

“There is never any ending to Paris”: Manifestations of Spatiality in Ernest Hemingway’s *A Moveable Feast*

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ABSTRACT

Ernest Hemingway’s *A Moveable Feast* (1964) contains an array of his memories of the time he spent in Paris in the first half of the 1920s. The work provides an ideal vehicle to explore the connection of spatiality to memory and text production along with how imagined geography relates to empirical geography. The essay deploys a theoretical apparatus relying on the works of Martin Heidegger, Henry Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord, Pierre Nora, and Walter Benjamin in its investigation of a psycho-geography composed by Hemingway. The essay aims to discuss how spatiality can contribute to the construction of personal history and in what way it can promote text production, and it will also explore the impact of space on the psychological and emotional condition of the individual. (AT)

KEYWORDS: space, heterotopia, lieux de memoire, flaneur, cognitive map, Ernest Hemingway



Introduction

Towards the end of his life Hemingway settled down in Cuba, at his ranch in San Francisco de Paula; this retreat inspired him to record his memories from his adult years in Paris. The collection of vignettes, *A Moveable Feast* (1964) centers on the period of his life spent in the French capital from 1921 until 1926. The title of the work resonates with Hemingway’s first wife, Elizabeth “Hadley” Richardson’s comment “[m]emory is hunger” (46), as the first term points toward spatiality, while the second can refer to earthly pleasures of food or sight, along with the metaphysical aspects of pleasant recollections. Hemingway’s bittersweet reminiscence of his youth and the inevitable onset of old age are implied by the famous motto to the book: “If you are lucky enough to have lived in Paris as a young man, then whenever you go for the rest of your life, it stays with you, for Paris is a moveable feast.” (1)

Drawing on a theoretical apparatus informed by the works of Martin Heidegger, Henry Lefebvre, Edward Soja, Michel Foucault, Michel de Certeau, Guy Debord, Pierre Nora, and Walter Benjamin, this essay explores how various manifestations of spatiality trigger the workings of memory and argues that Hemingway engages in spatial practices both on the physical and the metaphysical level. Consequently, the essay analyzes how the combination of locomotion and remembering can create individual history, how the process of walking leads to text production, and the psychological impact generated by space.

Spatial practice: A theoretical overview

While the study of spatiality has provided an abundance of models and theories, the starting point of my inquiry is Martin Heidegger, who viewed space as a multiplicity of places in which humans strive for worldliness with the precondition of “having one foot on the ground . . . , knowing where one is, and being at home there” (189). Spatiality also implies circumspection, a perspective of the “acting person uniting the reality of the past to the possibilities of the future” (Kaelin 69). It must be pointed out that Hemingway looking back on his youth was certainly aware of the “reality of the past,” while for him “the possibility of the future” tended to be limited at best.

What is more relevant to this study, however, is that by locating space between the *there* and *here*, Heidegger places emphasis on in-betweenness. Recognizing that all human activity is directed to a specific end, he also points to the need for “de-distancing” (Kaelin 85), or the elimination of the related physical or metaphysical distance. Hemingway takes a walk down memory lane, and it is the actual remembering or memory construction process that conquers the distance between his past and his present. Having taken into consideration the passing of the years, he has to realize that for him the *here* is the last stage of his life and the *there* is the days in Paris, when he and Hadley were poor but young and happy. I will demonstrate how Hemingway engages in this process of de-distancing while satisfying his hunger for memory both literally and figuratively.

Foucault’s recognition of the heterogeneity of spatiality leads to the identification of a set of spatial relations eventually forming heterotopias, that is, the multiplicity of spaces that are “represented, contested, and inverted” (24). The combination of space and time results in the formation of heterochronies including several sites, which are incompatible with each other, while being isolated and penetrable at the same time (26).

Lefebvre, drawing a parallel with heterotopias, argues that any spatial perspective, physical, mental, or social, invokes binary patterns such as real and imagined, concrete and abstract, or material and metaphorical. In this way, all of Hemingway's memories or the episodes from his youth have actual, tangible, or physical connotations, while their imagined, abstract, and metaphorical aspects apply as well. It must be kept in mind that his memory is selective, and he is not immune to committing the classical error of autobiographical literature, known as the autobiographical lie.

Andrew Hudgins identifies the following uncertainties, or "lies" impacting most life writing: the lie of narrative cogency entailing the simplification of a given episode through "clearing out the narrative underbrush" (542); the lie of texture expanding the story with unnecessary details; and the lie of fictional convention implying that the writer was unduly influenced by a given literary tradition. Additional weaknesses include the lie of emotional evasion and the lie of the recreated self (544–46). Naturally, Hemingway, due to his well-known "iceberg style of writing," falls into the trap of emotional evasion and simplification.

A Moveable Feast contains restrained descriptions of otherwise disconcerting events in the author's life. One such example is Hemingway's reappraisal of his relations with Gertrude Stein: "But I could never make friends [with her] again truly, neither in my heart nor in my head. When you cannot make friends any more in your head is the worst. But it was more complicated than that" (89). In the same vein, he is equally taciturn about the extramarital affair eventually ending his first marriage: "The husband has two attractive girls around when he has finished work. One is new and strange and if he has bad luck he gets to love them both" (159).

Lefebvre's tripartite model of spatial practice includes the recognition of perceived, conceived, and lived space (38–39). Inspired by Lefebvre, Edward Soja develops his own trialectic approach, claiming that *Firstspace* emphasizes the physical aspects calling on the viewer or observer to read or interpret the given space either by describing the "surface appearances," or providing "spatial explanations" to social and psychological processes (75). Thus, Soja's *Firstspace* is virtually identical with Lefebvre's perceived space including material and empirical aspects. In Soja's view, *Secondspace* is "entirely ideational, made up of projections into the empirical world from conceived or imagined geographies" (79), which establishes a connection with Lefebvre's conceived space consisting of signs and language. *Secondspace* implies the visual re-presentation of the world in subjective imaginary structures eventually giving rise to symbolic spaces and cognitive maps. As a

consequence, Soja's *Thirdspace* connoting resistance to the dominant order via its "radical openness" (68) can be considered a representational space as described by Lefebvre.

While these approaches reflect a static perspective, movement within space is described, among others, by Walter Benjamin and Michel de Certeau. The former elaborated on the concept of the *flâneur*, "the strolling spectator collecting mental notes on leisurely city walks and transcribing them into written form" (Seal), while the latter considered walking in the city as a form of text production via choosing one's route either consciously or subconsciously. As Benjamin asserts, "the street becomes a dwelling for the flâneur; he is as much at home among the facades of houses as a citizen is in his four walls. . . . The walls are the desk against which he presses his notebooks; news-stands are his libraries and the terraces of cafés are the balconies from which he looks down on his household after his work is done" (37).

De Certeau views walking or "linking acts and footsteps" as a form of text production (162). By choosing a given direction, the walker operates as a writer or a rhetorician presenting or re-presenting the city. Walking in the city means reading the city through bodies following an urban text (158). Such an urban text is created by the imposition of order on the landscape or space, which is considered the actual geography. Simple locomotion in the city retraces the lines of actual geography, or the outlines of geographical space. A walker, however, can find refuge in poetic geography (162), or in a liberated space free from physical and social constraints.

A Moveable Feast is an account of Hemingway's, Hadley's, and their son's life in Paris, and it concludes with the description of their skiing trip in the Austrian Alps. The narration is chronologically removed from the actual events as there is almost forty years between the aging writer and his remembered younger self. At the same time, it must be noted that Hemingway was an expatriate, and to some extent an outsider, both in Paris and Cuba. The memories of places, bars, restaurants, and the dwellings of contemporary literary and cultural figures are clearly identified with exact directions and street names. Hemingway not only positively locates himself in Paris, but he reads the city and allows the reader to do so as well.

Heidegger's *Dasein* concept helps in the overall evaluation of Hemingway's Paris experience. Spatiality and memory construction are connected in manifold ways, of which the title of the memoir is but one example. The idea of *derivé* by Debord, and Benjamin's concept of the *flâneur*

can also add to this because the text includes both physical and metaphysical strolls in Paris. Lefebvre's three-part model is relevant as well since Hemingway experiences space on all its levels including material, conceptual, and "living," or representational dimensions.

Spatial practice and personal history

Hemingway's spatial practices, that is, a series of figurative visits to the locations of his formative experiences in Paris provide the milestones of his memory construction process. Inspired by Pierre Nora, I assert that the city exists as a *lieu de memoire*, or sites of memory for the author. Arguing that each individual is the historian of their life, Nora distinguishes three dimensions: the material, the functional, and the symbolic, that is, the actual physical remnants of the past, the aim of memory production, and the potential interpretations, respectively (18–19). Nora posits that what we call memory is in fact the "gigantic and breathtaking storehouse of a material stock of what it would be impossible for us to remember, an unlimited repertoire of what might need to be recalled" (13). In his view "an order is given to remember, but the responsibility is mine and it is I who must remember" (15). Hemingway is internally compelled to preserve his recollections. Indeed, in Paris he amassed a "storehouse of material stock," which must be sorted and protected from "the work of forgetting" (19). It is not simply a coincidence that he recalls dear memories and events from his youth while living with his first wife, when during the actual remembering process he is married to his fourth wife, Mary, with whom he has an estranged relationship. Of this tension-filled relationship with and marital alienation from his fourth wife Hemingway remarks, "Mary was nice and solid and courageous but . . . married couples could find themselves on roads that diverged and that it had already happened" (Mellow 555).

In Hemingway's work, material memory is connected to buildings, cafés, statues, and landmarks, or places of habitation that are fully anchored in the author's mind. At the same time, since the text is a collection of memories, the book becomes a *lieu de memoire* as well. Memories also have a "seductive power," expressing a "subtle enchantment with the past" (Nora 20), promoting an escape from the present. Such a "subtle enchantment" is implied by the acerbic remarks tempering the author's nostalgia about their visit to Gertrude Stein and Alice B. Toklas: "I felt that they forgave us for being in love and being married—time would fix that" (Hemingway 17). Hemingway's Paris is also a topographical *lieu de memoire* "owing everything to the specificity of their location and to being rooted in the ground" (Nora

22)—enabled with the author’s clear description of the location of the given building or facility so much ingrained in his memory.

The functional aspect refers to the purpose of the given memory “dedicated to preserving an incommunicable experience that would disappear along with those who shared it” (Nora 23). The Paris experienced by Hemingway only exists for him, it is truly incommunicable, perhaps the only other person who would be privy to it was Hadley, who had been divorced from him since 1927. Also, in line with Nora’s distinction within the subcategory of symbolic memory, dividing it into dominant and dominated, or imposed from above and from within, Hemingway’s “silent pilgrimage” (23) can be considered as a figurative sojourn to the scene of his youth.

The text reflects a psycho-geography based upon the combination of spatiality and memory. The city appears as a heterotopia, the combination of sites that are represented, contested, and inverted. The first episode, “A Good Café on the Place St-Michel” provides an apt example for such a location. On the one hand, the Café des Amateurs, the counterpart of the “good café,” is described as a “sad, evilly run” establishment, even a “cesspool” which Hemingway kept away from because of the smell (9). On the other hand, this café of questionable quality is located on the rue Mouffetard, a “wonderful narrow crowded market street” (9). Consequently, the concept and location of the café include opposing descriptions, as the unnamed café appears the inverse of the named one. It is in this unnamed café where he asserts his status in a Heideggerian way, echoing the idea of *Dasein*: “all Paris belongs to me” (12). Being a writer, Hemingway is also heterotopic as after finishing a story he feels both sad and happy and “always empty” (12).

The same applies to the portrayal of the couple’s flat as at first Hemingway aiming to escape the cold walls of the home walks along the boulevard St-Michel to the boulevard St-Germain, eventually to a good café “that he knew on the place St-Michel” (11). Despite the clear geographical identification, the café remains nameless. The idea of the home, again in the form of a heterotopia, also becomes applicable as he places their apartment in the rue du Cardinal Lemoine where he and his wife “ate well and cheaply and drank well and cheaply and slept well and warm together and loved each other” (41).

Hemingway’s Paris forms a parallel with Lefebvre’s representation of space and representational space concepts. Representations of space or conceived space refer to the transformation of the given space from an actual location to a combination of sites reflecting memories. Contested or challenged spaces are also connected to memory or the process of

recollection. The contested aspect is manifested by the city hosting a multiplicity of discourses. In fact, the primary motivator of Hemingway's spatial perspective is the contestation and inversion of the given concept. The cafés also form heterochronies, which are accessible and impenetrable at the same time. Accessibility is implied by his familiarity with and frequent attendance at such facilities. Nonetheless, despite knowing the waiters by their first names, he remains an outsider. In the same vein, his home is in stark contrast with the well-arranged appearance of the café: "Home in the rue du Cardinal Lemoine was a two-room flat that had no hot water and no inside toilet facilities except an antiseptic container, not uncomfortable to anyone who was used to a Michigan outhouse" (31–32).

The spatial practice implies the perceived, conceived, and lived space. In all cases one can discover the tension between the material and the metaphorical, the concrete and the abstract. The unnamed café in the opening section becomes an ideal location for writing as it is juxtaposed against the Café des Amateurs, which is primarily serving a clientele representing the lower classes, alcohol and drug addicts. Whenever Hemingway loses inspiration, a specific café atmosphere can facilitate the writing process.

The writer as a walker, the walker as a writer

Acting as a twentieth-century manifestation of the Baudelairian *flâneur* combining the role of "the aesthete and the dandy" (Seal), Hemingway takes both a physical and metaphysical walk in the Paris of his youth. The text is dominated by the motif of walking in the city, in other words, observation via locomotion. Nevertheless, the direction of Hemingway's walks or text production is retrospective as he looks back at a period four decades away. In effect, he and the reader read the city retrospectively together. His recollections center on cafés, restaurants, but he mentions racing grounds, museums, and bookstores, too. Hemingway's life in Paris has three primary locations: his home, cafés, and restaurants, but the most frequent locations are the cafés as they provide him with the space he needs for writing.

Contestation is also present in Hemingway's function as a walker creating an urban text wavering between accessibility and inaccessibility. A closed park compels him to give up his established route. It is also noteworthy that despite the detailed outline of any route the author takes either to or away from home the reader is not familiarized with the actual features or attributes of the particular street. In fact, while Hemingway creates a mental map, he is stranded on its surface, and he is unable to make significant inroads either in the physical or figurative sense into the fabric or culture of the host

community. He primarily communicates with expatriates and members of Paris society consider him an intriguing or charming foreigner at best. It thus follows that he is restricted to being an outsider either as a *voyeur* or a *flaneur*.

The chapter titled "People of the Seine" provides a good example of voyeurism: Hemingway, himself an avid fisherman, just watches those casting in the Seine as he "did not want to become involved in the fishing" (37). He reiterates that "he did not fish," that is, he did not take part in the activity intentionally. While Hemingway uses the third person plural in his description, the statement: "With the fishermen and the life on the river . . . I could never be lonely" implies a desire to establish a virtual community with the former (37).

Fishing, however, has a prioritized position in Hemingway's life and art. Suffice to mention the protagonist of the *The Sun Also Rises* (1926) Jake Barnes finding momentary respite from emotional turbulence at the Irati River in the Basque country, or the struggle of Santiago with the marlin in *Old Man and the Sea* (1952). In this vein he is not simply a watcher of the fishing in Paris, but also an expert, who evaluates the given activity and the respective equipment: "the fishermen used long, jointed, cane poles but fished with very fine leaders and light gear and quill floats and expertly baited the piece of water that they fished" (36).

Hemingway's routes in Paris cover both actual and poetic geography. He almost flaunts his familiarity with the topography of the city, and he provides the exact location for all the important facilities or places he visited or stayed at. The following sentence aptly illustrates how he reads, and at the same time, creates his text of Paris: "If I walked down by different streets to the Jardin du Luxembourg in the afternoon I could walk through the gardens and then go to the Musée du Luxembourg where the great paintings were that have now mostly been transferred to the Louvre and the Jeu de Paume" (16).

Hemingway also establishes a connection between writing and walking as locomotion not only leads to the formation of a metaphysical, but to that of an actual text: "I would walk along the quais when I had finished work or when I was trying to think something out. It was easier to think if I was walking" (36). Also in a form of a *mise en abyme*, an image within an image or a story within a story, in this case presenting remembrance within memory, the very act of writing and motion on the metaphysical level are conflated: "Some days it went so well that you could make the country so that you could walk into it through the timber to come out into the clearing and work up on to the high ground and see the hills beyond the arm of the lake" (69). The

term “it” in the first line refers to the writing process as an early form of metafiction. The description of course reminds one of the route Jake and Bill took to reach the Irati river. Since Hemingway was working at this time on the manuscript of his first great novel, *The Sun Also Rises*, we are allowed an insight into the actual writing process.

Walking evokes a heightened sensory capacity for him: “It was a lovely evening and I had worked hard all day and left the flat over the sawmill and walked out through the courtyard with the stacked lumber, closed the door, crossed the street and went into the back door of the bakery . . . and out through the good bread-smells of the ovens and the shop to the street” (75). In an earlier example, instead of submerging himself in the fragrance of food, Hemingway avoids all the eating establishments while roaming. He asserts that when strapped for money and suffering from hunger, “the best place to go was the Luxembourg Gardens where you saw and smelled nothing to eat all the way from the place de l’Observatoire to the rue de Vaugirard” (53).

Walking for Hemingway could also serve as an experience of *derivé* or drift during which “one or more persons . . . let themselves be drawn in by the attractions of the terrain and the encounters they find there” (Debord 62). The remark “I walked in the early dusk up the street and stopped outside the terrace of the Nègre de Toulouse restaurant where red-and-white checkered napkins were in the wooden napkin rings in the napkin rack waiting for us to come to dinner” (75) reveals how intensely he immersed himself in the sight down to its smallest details.

When forced to change his walking direction due to a closure of a park, Hemingway was compelled to alter his “text,” which demonstrates a connection between spatiality and emotion manifest in his recollections: “It was sad when the park was closed and locked and I was sad walking around it instead of through it and in a hurry to get home to the rue du Cardinal Lemoine” (23). Yet the physical geography of a given location can be elevated to poetic geography as his description of a route leading to a “good café” demonstrates:

I walked on in the rain. I walked down past the Lycée Henri Quatre and the ancient church of the St-Etienne-du-Mont and the windswept place du Panthéon and cut in for shelter for the right and finally came out on the lee side of the boulevard St-Michel and worked on down it past the Cluny and the boulevard St-Germain until I came to a good café that I knew on the place St-Michel. (10–11)

It is here that not only can he find refuge from the rain, but he also gains inspiration as he proudly states that “all Paris belongs to me and I belong to this notebook” (12).

Paris as a space is composed of a multiplicity of places and Hemingway’s assessment of the City of Lights suggests the relevance of Lefebvre’s three-part model to the aggregate space. “But Paris was a very old city and we were young and nothing was simple there, not even poverty, nor sudden money, nor the moonlight, nor right and wrong, nor the breathing of someone who lay beside you in the moonlight” (47). The empirical aspects of the perceived space are alluded to by the term “very old city,” the conceived space manifested in mental images, or cognitive maps, is suggested by the expressions “nothing was simple,” or “nor the moonlight.”

While Lefebvre applies spatial practice or perceived space to society, Hemingway’s text bears relevance to such practice at the individual level. It includes the “repetitive routines of everyday life,” among them “routes, networks, workplaces, private life, and leisure enjoyments” (Soja 66), which Hemingway and, to a limited extent, Hadley definitely took part in. In Lefebvre’s view, conceived space is the dominant space in any society and it is laden with ideology conveyed by “the written and spoken word, or language, discourse and text” (Soja 67). In this instance Hemingway, referring to the fluctuation of privation and wealth, makes an allusion to poverty both on the macro and micro level, in other words, to the lower social strata of Paris and his own socio-economic status respectively.

Spaces of representation or representational spaces are “directly lived” (Soja 67), and they can appear in the form of the dominated or passively experienced space “that imagination wants to change or appropriate” (68). The term “nothing was simple” in fact forms the opposite of the triumphal appropriation of Paris expressed in the statement “Paris belongs to me.” Thus, Paris as represented and described appears as the passively experienced space in contrast to Hemingway’s boastful declaration implying active control of the given space.

The psychological impact of space on the individual

In the chapter titled “Une Génération Perdue,” Hadley, recalling their visit to Gertrude Stein’s home, offers a telling example of how space can generate a negative psychological or emotional impact on someone. While at first Hemingway appears to appreciate the advice he gets from Stein, her derogatory remark categorizing him as part of a lost generation (28) and the

realization of Stein's sexual orientation makes him feel ill at ease, and he develops a gradual resentment. The dialogue between him and Hadley aimed at summarizing their shared experience is most instructive:

"You know, Gertrude *is* nice, anyway."

"Of course, Tatie."

"But she does talk a lot of rot sometimes."

"I never hear her . . . I'm a wife, it's her friend that talks to me."

(29)

It is noteworthy that Hadley uses a term of endearment to name her husband, as the fact that they are both expatriates, strangers in a strange land, brings them closer to each other. In fact, Hemingway's description of Stein's flat is heterotopic as well. At first, he says "it was like one of the best rooms in the finest museum except there was a big fireplace and it was warm and comfortable and they gave you good things to eat and tea" (16), but as he becomes disillusioned with her he notices the "new worthless pictures hung in with the great pictures" (89).

Although the spatial practices are dominated by the author himself, there are interspersed episodes when he appears with his wife, such as this visit to Stein's home during which the young married couple in love is contrasted with the stern approach of the host. Even the title, "Miss Stein Instructs" places Hemingway and his wife into the position of children learning from a strict teacher. In this case Lefebvre's lived place, and especially that of the dominated space, may apply as both Hemingway and Hadley are passive recipients of the simultaneous charm and admonition Stein and her home represent. The couple also visits the races together and they both start to reminisce recalling pleasant memories of various trips taken with their friend, which functions as another example of the *mise en abyme*.

Heidegger's concept of spatiality elicits the question whether Hemingway has achieved the state of being at home or the condition of *Dasein* in Paris, and if the same applies to Hadley as well. It must be kept in mind that the text is produced by the established, internationally respected and celebrated writer recalling his younger, ambitious, yet insecure self. Most of the figures he met—Ezra Pound, Gertrude Stein, Jules Paschin, Wyndham Lewis, and F. Scott Fitzgerald—are acknowledged and accomplished artists. At this point in his life Hemingway is a struggling writer, who constantly seeks inspiration and faces an ever-present fear of not being able to complete his work. Thus, he feels especially at home in cafés, where he can gain

motivation. Hemingway judges a given location, either a café or a home, according to its propensity to facilitate the writing process. His account reveals that despite being married he spends most of his time alone as Hadley appears in the role of a supporting wife or companion at best. Consequently, he is the one who authors the text of his life and of the city, in other words, Hemingway and Hadley rarely read the city together. Therefore, the mental or cognitive map implied by the conceived space is only formed for him. According to Ulrich Neisser, while traveling the hero forms or attempts to form a cognitive map. Cognitive mapping, or constructing “an orienting schema, an active information-seeking structure,” involves three steps: becoming acquainted with the new physical surroundings, finding and exposing routes, and identifying landmarks until everything becomes familiar (110–11).

Obviously, Hemingway meets all these requirements as he almost boasts with his familiarity with Paris, and he reveals new routes regularly as he recalls his way home and when facing obstacles, such as the closure of the park, he can modify his route immediately. He is also oriented in Paris by the statue of Marshall Ney. Hadley, on the other hand, rarely walks alone and she functions as a classic Hemingway heroine limited to being the object of desire and the companion at the same time. Ironically, while Hemingway is in his element in Paris, Hadley recalls the trips away from Paris with excessive fondness. In one of the classic scenes of the episode titled “A False Spring” the couple nostalgically reminisces about shared experiences in the Alps while standing on a bridge spanning the Seine. Hemingway’s recalling the episode and especially Hadley’s comment is instructive: “Standing there I wondered how much of what we had felt on the bridge was just hunger. I asked my wife and she said, ‘I don’t know, Tatie. There are so many sorts of hunger. In the spring there are more. But that’s gone now. Memory is hunger’” (46). The expression “many sorts of hunger” implying unfulfilled desires or frustrated efforts at acceptance suggests that she did not feel at home in Paris.

Since Heidegger’s concept primarily refers to Being in the world, which implies being at home in the world (*Being* 233) or understanding oneself in the terms of one’s existence (32), Hemingway’s Paris experience can be interpreted on the physical and the metaphysical level as well. As far as his personal status is concerned, he is an expatriate, which implies a certain amount of rootlessness. This limited ability to integrate into the host society is partly underscored by keeping company with representatives of the primarily Anglo-Saxon literary world or the superficial relations forged at café tables. If *Dasein* is interpreted in light of the understanding of the self, the

Paris years contribute to self-acceptance, but only in a retrospective sense. It must be noted that Hemingway spent most of his life away from America and the actual autobiographical impulse of *A Moveable Feast* does not only evoke pleasant memories preserving the remnants of his youth; the city itself becomes a metaphor for a sanctuary, a place of internal calm and tranquility he was seeking throughout his life.

Conclusion

Edward Soja's description of *Thirdspace*, "where all places are, capable of being seen from every angle, each standing clear; but also a secret and conjectured object, filled with illusions and allusions, a space that is common to all of us yet never able to be completely seen and understood" (56), can fit Hemingway's Paris. The memoir represents a futile effort to control or maintain a hold on this city constantly changing both on the literal and figurative levels. Nonetheless, Hemingway's creative imagination-fueled spatial practice represents an attempt to transform the cafés a home away from home in a city proving to be a much sought-after psychological refuge. The author's illusions recall and mourn fleeting youth, while the allusions remind the reader of the unreliability of one's memory. Judith Butler's assumption that "the more I narrate the less accountable I prove to be" (67) resonates with Hemingway's skeptical caveat in the Preface concerning his reminiscences: "If the reader prefers, this book may be regarded as fiction. But there is always the chance that such a book of fiction may throw some light on what has been written as fact" (n. p.).

Mary Hemingway's introductory remarks to the book are indicative of her tension-filled spousal relationship and shed light on the marital estrangement implied by Hemingway's previous comment on "diverged roads." What is striking at first glance is that although written by Mary, the segment displays the very emotional evasion Hemingway is famous for. In fact, Mary's passage describes the stages of the writing process virtually in third person singular, and the term "we" appears only once when it refers to the couple's trip to Spain. The distancing intent on the part of Mary is not hard to discern. The text itself is referred to simply as "this book," which suggests her reluctance to become familiar with the respective content. The same conclusion is suggested by the last sentence: "It concerns the years 1921 to 1926 in Paris." Once again, the neutral pronoun and the mere chronological delineation helps Mary "to keep emotions at arm's length" (Virágos 380) regarding the fact that her husband excluded her from his world.

Hemingway's choice to reminisce about his first experiences in Paris as his main theme underscores the formative aspects of the time he spent there. Aiming to slow down the "work of forgetting," he made a last-ditch attempt to reconnect with his youth fading into the chronological distance. "There is never any ending to Paris" (160), he writes, acknowledging the eternally lasting impression the city made on him. The analysis demonstrates that despite acquiring an impressive familiarity with the topography of the city and developing a first-name-based acquaintance with the café and restaurant personnel, he was not able to find a true home in Paris. Most of his time was spent alone either writing or searching for inspirations to write. Hemingway remained "a stranger in a strange land" where home meant the intimate companionship of his wife. The detailed description of Hemingway's everyday routes with the exact directions and enumerated street names verging on the obsessive gives the impression that the author may be compensating for the weakening of his memory.

The construction of *lieux de memoire* implies a chronological definition of the self, a search for a stable point from which a retrospective look can be taken. One of the unique aspects of *A Moveable Feast* is that it describes how the author fondly and warmly, yet ironically recalls his early years, which also include memories of events preceding his stay in Paris. Yet the latter memories are jointly summoned with his wife. In some sense Hemingway's life can be seen as heterotopic since throughout his years in Paris he truly represented, contested, and even presented the inverse of himself. Thus, the expression, "nothing was simple," alludes to a man on an eternal search for tranquility and escape from a spiritual and psychological hunger, from which an occasional stroll or later a fishing trip could provide only a temporary respite.

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Note

¹ The veracity of the *A Moveable Feast* has long been the subject of controversy, and Hemingway's remark "[n]o one can write true facts in reminiscence" (Mellow 592) has deepened the respective quagmire. Furthermore, the author's comment concerning omissions and ellipses in the very text suggests ambiguity both in the textual and literary sense: "You could omit anything if you knew that you omitted, and the omitted part would strengthen the story and make people feel something more than they understood" (58). The respective ambiguity inspired J. Gerald Kennedy and Mark Spilka to search for signs of androgyny "behind public displays of virility and fictional provings of masculine integrity" (Spilka 2). While such contentions certainly fall in line with research results emphasizing a shift from toxic to anxious masculinity in Hemingway's works, my essay prioritizes the role of memory and its capability to form and re-form space both literally and figuratively in *A Moveable Feast*.

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