefully studied players.

That the readers do not lose themselves in the garrulous display of intellectual bravado has also been vouchsafed by Mann's ironic style which invites them to view his firework of ideas from a healthy distance. As Castorp's education proceeds, he, too, begins to discriminate, dismiss, and even doubt the wisdom of an exclusively cerebral approach to life. The result is, of course, one of the most ironic twists of the novel in that it helps its hero to break away from the magic spell so diligently woven.

Themes

Dionysios vs. Apollo

In his immensely influential book The Birth of Tragedy, published in German in 1872, philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche interpreted ancient Greek culture in terms of a conflict between two fundamental forces. One he named Apollonian after Apollo, the Greek god of harmony, proportion, reason, architecture, the sun, and the Dorian mode in Greek music (corresponding to major chords in modern European music). The other force he called Dionysian, after Dionysios, the god of wine, uncontrolled emotion, night, drunkenness, divine madness, ecstasy, loss of self, and the Mixolydian mode in Greek music (corresponding to minor chords in European music). The conflict between these two forces is the major theme of The Magic Mountain.

Mann represents the Apollo-Dionysios conflict in many pairings. The bright, cheerful, white-enameled Berghof rooms contrast with Krokowski's analytical "den," where Hans notes that "murky twilight, deep dusk, reigned". Dr. Behrens takes scientific X-rays of patients - but also paints amateur portraits in his rooms, including one of Clavdia in a diaphanous gown that leaves Hans unclear how much she is really wearing and what their relationship really was. Hans' attraction to the "Asiatic" Clavdia Chauchat causes concern to Settembrini, who believes he stands for Western "light" against Asian "darkness." Hans himself, with his secret love of indolence and dreams, is a potential Dionysios to the Apollonian Joachim, who strictly observes his rest-cure and all schedules of the Berghof so he can fulfill his duty as an officer.

Most important, Settembrini and Naphta represent Apollo and Dionysius, battling for Hans Castorp's German soul. Settembrini is somewhat threadbare and comical at times. However, Hans associates him with blinding light, from the day when Settembrini suddenly turns on the light in Hans' room when he is dreaming in the dark about Clavdia.

Hans Castorp's attraction to Clavdia Chauchat has both Apollonian and Dionysian aspects. On the one hand, his love for her leads him to study medicine, botany and astronomy - Apollonian activities. On the other hand, he identifies his love for her with illness, laziness and dreaming. Clavdia herself says that morality consists in losing yourself in sin and danger - the Dionysian attitude.

Mann plays with this contrast as much as he illuminates it. He even has Settembrini say that irony itself has two faces: "When [irony] is not employed as an honest device of classical rhetoric...it becomes a source of depravity, a barrier to civilization, and a squalid flirtation with inertia, nihilism and vice."

In his climactic vision of the classic landscape when he is delirious on the snowstorm, Hans himself (probably speaking for Mann here) says that man himself is larger than any such polarities or dualities.

Coming of Age

The Magic Mountain is one of the most important examples of a genre that German writers invented - the bildungsroman, which means a novel about the moral and spiritual education (in the widest sense, not just in school) and coming of age of a young man. Hans' Castorp's experiences at the Berghof lead him into paths and activities that he would never have contemplated if he had stayed in the "flatlands" and followed the safe life laid out for him. He awakens spiritually, and becomes aware of the great conflicting streams in Western culture: the conflict between the Apollonian virtues of work, reason, harmony, proportion and light, versus the Dionysian delights of self-surrender to passion, carelessness, leisure, and dreaming. He also learns that real spiritual "becoming" is as much a matter of suffering as of doing.

The Nature of Time and the Meaning of Work and Leisure

This is a major theme of the novel, returned to again and again by narrator, speaking either in his own omniscient voice, or summarizing Hans Castorp's musings as he studies and investigates different subjects and his own experiences and emotions.

One way Mann plays with time is by devoting many long chapters to short periods of time, such as the first three weeks Hans spends at the Berghof, while speeding over his last few years in a few chapters. Another is by assigning regular, repeated phrases to characters and situations, very much as characters have musical phrases or themes in operas or symphonies. The repetitions are meant to mimic the regularities in Hans Castorp's schedule, as he takes his regular rest-cures, eats his five daily meals in the Berghof's dining hall, walks in the hills or down to Davos—and listens to Settembrini or later, Settembrini and Naphta debate. The "enchanted" nature of Hans' stay at the Berghof also stands for the whole period before World War I, which, as Mann well knew, represents for his readers in 1927 a magical lost world that can never return.

The meaning of work and leisure are intimately tied up in the narrator's speculations about time. Hans Castorp has a secret, hidden love of leisure, dreaming and idleness. When he was forced to stay behind for a couple of terms in middle school, he secretly liked the feeling of no longer having obligations. However, is it really a pull towards disreputable forces of dissolution and death, as Settembrini says? In the hardworking, earnest German Protestant culture Hans comes from, leisure and dreaming are suspect. Does "work" mean the dull, moneymaking activities of Hans' hometown - trade, shipbuilding, and so on? Is Hans fleeing the world of work for a world of idleness and laziness, as Settembrini says? Or do Hans' experiences actually inspire him to new kinds of work, the study of medicine, astronomy, botany, and music that are his real education? Is educating oneself active or passive - or a mixture of both? What about the place of suffering in education? (An important theme in Nietzsche.) For the Greeks and Romans, and the monks of medieval Europe, leisure rather than work was the highest state, the realm of contemplation of God, learning and culture.

Fairy Tales and Myths

Mann often compares his story to a fairy tale and makes references to Grimms' tales. The title itself is the name of a famous fairy tale. When he is on bed rest, Hans eats his meals "like the tailor's son who dined from a magic table." The Berghof meals are described using phrases from fairy-tales - "the roast and the baked and the sweet and the strong appeared five times a day." The theme of time itself connects to another well-known fairy tale in which a man spends what he thinks is a few days in a monastery during travels, only to find when he leaves that he has been there seven years. (This same tale was the inspiration for Washington Irving's Rip Van Winkle story.)

The many references to Greek and Roman mythology made by Settembrini illuminate the relationships among the characters. For instance, he regularly refers to Behrens and Krokowski as Minos and Rhadamanthus, judges of the dead. Hans Castorp's key vision during a snowstorm contrasts Apollonian images of a beautiful and harmonious Mediterranean landscape from classical mythology with dark Dionysian underpinnings of two old hags dismembering and devouring a child, a fairy-tale image very reminiscent of stories like the gingerbread house. Each of these images invites ironic reversals.

Love and Death

This theme appears in many different ways, both openly as in Dr. Kroskowski's lectures, and in more subtle ways. Hans' fascination with Clavdia is unhealthy from the very beginning - quite literally, since it coincides with the illness that keeps him at the Berghof, and may be the indirect cause of it. Hans himself will claim that his love for Clavdia causes his illness during the key Walpurgis Night encounter with her. During his medical studies, Hans constantly seeks the connection between death and the processes of life. His first meeting with Clavdia Chauchat comes in the waiting room the Dr. Behrens' X-ray room, where he views Joachim's ex-ray with "reverence and terror" and remembers a distant member of his family who was said to have the clairvoyance of seeing those about to die as skeletons. The Berghof patients themselves see their illness as a license to engage in frivolous or desperate love affairs of a kind many would not allow themselves in the flatlands. Clavdia herself is no different in that respect.

Hans connects his feelings of devotion to his grandfather with a reverence for death, leading him to see something holy in sickness and to be somewhat receptive to Leo Naphta's quasi-medieval exalting of sickness, death and terror. The contest between Settembrini and Naphta finally results in a duel, near the book's end. When Settembrini shoots into the air and waits for the bullet, Naphta kills himself instead with a shot to the temple. His suicide prefigures the suicidal ideologies that will soon destroy European civilization.

Significant Topics

At the height of the novel, its young hero has a dream whose meaning he summarizes in one sentence, the only sentence Mann deigned worthy of being italicized: "For the sake of goodness and love, man shall let death have no sovereignty over his thoughts." The novel studies the process by which its leading character progresses from his initial attraction to the irrationalities of disease and death to a renewed trust in life, love, and human responsibility.

With the help of some very curious pedagogues, the hero learns to find his way ever more skillfully among a host of conflicting and, in their one-sidedness, always alluring but always destructive ideological alternatives. When the outbreak of the war brings to an end these baffling trial runs, he is finally ready to join the real fight on the side of those whose love of life promises the only hope for a civilized and happy society.

Style

Point of View

The narration is third-person and objective rather than omniscient. The narrator has access to Hans Castorp's interior thoughts, but not those of the other characters, which are presented only as Hans learns about them or sees them. Even though the narrator often summarizes Hans' thoughts and experiences, and may seem omniscient, he only presents facts and thoughts that Hans has learned. However, the narrator often comments on Han's thoughts and reactions in his own ironic voice, putting the reader at an amused, detached distance from the innocent and naïve Hans.

Dialogue is very important, and many pages present only dialogue, whether of Settembrini and Naphta debating, or Hans debating within himself. The key encounter between Hans Castorp and Clavdia Chauchat on Walpurgis Night, for example, is presented almost completely in dialogue, with almost no description. The same is true of many of the debates between Naphta and Settembrini. Sometimes the dialogue is directly quoted, but often it is paraphrased or summarized by the narrator without quotation marks.

Setting

The novel is set in the Berghof International Sanatorium just above the Swiss town of Davos-Platz. It is modeled on an actual sanatorium where Mann visited his wife while she recovered from tuberculosis. Important locations include Hans' room and balcony where he takes the outdoor rest-cure and spends hours thinking and dreaming of Clavdia while gazing at the Alps, or studying medicine or botany. The dining hall, where patients eat five meals a day, is another important setting. Hans finally approaches Clavdia during Walpurgis Night (Mardi Gras) in the sanatorium's social room, which contains various optical devices and where parties are held on special occasions. Pieter Peeperkorn also throws his parties there.

The nearby mountain path contains a bench where the cousins and Settembrini often talk. In one meadow with blue flowers, Hans likes to "play king" alone - his term for thinking at length.

In the town of Davos, patients walk during the day, and often sneak away at night for amusements and love affairs with fellow-patients. Dr. Krokowski's analytical study, where Hans secretly undergoes analysis, is dark and murky. Settembrini's apartment is bare, furnished only by a few sticks of furniture and his humanistic books and journals. Naphta's apartment in the same building, however, is richly furnished with brocaded fabrics and upholstered chairs. Sometimes the patients take carriage rides to nearby towns or local sights, such as the famous waterfall near which Pieter Peeperkorn hosts a picnic.

An important setting is the mountain on which Hans becomes disoriented during a blinding snowstorm. As he weakens, he hallucinates a classical Mediterranean landscape, with beautiful young men and women in robes practicing archery and riding horseback. However, behind temple walls, two hideous hags devour a human baby. This vision is the ultimate representation of the forces of life and death, Apollo and Dionysios, whose conflict fuels culture.

The changeable mountain weather, where you can experience all four seasons in any order, is part of the derangement of time that Hans Castorp and the other patients suffer in their "enchanted" mountain. Settembrini compares the sanatorium to the land of the dead in Greek mythology. It is an arena where the forces of life and death battle openly, not obscured by the rhythms of regular life in the "flatlands."

The most important setting of Hans' childhood is his grandfather's house, with its old-fashioned furnishings, silver baptismal bowl, and stern painting of his grandfather in his ruff-collared costume.

Language and Meaning

The narrator's tone is usually droll, amused, witty and detached, much like Lodovico Settembrini's, in fact, although without Settembrini's lapses into temper or melancholy. While displaying a great deal of sympathy for Hans Castorp, the narrator often teases him. But at times, especially during his vision, Hans speaks directly for the narrator. The pages in which the narrator muses about time, or summarizes Hans Castorp's medical, astronomical, or botanical learning, are often lyrical and rapturous.

Another technique of narrative control is the slowing down or speeding up of time. The narrator can spend pages on a single encounter that takes a few minutes, or chapters on the events of a few days, while skipping over months or years with minimal comments or short summaries.

Each character has certain catch-phrases associated with him or her, very much like musical signatures in an opera. For example, Settembrini is described as a homo humanus; his grandfather "consecrated the citizen's pike on the altar of humanity"; Settembrini uses (about Hans) the phrase "placet experiri" (it pleases to experiment); he calls Behrens and Krokowski "Minos and Rhadamanthus," and so on. In addition, Hans repeats certain expressions to himself that he picks up from Joachim, Settembrini, Dr. Behrens, other patients, or his studying, such as "getting used to not getting used to" the Berghof and its routines, the idea that the mountain air is "not only good against disease, but good for disease," and so on. Dr. Behrens also has a line of patter with stock phrases he regularly repeats, telling patients that after all, the Berghof is no Siberian salt-mine, that certain patients have a "talent for sickness," and so on.

Structure

The book is written in seven "chapters", most of which are really long sections, divided into named sub-chapters. The titles of the sub-sections are often droll or ironic comments on the events, or on Hans Castorp's interpretations of them. Each chapter ends with an important hinge point in the plot. The first chapter ends with Hans' arrival and first day at the Berghof. The second tells the "back story" of his childhood and the important influences on it. These include the early deaths of both his parents, his adoption by his Grandfather Castorp, that old man's death, and Hans' final adoption by his uncle Great-Uncle Consul Tienappel and his family. Chapter Three ends after two major characters, Settembrini and Clavdia, have been introduced, along with the major themes associated with Settembrini. Chapter Four ends with Hans becoming admitted as a permanent patient at the Berghof. Chapter Five ends with his climactic encounter with Clavdia during Mardi Gras Night (Walpurgis Night), almost a year after Hans is admitted as a patient. Chapter 6 ends with Joachim's death, and Chapter Seven ends with Hans joining the German army in World War I. In other words, each chapter ends with a hinge event that marks an important change in Hans Castorp's characters or situation.

Quotes

The Magic Mountain,Page 79: "[Hans] tried . . .imagining how it must be when one is finally free of all the pressure honor brings and once can endlessly enjoy the unbounded advantages of disgrace - and the young man was terrified by a sense of dissolute sweetness that set his heart pounding even faster for a while."

The Magic Mountain, page 111 (Settembrini): "Music...there is something only semi-articulate about it, something dubious, irresponsible, indifferent. ... Music, it would appear, is movement for its own sake—although I suspect it of quietism. Let me overstate my case: my distaste for music is political."

The Magic Mountain, page 157 (Narrator): "What a piece of work is man, and how easily conscience betrays him. He listens to the voice of duty - and what he hears is the license of passion. And out of a sense of duty to be fair and balanced, Hans Castorp listened to Herr Settembrini. With the best of intentions he tested the man's views on reason, the world republic, and beautiful style - and was prepared to be influenced by them. And each time, he found it all the more permissible afterward to let his thoughts and dreams fun free in another direction, in the opposite direction. To put our suspicion and true understanding of the matter into words—he had probably listened to Herr Settembrini for one purpose only: to be given carte blanche by his conscience, a license it had been unwilling to grant him at first. And what or who stood on the opposing side of patriotism, the dignity of man, and beautiful literature—the side toward which Hans Castorp believed he should direct his thoughts and deeds? There stood . . . Clavdia Chauchat—listless, worm-eaten, Kirghiz-eyed ..."

The Magic Mountain, page 180 (Narrator): "...both good order and the laws of narrative require that our experience of time should seem long or short, should expand or shrink, in the same way it does for the hero of our story, for young Hans Castorp, who quite unexpectedly has found himself impounded by fate."

The Magic Mountain, page 180 (Settembrini): "Death is to be honored as the cradle of life, the womb of renewal. Once separated from life, it becomes grotesque, a wraith—or even worse. For as an independent spiritual power, death is a very depraved force, whose wicked attractions are very strong and without doubt can cause the most abominable confusion of the human mind."

The Magic Mountain, page 226 (Narrator): "We have as much right as anyone to private thoughts about the story unfolding here, and we would like to suggest that Hans Castorp would not have stayed with the people up here even this long beyond his originally planned date of departure, if only some sort of satisfactory answer about the meaning and purpose of life had been supplied to his prosaic soul from out of the depths of time."

The Magic Mountain, page 239: (Settembrini:) "A great deal of Asia hangs in the air here. It is not for nothing that the place teems with Mongolian Muscovites—people like

these. Do not model yourself on them, do not let them infect you with their ideas, but instead compare your own nature, your higher nature to theirs, and as a son of the West, of the divine West, hold sacred those things that by both nature and heritage are sacred to you. Time, for instance. This liberality, this barbaric extravagance in the use of time is the Asian style—that may be why the children of the East fee so at home here."

The Magic Mountain, page 247: (Settembrini:) "It is no different with the body. One must respect and defend it, when it serves the cause of emancipation and beauty, of freedom of the senses, or happiness and desire. One must despise it insofar as it is the principle of gravity and inertia opposing the flow toward the light, insofar as it represents the principle of disease and death, insofar as its quintessence is a matter of perversity, or corruption, of lust and disgrace."

The Magic Mountain, page 334: (Clavdia): "Morality? It interests you, does it? All right—it seems to us that one ought not to search for morality in virtue, which is to say in reason, in discipline, in good behavior, in respectability—but in just the opposite, I would say: in sin, in abandoning oneself to danger, to whatever can harm us, destroy us. It seems to us that it is more moral to lose oneself and let oneself be ruined than to save oneself. The great moralists have never been especially virtuous, but rather adventurers in evil, in vice, great sinners who teach us as Christians how to stoop to misery."

The Magic Mountain, page 393 (Naphta): " 'All institutions dedicated to genuine education have always known that there can be only one central truth in any pedagogy, and that is: absolute authority and an ironclad bond—discipline and sacrifice, renunciation of the ego and coercion of the personality. It is ultimately a cruel misunderstanding of youth to believe it will find its heart's desire in freedom. Its deepest desire is to obey.'
Joachim sat up straight. Hans Castorp blushed. Herr Settembrini twirled his handsome moustache excitedly.
'No!' Naphta continued. 'The mystery and precept of our age is not liberation and development of the ego. What our age needs, what it demands, what it will create for itself, is—terror.' "

The Magic Mountain, page 396 (Naphta): "In the modern confrontation with bourgeois-capitalist rot, the world's proletariat embodies the humanity and criteria of the City of God."

The Magic Mountain, page 485 (Hans): "We don't form our dreams out of just our own souls. We dream anonymously and communally, though each in his own way. The great soul, of which we are just a little piece, dreams through us so to speak, dreams in our many different ways its own eternal, secret dream—about its youth, its hope, its joy, its peace, and its bloody feast."

The Magic Mountain, page 485 (Hans): "Death or life—illness or health—spirit or nature. Are those really contradictions? I ask you: Are those problems? No, they are not problems, and the question of their nobility is not a problem either. Death kicks over its

traces in the midst of life, and this would not be life if it did not, and in the middle is where the homo Dei's state is found—in the middle between kicking over the traces and reason—just as his condition is somewhere between mystical community and windy individualism. I can see all that from my column here. And in that state let him commune with himself, find, gallant, genial, and respectful—for he alone is noble, and not that set of contradictions. Man is the master of contradictions, they occur through him, an so he is more noble than they. More noble than death, too noble for it—that is the freedom of his mind. More noble than life, too noble for it—that is the devotion of his heart."

The Magic Mountain, page 507 (Settembrini): "Decisions must be made—decisions of incalculable significance for the future happiness of Europe, and your country will have to make them, they must come to fruition within its soul. Positioned between East and West, it will have to choose, will have consciously to decide, once and for all, between the two spheres vying for its heart."

The Magic Mountain, page 522 (Narrator): "In fact, our dying is more a concern to those who survive us than to ourselves; for as a wise man once cleverly put it, as long as we are, death is not, and when death is, we are not; and even if we are unfamiliar with that adage, it retains its psychological validity. There is no real relationship between us and death; it is something that does not apply to us at all, but at best to nature and the world at large—which is why all creatures can contemplate it with composure, indifference, irresponsibility, and egoistic innocence."

The Magic Mountain, page 532 (Narrator): "Narrative...has two kinds of time: first, its own real time, which like musical time defines its movement and presentation; and second, the time of its contents, which has a perspective quality that can vary widely, from a story in which the narrat5ive' imaginary time is almost, or indeed totally coincident with its musical time, to one in which it stretches out over light-years. A musical piece entitled "Five-Minute Waltz" last five minutes—this and only this defines its relationship to time. A story whose contents involved a time span of five minutes, however, could, by means of an extraordinary scrupulosity in filling up those five minutes, last a thousand times as long—and still remain short on boredom, although in its relationship to imaginary time it would be very long in the telling."

Topics for Discussion

Does Hans' love for Clavdia lead him to idleness and dissipation, as Settembrini suggests? Or is it a positive force for self-knowledge and growth? Or both? Explain and give examples.

In what ways do Hans and Joachim represent Germany? Why do Settembrini and Naphta choose Hans, rather than Joachim, as the object of their pedagogical rivalry?

What do Settembrini and Naphta represent? What is the meaning of Settembrini's threadbare outfit? How is it that Naphta can be both a Jesuit and a communist?

Why does Hans stay at the Berghof after Clavdia departs for the second time? Have there been any hints or foreshadowings about what has happened to him?

Compare the suicides of Peeperkorn and Naphta. What does Peeperkorn represent? What is the meaning of his strongly implied sexual impotence?

What connections does Mann establish between narrative and musical time? As we become immersed in the novel, are we, the readers, becoming like Hans when he loses himself in his phonograph records?

Does Joachim's ghost really appear at Ellen Brand's séance? Can the reader tell one way or another? Is it important to know whether the ghost is real or not?

What values are most important to Clavdia Chauchat? How do we know?

What events in Hans' childhood make him susceptible to the Berghof's influences? What is the meaning of his parents' death for the novel?

What does Hans' delirious vision in the snow mean? What does Hans conclude about the conflicts between Settembrini and Naphta? Explain how the vision expresses the novel's main themes. In particular, does it resolve the conflict between Dionysian and Apollonian values? If so, how? If not, why not?

Literary Precedents

As with all of Mann's mature works, it seems more profitable to discuss literary traditions than literary precedents in the elucidation of the novel's imaginative context.

The title itself is clearly meant to suggest the world of fairy tales. The hermetically sealed environment of the sanatorium and the enchantment which regularly befalls all who enter its precincts hint at a realm of different dimensions. And yet this realm is described by a realist who does not rest until the surroundings are recognizable as those of the Swiss resort of Davos.

By the nature of its theme, The Magic Mountain can also lay claim to the peculiarly German tradition of the educational novel, the bildungsroman, of which Goethe's Wilhelm Meister Apprenticeship (1795-1796) remains the classic example. The way in which ideological combat dominates the scene, on the other hand, reminds one of the novel of ideas, which in Mann reached new heights of erudition and for whose argumentativeness he seems particularly indebted to the novels of Feodor Dostoevski.

Hermann Hesse's The Glass Bead Game (1943) and Hermann Broch's The Sleepwalkers (1931-1932), to name only two of the most distinguished examples, testify to the eminence which the polyphonic novel of ideas achieved in German speaking literature during the first half of the twentieth century.

Related Titles

Mann broadened the intellectual sweep of The Magic Mountain even further by introducing vast masses of historical and anthropological material into his monumental novel Joseph and His Brothers (1934-1944). Here, too, elements of legend combine with a sheer overwhelmingly detailed realism, ingredients which also characterize his third novel of ideas, Doctor Faustus (1948).

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Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults

Editor - Kirk H. Beetz, Ph.D.

Library of Congress
Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Beacham's Guide to Literature for Young Adults
Includes bibliographical references.
Summary: A multi-volume compilation of analytical essays on and study activities for fiction, nonfiction, and biographies written for young adults.
Includes a short biography for the author of each analyzed work.
1. Young adults□Books and reading. 2.Young adult literature□History and criticism. 3. Young adult literature□Bio-bibliography. 4. Biography□Bio-bibliography.
[1. Literature□History and criticism. 2. Literature□Bio-bibliography]
I. Beetz, Kirk H., 1952
Z1037.A1G85 1994 028.1'62 94-18048ISBN 0-933833-32-6

Printed in the United States of America First Printing, November 1994