The use of reference materials is not permitted during this exam. This includes dictionaries, smartphones, or other electronic devices.

The exam has two parts worth 50% each, for a total of 100% of the final grade. Please answer in essay form. Also, answer the questions as they are asked even if this means taking a position with which you personally disagree. Grades will be based on the coherence and force of your arguments.

Part One
Who is the girl referred to in the first and last lines of the following poem? What point does she help the author make about the kind of politics described in the epigram? (Please note that the author of the poem is not Thomas Mann, who is cited in the epigram.) Be sure to base your answer on a close reading of the poem, not what you believe personally about the subject.

Politics
‘Today our destinies present their meanings
in political terms’ - Thomas Mann

How can I, with that girl standing there,
My attention fix
On sexual or on Chinese
Or on environmental politics?
Yet here’s a traveler who knows
What she talks about;
And there’s a politician
Who has read and thought,
And maybe what he says is true
Of economy and war;
And everywhere are critics
Who with cool passion
Plead justice for those wronged.
But O that I were young again
And held her in my arms!

Part Two
What criticisms that can be made of the poem’s position on politics determined in your answer to Part One? What counter-arguments can be made in support of the author?