

**Hemingway's fictional self in *A Moveable Feast***

**ENG4907 (12E) HONOURS PROJECT II**

**Course code:** ENG4907

**Group code:** 12E

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**Date Submitted:** 10/05/2019

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### Introduction

One of the most important modernists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Virginia Woolf, once said that “it would seem that the life which is increasingly real to us is the fictitious life” (234). This particular statement fits the writing methodology of Ernest Hemingway, who is famous for blending his personal experiences into his writings of fictions. The stories that happen to the characters in Hemingway’s fictions are often found to be true reflections of his own life. Using personal stories and making them into characters became one of his most significant signatures. Therefore, it is not surprising to discover that Hemingway maintains his writing style of creating “truthful” characters even when it comes to *A Moveable Feast*, a memoir of his.

*A Moveable Feast* was published posthumously based on Hemingway's manuscripts and notes. The memoir mainly focuses on the years from 1921 to 1926, during which Hemingway settled in Paris with his first wife Hadley Richardson as a journalist of the Canada Toronto star. It was within these years in Paris that he started to pursue a career as a writer and he encountered quite a lot of expatriate writers including Gertrude Stein, Ezra Pound and F. Scott Fitzgerald.

As is shown in his memoir, Hemingway’s life in Paris was filled with poverty, sometimes even hunger. Nevertheless, there were also love and joy, together with his major transition

point in his writing career. Though considered to be a memoir, *A Moveable Feast* is made up of both "truths" and "lies". This can be seen in the preface section in the 1964 edition of *A Moveable Feast* in which Hemingway mentions that "if the reader prefers, this book may be regarded as fiction". The highlight of the preface lies in the end where Hemingway states that "...there is always the chance that such a book of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact" (1).

While the author provides the readers with options to interpret the book, it also brings up an important question of the genre of the book. Should we consider *A Moveable Feast* as a fiction or a memoir? If it is a memoir, why is it a combination of truths and lies? While most of the essays concerning *A Moveable Feast* treat it as a recollection of memories of Hemingway's life in Paris, this research argues that Hemingway fictionalizes himself in the memoir in order to enhance his heroic and masculine image as a writer who treats his work with great discretion. For Hemingway, writing serves more than just any form of work, but one that is related to sufferings and traumas of which only a writer who possesses abundant masculinity may handle. Admitting that the book may be regarded as fiction blurs the need for veracity and verification, Hemingway was able to embody a deliberate portrait of himself as the young writer that he wants the readers to see. The pieces of evidence listed in the research are proportional and are limited to certain chapters, but they exemplify some of the most significant demonstrations of Hemingway's attempt of fictionalizing himself and give us an insight on how he develops his fictional self throughout the memoir.

## Telling lies in life writings

Although the genre of *A Moveable Feast* may seem debatable, it is foremost acknowledged as a memoir. As a form of autobiography writing, memoirs usually deal with the recollections of one who has been a part or has witnessed significant events (Harmon 305). Memoirs are different from autobiographies because they are usually concerned with actions and personalities other than those of the writer, while autobiography puts emphasis on the private and inner life of its subject (305). Though these two genres are quite different, they do share something in common. As memoirist Vivian Gornick puts it, "Memoir writing shares with fiction the obligation to lift from the raw material of life, a tale that will transform an event, shape experiences, and deliver wisdom" (7). While Hemingway suggests that *A Moveable Feast* can be regarded as fiction if readers prefer, he appears to be much more certain in the fragments of the handwritten drafts of false starts for the introduction, stating that "This book is fiction" (229). Moreover, he even regards "Hadley" as the main heroine of the book. To this extent, the absence of absolute factual truth can be expected, especially when Hemingway confesses that "No one can write true fact in reminiscences" (229). Truth in the autobiographical writings is not historical truth. Writers like Hemingway tend to abide by a different standard of narrative truths where personal authenticity outweighs literal accuracy. A number of theorists have elaborated their ideas on how to define life writings. Elizabeth Bruss, for instance, argues in her book *Autobiographical Act: The Changing Situation of a Literary Genre* that we should understand autobiography as a kind of performance act instead of regarding it as a chronology of the representative life

(300). Other theorists such as Paul John Eakin considers autobiographical writing as a form of self-invention that constitutes the self. In this sense, the self plays the role of the origin of the "reflexive center of human subjectivity" (198). Eakin also emphasizes on the process that lives are made into stories and on self-experiences as "a kind of awareness process" (5). Therefore, the self that is constituted in autobiographical writings is highly based on the writer's subjectivity.

More recent theorists like Smith and Watson make a more direct statement towards how we should treat autobiographical narrators and their life writings. They state that readers should set a different kind of expectations while reading autobiographical writings, such as *A Moveable Feast*, rather than using the standard of truths and lies. "Autobiographical narrators establish for their readers a different set of expectations, a different pact, than the expectations established in the verisimilitude or suspension of disbelief of the novel or the verifiable evidence of biography and history writing" (Smith and Watson 12). Additionally, Smith and Watson hold the view that life narrators tend to present shifting and inconsistent views of themselves and that any form of utterance in an autobiographical text characterizes its writers (12). Notably, when one is both the narrator and the protagonist of the narrative, as in *A Moveable Feast* for Hemingway, the truth of the narrative becomes controversial (13). Readers should therefore adjust their expectations of the truth told in this kind of self-referential narrative. It would be more appropriate, for readers to see life narratives as a historically situated practice of "self-representation" (14). It is the writer's free will to select what he or she wants to include in their life writings, what he or she wishes to tell or

deliberately holds back. Such a perspective on life writing is also in align with Hemingway's deliberate omissions as he mentions in the prefix that "For reasons sufficient to the writer, many places, people, observations and impressions have been left out of this book" (1). Furthermore, his confession lies in the fragment section which said "Most of the voyages are not there...nor many people that we loved...It has been cut ruthlessly as fiction should be" (230). Not only have these lines clarify the reasons why a lot of Hemingway's close friends are not mentioned in *A Moveable Feast*, but it has also proved that he is fictionalizing himself. Taking the above into consideration, autobiographical truth should be interpreted as an inter-subjectivity exchange between the life narrator and its targeted readers aims at producing a shared understanding of the meaning of life (Smith and Watson 13). Despite that critics often analyze autobiographical acts distinguishing between the "I" now and the "I" then, Smith and Watson suggest that we could attempt to look at autobiographies and memoirs among four different autobiographical "I":

*The real or historical I*

*The narrating I*

*The narrated I*

*The ideological I* (58)

The real or historical I is the flesh-and-blood writer. This is the "I" that produces the autobiographical "I"--whose life is far more dispersed and diverse than the story that is being told of it (59). The narrating "I" is the part of Hemingway that wants to tell a story

about himself. This "I" is available to the readers and it is the "I" who serves as the narrator and the one who tells the autobiographical narrative.

While the narrating "I" is the agent of discourse, the narrated "I" is the subject of history. Playing the role of the protagonist of the narrative, the narrated "I" is the exact version of self that the narrating "I" chooses to form through recollection for the readers (60). However, the young Hemingway in his twenties is not doing the narrating or the remembering of the story. The narrating "I" is the one creating and remembering the story. And finally, the ideological I who is "the concept of personhood culturally available to Hemingway as the narrator" (61). The constant shifting between the narrating and narrated "I" in Hemingway's memoir embodies his intentions of creating a progressive establishment of a fictional self.

Although it is not uncommon for writers to lie in their personal narratives, the reasons why they lie vary, and these happen to contribute to the essence of their works. Timothy Dow Adams points out that what is important is not the fact that authors chose to lie, but the nature of what each writer is said to lie about (167). Furthermore, what does lying have thought to be gained by each autobiographer? In his opinion, lying in autobiographical writings is not just something that happens inevitably. Instead, it should be regarded as a highly strategic decision (X). The life narrator's reasons for telling lies are far more important than absolute accuracy. Gertrude Stein, for instance, tells her story in *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* from her lover's angle. With the help of ventriloquism, Stein manages to fictionalize herself in order to make herself more important as an artist. By

writing as Alice B. Toklas, who is Stein's lover, Stein obtains the freedom of speech. Pretending to be Alice Toklas makes it more natural and humorous for Stein to present her huge ego; saying things such as "Gertrude Stein is one of the three geniuses of the modern age" (180). Stein herself also admits that the "I" of the text and the name on the title page could never be equivalent" (Adams 28).

Unlike Stein who is obviously telling her life using someone else's identity, Hemingway tells his narrative story with his own identity, historical or not. The reason for Hemingway to construct a fictional self, however, has much to do with his life experiences. Hemingway started writing this memoir in 1957 at the age of 58. As a man in his fifties, Hemingway certainly did not think of himself as being old. According to the letters he wrote to Lilian Ross, Hemingway was excited to enter the fifties, "It is sort of fun to be fifty and feel you are going to defend the title again, I won it in the twenties and defended it in the thirties and the forties, and I don't mind at all defending it in the fifties"(32). Besides, Hemingway used to be biased towards memoir writing as he said that "It is only when you can no longer believe in your exploits that you write your memoirs" (Reynolds 224). The plane crash incidents in Cuba during the 1950s which caused him severe injuries in his jolts, liver and kidneys together with the memory loss resulted from the shock treatment contributes to one of the reasons why he started to write a memoir. Suffering both physically and mentally, Hemingway was in such a critical condition that he did not even accept his Nobel Prize for literature by himself in 1954. The distressing sequela to his accidents also greatly affected his writing. When Hemingway was asked to come up with a quotation for a speech, he



panicked and discovered that he could not come up with one good quotation for an entire day. The fear of losing his inspiration in his writing continued to expand and he was worried that he could not write anymore. In Hemingway's perspective, the inspiration for writing is as important as what he said in his acceptance speech for the Nobel Prize "how simple the writing of literature would be if it were only necessary to write in another way what has been well written". Therefore, it is understandable why Hemingway fictionalizes himself and attempts to enhance his image as a writer in *A Moveable Feast*, which was written at the last stage of his writing career. He wants the readers to recognize him as not just a writer, but an artist who poses a strong sense of masculinity, which was something he could not accomplish regarding his conditions. Aside from that, Hemingway also believes that each book for true writers should be a "new beginning where he tries again for something that is beyond attainment". That being said, *A Moveable Feast* serves as Hemingway's new attempt of fictionalizing his life and this to some extent satisfies his huge ego as a writer.

### **Research gap**

As a memoir which was published after the decease of the author and some fragments of the book may have been rearranged by his family members, there are not a lot of research directly investigating *A Moveable Feast*. While some of the researchers discussed the fictional genre of the memoir, most of them focused on the truths and lies in comparison to Scott Fitzgerald's version of the stories that happened in Paris. Susanne Egan for instance, argued that Hemingway's use of Scotts Fitzgerald is profoundly significant as part of the creation of the young Hemingway (80). Issues regarding genders have also been discussed

in *A Moveable Feast*. Fung examines the memoir by saying that *A Moveable Feast* is conventionally feminine by comparing it with Gertrude Stein's *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas*. Additionally, Kennedy talks about the gender troubles that Hemingway faced in *A Moveable Feast*, exemplifying the statement with Hemingway's attitude towards Stein's homosexuality and the end of their friendship discussed in the memoir. To sum up, these past researches share one thing in common, that is, they focus on the relationship and stories between Hemingway and the other renowned writers, which does account for a major part of *A Moveable Feast*. What this research aims to investigate is the fictional self that Hemingway attempts to create in the other chapters of the memoir. These chapters, which talk about Hemingway's daily life and activities in Paris, play an important role in the plotting of the entire memoir. By looking at these chapters, readers may understand the memoir from a completely different angle. They will come to realize that the setting for the other characters and the inclusion of various activities serve as a strategic method for Hemingway to enhance his image as a writer. In addition, this research enables readers to interpret and appreciate *A Moveable Feast* as an art rather than just a memoir.

### **The fictional self in conversations**

As a memoir with personalities and actions other than those of the writer, Hemingway has included an extensive amount of conversations in his writings. These long conversations, either with his wife Hadley, his friends such as Sylvia Beach or even random passersby serve more than the purpose of presenting the nostalgically feelings Hemingway had with family or friends. Instead, a closer look at these conversations will help us to uncover how

Hemingway presents the narrated "I" as a writer for his readers. However, this technique does not suggest that Hemingway is lying in his memoir, but that he has selected fragments of his memories purposefully.

Hemingway's approach to structuring these conversations relates to Mikhail Bakhtin's theory on monovocality. Unlike polivocality which suggests a work containing many different voices and each of them owning its own validity, perspective and narrative weight, works that presents monovocality has only one voice and conversations as such become extremely one-sided (qtd. in Steinby and Klapuri 41). According to Bakhtin, characters exist in monological novels for the purpose of transmitting the author's ideology, and the author represents only his own idea, not anyone else's (42). Nevertheless, Bakhtin also admits that true monovocality never exist. Although not all the characters in *A Moveable Feast* exist for the purpose of expressing the author's personal point of view, Hemingway is using some of the characters in his memoir to voice out part of his opinions on his behalf.

Such a writing technique aligns with Donna C. Stanton's opinion on the gender differences in life writings. Stanton holds the view that life writing can be divided into two gender branches. While female life writings are more communal and relational, male life writings focus more on individuality and professional achievements (137). In other words, male life writing is a way for the individual to tell his singular and unique story. Taking this gender model of autobiography into consideration, Hemingway's intention of *A Moveable Feast* is in align with Stanton's definition of a form of male life writing. Fung also argues

that the other supporting characters' stories in male life writings no longer belong to themselves, because they are anthologized by the male life writer (265). In addition, these stories, just as some of the conversations that Hemingway included in *A Moveable Feast*, come together as a form of single ideological narrative that confirms the writer's professional prominence and freedom (265). The way Hemingway manages the conversations in his memoir is an evident demonstration of male life writing, where the entire plotting of the conversations and the characters is centered on his reputation as a writer.

Hunger as a theme that frequently appears in the memoir is more than just a form of sensation. Instead, it represents Hemingway's inspirations and aspirations as a writer. Both the narrative "I" and the narrating "I" crave for hunger for this is the kind of feeling that helps him to come up with good writings or to understand the artworks of Cezanne better, which only occurs when the narrative "I" was sleepless or hungry. In *A Moveable Feast*, hunger, creativity and happiness are always bound up together. Not only does hunger enable him to sharpen his perceptions but it also allows him to broaden his minds in creation.

Seeing hunger as a form of positive reinforcement to his writing career, Hemingway inserts the theme of "hunger" in quite a few of the conversations in his memoir. The most evident example lies in the chapter of "Hunger Was Good Discipline". Hemingway talks about how you would get very hungry when you did not eat enough in Paris, making it entirely related to the physical sense of "hunger" at first, and then moves on to discuss how

he got to understand Cezanne better when he was hungry. Eventually, the author guided the readers through the streets of Paris and stopped at Sylvia Beach's bookshop, where they had a nice little conversation related to "hunger and work". As the owner of "Shakespeare and Company", Sylvia was one of Hemingway's closest friends who supported and encouraged his writing career throughout Hemingway's stay in Paris. She offered to lend him books to read and she allowed him to pay whenever he is convenient, considering that Hemingway lived in great poverty. Consequently, Hemingway mentioned Sylvia in various circumstances which are related to work, especially when Hemingway was experiencing difficulties and confusions. Sylvia started the conversation by pointing out that the author was too thin and asking if he had eaten enough. Even though Hemingway was apparently hungry and hadn't consumed enough food, he still told Sylvia that he had eaten enough and would be going home for lunch at 3pm. This casual conversation helps to build up Hemingway's image as an author in a way that he would rather stay hungry so as to save money for books and to have more inspiration for writing than to satisfy his physical needs. Again, he puts his "work" at the top of his life pyramid and by showing his tolerance for physical sufferings, projects his masculine characteristics as a writer. Sylvia also extended her heartwarming comforts when she learnt about Hemingway's frustration that he was not gaining the recognition, nor earning enough money as a young writer. She said "Don't worry about what they bring now. The point is that you can write them" (67). Hemingway intentionally included this sentence for it was not only an inspiration for the narrated "I" then, but was also a kind of comfort and a strong ethical belief as a writer for the narrating "I". Sylvia's rhetorical statement that "Don't you know all writers ever talk about is their

troubles? But promise me you won't worry and that you'll eat enough" (68) again justifies Hemingway's reason to stay hungry and worried for it was something that all writers should go through. By ending the conversation with Hemingway saying that he would go and eat something, the author reinforces the fact that he would rather not eat than to compromise his artistic integrity, which brings his devotion in writing to another level.

Other than the conversation with Sylvia Beach, Hemingway also discusses about hunger and work in various other scenarios, most frequently with his wife Hadley. Out of all the other characters that appear in Hemingway's memoir, Hadley is definitely one of the key characters and the main heroine of the memoir. In fact, Hemingway apologizes in the draft of *A Moveable Feast* with the lines "Hadley is the heroine and I hope she will understand and forgive me writing fiction" (229). The long conversations that "I" have with Hadley serve more than an idyllic scene of a couple's life. Instead, the author is using what Hadley says as a character to foreshadow his real intentions. For example, during their conversation about their friend Chink in the chapter of "The False Spring", Hadley remarks that, "...you and Chink always talking about how to make things, true, writing them, and put them rightly and not describe" (46), which is an interesting way to convey Hemingway's aspiration as a writer through the words of someone else. Although the chapter on the false spring merely describes a normal day for Hemingway in Paris, it's actually a chapter where Hemingway introduces how he worked and what working meant for him. However, other than the depictions of some daily routines which concerns a bit about his writing career in the morning, the chapter fails to mention anything else explicitly concerning working. What

stand out are the casual daily routines of race horsing, eating and wandering around Paris with his wife Hadley. By using Hadley's words to talk about his writing technique, which is to "make things true, writing them and put them rightly and not described" (46), Hemingway naturally blends his writing concept and technique into a smilingly casual conversation between a couple. Identical to the approach of which Gertrude Stein uses her partner "Alice" to compliment herself, the existence of Hadley helps to hide a part of the narrated "I" and his ambition in the conversation, making it more convincing and authentic for the readers. After their discussion about Chink and past memories, Hemingway changed the topic of their conversation by talking about hunger, which led to an interesting development the dialogue:

"Are you hungry again?" I said. "Us. Talking and walking."

"Of course, Tatie. Aren't you?"

"Let's go to a wonderful place and have a truly grand dinner." (47)

Leading the topic of the conversation about work and memories right back to hunger suggests the author's intention of displaying how focused they were talking about work and writings that they have forgotten their physical desire. Work and inspiration are the main priority, not only for Hemingway, but also for the fictive "Hadley" in the memoir. They ended up going to a restaurant which was an exciting and expensive place for them. However, when they arrived at the restaurant, Hemingway stood at the door and wondered how much they felt was hunger. Hadley answered his question by saying "I don't know, Tatie. There are so many sorts of hunger. In the spring there are more" (48). Hemingway

deliberately selects this sentence to be included in the memoir for Hadley's line directly points out that there is more than one interpretation to the meaning of hunger, and the physical interpretation was definitely not the kind they were discussing about for he was still "hungry" after they had dinner. Therefore, hunger at this stage can be understood as Hemingway's never-ending enthusiasm for writing. As long as he was still a writer, he would remain hungry for he always wanted to write more and he preferred to remain hungry so that he could obtain more inspirations for writing. A strong sense of nostalgia is also revealed in this conversation for the narrated "I" didn't seem to understand what hunger meant at that time while the narrating "I" in his fifties reflected on this particular sensation. The shift of time and place in the conversations of the memoir presents the author's progressive understanding and development as a writer who prioritized his work.

Hemingway's idea of privileging work over other conditions continues to extend in conversations other than Hadley and Sylvia Beach. Moreover, he also talks about his work with characters that do not even have a proper name or identity, which makes Hemingway's selection of such conversation to be worth investigating.

In the chapter of "Birth of a New School" which is included in *A Moveable Feast's* additional Paris sketches, the narrated "I" got into a strange conversation with "someone" when he was writing in the cafe. There wasn't a clear description of who this someone was, only that he was a young man, and probably by the first name of "Harold" which didn't come up until almost the end of the conversation where the narrated "I" said, "Harold, I'll



avoid that as long as I can" (173). The content of the conversation was about writing. However, it was not a very pleasant conversation. Hemingway presented himself as a nasty and grumpy character who did not want to get into any sort of conversation with the person who disturbed his writing process. The first part of the conversation was quite unique in the way that it was very "one-sided". Harold seemed to be the only one talking while Hemingway attempted to focus on writing another line:

He was sitting at the next table, a tall fat young man with spectacles...I thought I would ignore him and see if I could write. So I ignored him and wrote two sentences.

"All I did was speak with you."

I went on and wrote another sentence. It dies hard when it is really going and you are into it.

"I suppose you've gotten so great nobody can speak to you."

I wrote another sentence that ...and I wrote the first sentence of the next paragraph.

"You never think about anyone else or that they may have problems too."

(170)

This monologue routine went on for several rounds before the narrated "I" eventually lost his temper. Not only does this conversation present how annoying "official intruders" could be, but it also displays the idea that Hemingway is very focused during his writing

process and it is not surprising that anyone who gets into the way of his writing process would be severely reprimanded. When Harold continued to interrupt Hemingway with strange questions, he received harsh remarks from Hemingway such as "you shouldn't write if you can't write. What do you have to cry about it for? Go home. Get a job. Hang yourself. Only don't talk about it. You could never write" (172). "Harold", in return, told Hemingway that he was a cruel, heartless and conceited person. Presenting himself as rude and aggressive strengthens Hemingway's image as a strong, devoted writer who was willing to go into extremes to defend his "territories" in writing. It is not just any kind of work that any random people who walked into the cafe could do. Writing, for Hemingway, is a man's work which requires the right amount of instinct and talent.

As a matter of fact, the reason why the name for the "somebody", which turns out to be "Harold" does not come up until the very end of the conversation is that who he really is doesn't matter. To Hemingway, this "somebody" could be anybody, he could represent a group of people who failed to understand Hemingway as a writer, interrupted his work as a writer, or who went against his beliefs. In addition, he establishes the sense of "Isolationism" which is a kind of masculine feature to indicate his unique individuality while working (4). Hemingway mentioned in his Nobel Prize acceptance speech that good writers did their work alone. The alienation in Hemingway's fictional self also displays a modernist's pursuit of self and individualism. Meanwhile, these conversations are Hemingway's means of striking back at the people who didn't understand his work or had critique his work without justifying reasons. This is embedded in the latter part of his conversation with the young

man, where the narrative "I" kindly suggested that the young man could be a critic. The scene became quite humorous when the young man gladly took up the role of a critic and started to criticize Hemingway's work. Hemingway vividly describes this instant change, "Hem," he said, and I knew he was a critic now since, in conversation, they put your name at the beginning of the sentence rather than at the end" (173). This remark implies that critics leave the impression of being arrogant and rude to Hemingway. The conversation reached a climax when the young man said that he thought Hemingway's works to be "too stark, too stripped, too lean, too sinewy" (173). Hemingway certainly didn't take his words seriously though he promised to "avoid that as long as I can" while practicing speaking like a critic. The implementation of this conversation displays the narrating "I's opinions on the various critics that have criticized his works during his life as a writer. As Hemingway sets the conversation up in this manner, he proves that any random person who comes out of nowhere can call themselves a critic, but they actually have no clue what they are criticizing about, hinting that critiques can be nonsense sometimes. Furthermore, it also presents Hemingway's perseverance towards his goal as a writer and his endurance when facing all kinds of different intrusions and criticisms about his work. For Hemingway, nothing is more important than maintaining a peaceful and quiet working environment, which is an idea that is repeatedly echoed in the conversation with Harold. The implied meaning hidden in the narrative paves the way for Hemingway's artistic development. Hemingway's persistence, alienation and individuality as a writer suffuses the dialogues in this memoir, displaying the most sincere version of his inner-self.

## Sports and sufferings

Apart from the conversations, Hemingway appears to be found of including a series of manly activities in his memoir. These activities include horse racing, snow skiing, car racing, boxing and fishing. This is not surprising as quite a lot of Hemingway's novels of bullfighting, men boxing, hunting giant fish, and battling each other in war have perpetuated the concept of masculinity as an ideal that must be achieved through sufferings and tribulation, rather than exist as an inherent trait (Strychacz 3). However, the manly activities included as a part of Hemingway's daily routines go far beyond the simple identification to exemplifying himself as the ideal masculine role through "glorification of machismo, physical violence, blood sports and war" (Meyer 3), just like what he does in his other fictions. To be more specific, Hemingway's pursuit of stereotypically masculine experiences in *A Moveable Feast* is based on the premise that these activities share similar features that relate him and his readers to his work as an artist. Thus the series of manly activities are chosen by Hemingway as part of his memoir for they serve metaphorically as a kind of allegory he has towards his writing career.

One of the most popular manly activities that Hemingway mentions in *A Moveable Feast* is horse racing. Hemingway and Hadley would often go and bet on horse racing while they were in Paris, part of the reason was that Hadley enjoyed and sometimes loved this event. Horse racing, according to the author, was just like a "demanding friend". To be exact, horse racing was the "falsest, most beautiful, most exciting, vicious, and demanding" (51) friend he had. To his own astonishment, he who was "so righteous about people and their

destructiveness" (51) could tolerate the sport for it could help him make money. A great deal of preparation needed to be done in order to participate in this event. In the chapter on "The End of an Avocation", Hemingway gives a detail introduction to all the preliminary requisites, "you have to watch the race from the top of the stand...you watched the prices and all the shifts of odds each time...you had to know how he was working...you should know by then what his chances then" (52). The detailed description of horse racing intends to enhance the idea that horse racing is an activity that requires serious and abundant preparation. Moreover, it is supposed to be a complicated process. This feature that horse racing presents shares its similarities with Hemingway's definition of work. Whenever Hemingway started working, he would find himself a nice and quiet location, for instance, the cafe or at home with the windows open and he would be very particular that no one should interrupt his writing process. To a certain extent, choosing the best viewpoint for horse racing from the top of the stand so that you can climb up faster to see what each horse does resemble Hemingway's choice of location to work. Both activities own a certain sense of ritual.

Another quality that horse racing shares with work is that both are risky and are a certain type of "gambling". Despite the fact that they were suffering from poverty, Hemingway had invested quite a lot of money in this particular activity, for "it was all part of the fight against poverty that you never win except by not spending" (43). However, this investment was very risky as "it took full-time work to try to handicap intelligently and you could make no money that way" (51). The risky nature of this manly activity shares its similarities with the

nature of his work as a writer for Hemingway had also taken risk by abandoning his job as a journalist in order to become a writer. Moreover, just as the fact that horse racing might not bring profits, Hemingway as a novice writer couldn't guarantee that his writings would become recognized by the general public. In the chapter of "A false spring", Hemingway talks about two experiences of horse racing and they were stitched together strategically. After describing a win in horse racing, Hemingway continues with the sentence, "another day later that year when we had come back from one of our voyages and had good luck at some track again" (45). The emphasis on the timeline of both horse racing events indicates that luck in horse racing is not very common and they didn't have the chance to encounter "luck" all the time. Interestingly, "luck" is also something that Hemingway talks about regarding his work as a writer. In "Birth of A new School", Hemingway was preparing to start working and he said, "for luck you carried a horse chestnut and a rabbit's foot in your right pocket... the claws scratched in the lining of your pocket and you knew your luck was still there" (169). It is not hard to understand that Hemingway believes that writing, just as horse racing, requires luck. Even in those days when he thought he didn't need the rabbit boot, which is a symbol of luck, he admitted that "it was good to feel it in your pocket" (175). Therefore, the reason why Hemingway brings up horse racing in *A Moveable Feast* serves way more as a sense of nostalgia. Instead, he aims to present to his readers how risky, dangerous and time-consuming working as a writer can be. This is identical to horse racing. His notion of prioritizing his work further strengthened when Hemingway decided to give up horse racing even though he was earning money out of this activity. According to his explanation, horse racing took up too much of his time and efforts which in a way affected

his work as a writer. The comparison that he would rather spend more time working on his risky writing career which probably guarantees no profit as a writer rather than spending time on race horning, which is just as risky but brings profits shows how important his work is to him. Furthermore, this also enhances his image as not just a writer, but a noble "artist" who pursue art more than money.

While horse racing is associated with Hemingway's work, skiing, as another form of dangerous activity, establishes a stronger connection with Hemingway's heroic masculinization in writing. As Hemingway could not afford to spend the winter in Paris, his entire family would go to Schruns to spend the winter. Hemingway considered Schruns to be a good place to work. "I know because I did the most difficult job of rewriting I have ever done there in the winter of 1925 and 1926" (118). Instead of going into details on how difficult his job of rewriting was, Hemingway chose to write about one of the most common activities that he enjoyed attending at the Schruns, which was skiing. Skiing is described as a kind of an extreme sport. Hemingway uses a large proportion of the chapter of "Winter in Schruns" to discuss avalanches and the people who got killed because of skiing. He even became an expert in avalanches as he said "there were many people killed by avalanches that year in the Arlberg and we became great students of avalanches...Most of the writing that I did that year was in avalanche time" (119). The arrangement of the plotting by talking about work with avalanches implies that writing as a form of work for Hemingway is "dangerous" in its own sense. But Hemingway kept on working as a writer in the same way that he kept on skiing. Both activities require enough practice so that one may finally

become an expert. Arnold Samuelson, who was Hemingway's student, recalled his teacher telling him that there was no way to know if one could become a good writer. All that he could advised was to "keep on writing but it's a damned tough racket". In this case, writing aligns with skiing for there is no way to tell whether the results would be promising yet a writer with masculine nature like Hemingway choose to keep on trying. The skiing captain in Schruns Walther Lent, however, believed that "the fun of skiing was to get up into the highest mountain country where there was no one else and where the snow was untracked" (53). This kind of fun can be related to the joy that Hemingway wanted to obtain in his writing career, to explore his own unique writing technique that no one has explored before, even if it means writing works that Gertrude Stein described as "inaccrochable". While Stein regarded them as meaningless and foolish, Hemingway continued his exploration in writing which is identical to the way he treated skiing as a dangerous event. Perhaps it was just as the climb of the mountain before skiing, as Hemingway described that "part of the climb was steep and very tough, but the second time you made that climb was easier, and finally you made it easily" (116). The repetitive attempts in the challenging process of skiing enable readers to relate to Hemingway's process of first writing one true sentence, then write another one and go from there. Both skiing and writing require persistence and regular practicing for Hemingway and such a metaphorically inclusion of the sport makes the memoir more authentic to the readers. The application of such allegories enables Hemingway to enhance his image as a writer in a relatively subtle way.

In addition to the manly sporting activities, Hemingway also sets himself up as a working



writer among dilemmas and this is another way in which he distinguishes himself from other writers. Some of these dilemmas have a close bond with the manly activities, while the others are directly related to his work as a writer. These pains and sufferings that Hemingway chooses to include in his memoir foster a strong bond with his work and "dramatize" his devotion in writing. Poverty, which is mentioned as a main theme in many chapters, serves as one of the keywords to conclude Hemingway's life in Paris. The narrated "I" in the memoir was troubled with financial crisis and it interfered with almost whatever activity he did. However, the only activity that poverty didn't get into its way is his work as a writer. Poverty would influence his decision in daily demands such as eating, buying clothes, choice of entertainment yet it never affected his choice to work as a writer. In fact, it was his giving up journalism and switching to writing as a career that resulted in his poverty in the first place. Nevertheless, this didn't prove to be his major concern. "I knew how severe I had been and how bad things had been. The one who is doing his work and getting satisfaction from it is not the one the poverty is hard on" (42). The idea that the satisfaction he obtained through working far outweighed the suffering that poverty caused extends to two statements. First, work, as always, maintains to be the prior concern even when it comes to the comparison with daily demands. Second, it aggrandizes Hemingway's figure not just as a writer, but a real "artist" that devotes himself completely to work. For the narrated "I" in the story, the artistic pursuit is way more important than physical sufferings. The statement that "I was damned if I would write one (a novel) because it was what I should do if we were to eat regularly" (71) confirms Hemingway's intention of writing as an artistic aspiration rather than making ends meet to fulfill his physical needs.

Aside from the allegory embedded in the theme of "poverty", "trauma" also appears to be a main concept in *A Moveable Feast*. These concepts related to pains and sufferings exaggerate Hemingway's individualism and alienation as a writer who experienced hardships that not everyone could identify with. Among the two kinds of trauma that appear in the memoir, the first one is related to Hemingway's criteria in defining a piece of "true" writing. Hemingway mentioned an incident in which he showed a piece of the racing story to the American writer and editor Edward O'Brien. Before showing O'Brien his writing, Hemingway explained his complicated feelings for it was a bad time and the narrated "I" did not think that he could write again. In order to help the readers to better understand, Hemingway describes the process by referring to "as you might show the binnacle of a ship you had lost in some incredible way, or as you might pick up your booted foot as if it had been amputated after a crash and make some joke about it" (70). In addition, he shifts into "you" to insist on his reader's identification with his descent into the dark days of struggling as a novice writer. Losing a leg and of the binnacle of a ship are both bad experiences yet Hemingway aligns them with his writing career and reinforces the same kind of hurtful feelings on his readers, which maximizes the sensational process and magnifies his masculinity characteristics in writing. The alignment of "hurt" and work continues, "when he read the story, I saw he was hurt far more than I was...I had never seen anyone hurt by a thing other than death or unbearable suffering" (70). It becomes crystal clear for the readers that the author was glad that he managed to "hurt" his readers with his works and he considered it as a success. Hemingway's intention is better elaborated in the chapter of "On

Writing in the First Person" where he describes that "my own small experiences gave me a touchstone by which I could tell whether stories were true or false and being wounded was a password" (182). Therefore, real historical facts are not the most important thing for Hemingway in writing. Only by writing words that hurt himself and the readers makes his works authentic, which is an interesting interpretation of what it meant by writing "true sentences". Trauma in the memoir helps to shape Hemingway's understanding of writing as a career filled with masculinity characteristics. The heroic self-taunting about the painful writing process further consolidates Hemingway's image as a male writer.

Another form of trauma in the memoir is related to Hemingway's traumatic experiences of losing his manuscript, which includes some of the first drafts of *A Moveable Feast*. Hadley tried to bring Hemingway all his manuscript in the autumn of 1922. She packed up every piece of the manuscripts into a small overnight suitcase. Unfortunately, Hadley lost the suitcase on the train. As one of the most notable traumas in Hemingway's life, the incident of the loss of the manuscript became a way for Hemingway to show his readers how important his works meant for him and how he faced the trauma like a real man even though it was a complete nightmare. The significance of this traumatic incident had on Hemingway's life can be seen in fragmentary descriptions such as "I had never seen anyone hurt by a thing other than death or unbearable suffering except Hadley when she told me about the things being gone" (70). The portrait of Hadley's extreme sadness indirectly reflects the amount of pain Hemingway had suffered when he found out about the loss of his manuscript. Despite how "calm" the narrated "I" appeared to be in the memoir, Hemingway

was the actual victim of this incident and he must have been more traumatized than Hadley, even though he preferred not to go into details. In fact, it seems that the pain of the memory was so severe that he could only refer to them as "the things". This kind of traumatic emotion becomes more evident in the following lines where he describes the moment when he found out that Hadley had lost all his works. "it was true all right and I remembered what I did in the night ... and found it was true. That was over now and Chink had taught me never to discuss casualties" (70). The fragmentary insertions of this traumatic event aim to prove that even after all those years, the narrating "I" was still unable to relive the pain. In comparison, the loss of his work strikes him more severely than poverty and hunger and in saying that "it was over now" and that "I told O'Brien not to feel so badly...It was probably good for me to lose early work and I told him all that stuff you feed the troops" (70) rather than going on to elaborate on how hurtful he was, the narrating "I" chose to tell the story in a calm manner and he even comforted O'Brien who felt sorry for his loss. Taking a step back from the traumatic event strengthens Hemingway's masculinity as a writer who was willing to bore all the consequences and started writing stories again. The multiple identifications of Hemingway's intentions in his allegories demonstrate that he has made an agreement with his memory that his image as a writer should and would never elapse. Instead of a constant search of identity as is the case for most of the other life narrators, *A Moveable Feast* serves as a constant confirmation of his known identity as a masculine writer.

## Conclusion

In general, *A Moveable Feast* features Hemingway's successful attempt to enhance his

image as a writer by fictionalizing. Looking into the conversations and the allegories of writing in the memoir, readers are able to appreciate the life writing from a more artistic perspective. Life writings, in a way, should never be understood as a regular chronology of life, nor a natural recollection of past memories. Instead, readers should try to find out the mutual understanding of life that the author managed to embed in these life narratives. In this case, Hemingway's shared emotions are based on the identity he set as a writer. While perspectives of incidents might change throughout the years, the narrated "I" and the narrating "I's" vision and faith of what a writer should be remain eternal. As a modernist writer, Hemingway's subtle way of implying his real intentions fits his famous "iceberg theory" where only the tip of the iceberg is shown in fiction. Readers will only see the part that lies above the water, yet the knowledge that you have about your character acts as the bulk of the iceberg beneath the water, giving your story weight and gravitas. This theory remains to be true in *A Moveable Feast* where Hemingway had selectively chosen the characters and stories into his memoir, endowing his life writing with personal weight.

As Hemingway said in his speech for accepting the Nobel Prize, "writing, at its best, is a lonely life... he does his work alone and if he is a good enough writer, he must face eternity, or the lack of it, each day." Written by the end of his writing career, *A Moveable Feast* was Hemingway's way of establishing his heroic and masculine identity as a writer and an artist. A writer may become old, inspirations may disappear, yet the sincerity and commitment to the identity of a writer will never fade. Just as Hemingway said, "You belong to me and all Paris belongs to me and I belong to this notebook and this pencil" (18).

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