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**Binary Construction of Characters in *Death in Venice*:
Aschenbach and the Anonymous Crowds.**

Thomas Mann's *Death in Venice* is an intensely lyrical and aesthetic stream – of – consciousness about Aschenbach who desperately loves a young and handsome boy in his trip to recuperate in Venice and ends up in death. In the novel, there is only one character with name, that is Aschenbach who is also the narrator of the work, where the plot of the novel develops fully in his consciousness. Other characters are the anonymous and the crowds who are nameless and always neglected in the readers' expectation and researchers' consideration. Yet, all the characters in the novel are carefully designed for something like all the props on the stage. As a result, this paper tries to decode the character construction in the novel to reveal Thomas Mann's writing techniques. It is found that the novel adopts a binary construction of the characters with and without names and shapes a sharp contrast between Aschenbach and the other characters in the following dimensions such as the solid – character and the illusory – character, the major character and the minor character, and the whole character and the part character. From the three dimensions, the sharp contrast reveal that solid – major – whole character is the character with name who is the protagonist of the novel. His character construction follows a solid – major – whole description, which means that the reader can obtain his full information to stand in his shoes to understand his feeling and his emotion, the extreme form can make the reader be the character in the novel. While the anonymous and the crowds are written in an illusory – minor – part way and they appear or disappear when it is necessary. They have no names and always are greeted as the boatman, the manager, the waiter, etc. They are in the opposite of the solid – major – whole construction and the reader can skip them in reading. But they exist to function the plot development and the character completeness, which is a superb symbol of the author as a writer.