

Buddenbrooks: The Decline of a Family

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A Major Literary Event: a brilliant new translation of Thomas Mann's first great novel, one of the two for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in literature in 1929.

Buddenbrooks, first published in Germany in 1900, when Mann was only twenty-five, has become a classic of modern literature -- the story of four generations of a wealthy bourgeois family in northern Germany. With consummate skill, Mann draws a rounded picture of middle-class life: births and christenings; marriages, divorces, and deaths; successes and failures. These commonplace occurrences, intrinsically the same, vary slightly as they recur in each succeeding generation. Yet as the Buddenbrooks family eventually succumbs to the seductions of modernity -- seductions that are at variance with its own traditions -- its downfall becomes certain.

In immensity of scope, richness of detail, and fullness of humanity, Buddenbrooks surpasses all other modern family chronicles; it has, indeed, proved a model for most of them. Judged as the greatest of Mann's novels by some critics, it is ranked as among the greatest by all. Thomas Mann was awarded the Nobel Prize for literature in 1929.

"A remarkable achievement.... In Mr. Woods's sparkling new translation, the reader now encounters a work that is closer in style, vocabulary, idiom and tone to the original." --The New York Times Book Review

First published in 1900, when Thomas Mann was twenty-five, Buddenbrooks is a minutely imagined chronicle of four generations of a North German mercantile family--a work so true to life that it scandalized the author's former neighbors in his native Lübeck. As he charts the Buddenbrooks' decline from prosperity to bankruptcy, from moral and psychic soundness to sickly piety, artistic decadence, and madness, Mann ushers the reader into a world of rich vitality, pieced together from births and funerals, weddings and divorces, recipes, gossip, and earthy humor.

Now Mann's triumph of realism is available in its first new English version in seventy years. With perfect fidelity, John E. Woods gives us a Buddenbrooks that is rich in dialect and varied in tone, exuberant in its wordplay and unfettered in its comedy. He has restored a classic to its origins and put blood back in its veins.

"A cause for rejoicing." --Library Journal

"Wonderfully fresh and elegant ... bound to become the definitive English version ... essential reading for anybody who wishes to enter Mann's fictional universe." --Los Angeles Times

John E. Woods is the distinguished translator of many books -- most notably Arno Schmidt's *Evening Edged in Gold*, for which he won both the American Book Award for translation and the PEN Translation Prize; Patrick Suskind's *Perfume*, for which he again won the PEN Translation Prize in 1987; Mr. Suskind's *The Pigeon* and *Mr. Summer's Story*; Doris Dorrie's *Love, Pain, and the Whole Damn Thing* and *What Do You Want from Me?*; and Libuse Monikova's *The Facade*. Mr. Woods lives in San Diego and is currently at work on a translation of Thomas Mann's *The Magic Mountain*.

Other Books

Literary Anthropology, The traditional gulf between the theory and practice of literature

and the various areas subjoined under anthropology has hindered the development of some very fruitful perspectives in the realm of poetics and the general theory of literature (particularly in its narrative forms). Poyatos' initial idea of literary anthropology as the study of people and their cultural manifestations through their national literatures - without doubt the richest source of documentation of human life-styles and the most advanced form of our projection in time and space and of communicating with contemporary and future generations - has been enriched by the thoughts of a multi-cultural group of scholars from both anthropology and literature who at a first symposium on the subject attempted to define this area leaving the way open to many more research possibilities.

⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ ⌘ . Though starting with the founder of the family business in the year 1790, in the novel *Johann Buddenbrook* , the following ... Moreover, Mann's intention in writing *Buddenbrooks* was to record the decline of this family through time. ..."