

# What has ended?: Masculinity and time in "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow"

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## アブストラクト

アーネスト・ヘミングウェイの初期短編小説、「あることの終わり」の冒頭の描写とそれ以降の間の齟齬は、今日まで研究者たちの議論の的となってきた。これはヘミングウェイの技量の問題というよりも、おそらくはかれが1920年代という、さまざまな価値観が挑戦を受けた時代に作家として活躍を始めたことが原因である。本稿では、ジェンダー意識と時間観の二つに着目し、それらがヘミングウェイの時代にどのような変容をこうむっていったか、そしてそれがかれの作品にどのような影響を与えていったかを、当時の時代背景に目を向けつつ、主に「あることの終わり」と「三日吹く風」という二つの短編を分析しながら考えていく。

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Ernest Hemingway is a controversial writer. In spite of Hemingway's tough attitude, his works often contradict what he seems to imply. He liked to present a macho image, and early criticism followed his lead.<sup>1</sup> But later biographers and critics have cast doubt on his machismo. In his biography, Kenneth Lynn showed the great influence of his mother over young Ernest and argued that it resulted in confusion about gender distinctions. Mark Spilka examined androgynous imagery in Hemingway's works. *The Garden of Eden*, published posthumously in 1986, delivered a crushing blow to his long-cherished image. The novel clearly shows the author's interest in homosexuality. In discussing homosexual desires in Hemingway's works, Debra Modellmog devotes many pages to this novel. Recently some critics began to argue that macho is a term that has more nuanced meanings.<sup>2</sup> Now probably no reader would take Hemingway's macho image at face value. The works of biographers and critics show that Hemingway had a far more complex and liberal understanding of gender and sexuality than previously believed.

But it is also true that his works strongly promote a hyper-masculine image if only in a reaction to his possible anxiety regarding gender and sexuality. In this sense, Hemingway's attitude toward certain trends of his time is ambivalent. In the 1920s gender distinction became increasingly blurred. Flappers appeared, and what had been considered a "men's

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<sup>1</sup> There is a famous account that when Hemingway read Philip Young's book, *Ernest Hemingway*, he expressed a strong disapproval of Young's argument. But unlike later critics, Young did not try to undermine the image which Hemingway had been creating.

<sup>2</sup> Greg Forter points out the masochistic pleasure that exists behind hard-boiled heroes' toughness. Richard Fantina discusses masochistic tendency in Hemingway's works that is closely related to his "machismo."

sphere" was gradually invaded by women. Hemingway clearly championed rigid gender distinctions and often despised effeminate men, but as Jake's affection for Brett, who also has a masculine aspect, in *The Sun Also Rises*, or a short story "Sea Change" shows, he seemed to be attracted to what he ostentatiously rejected. Also, as to sexuality, he actually felt the gradual transformation of the norm and took an ambivalent attitude. He moved to Paris after the war and saw many homosexuals. His mentor in his Paris years was Gertrude Stein, a lesbian. In *Imagining Paris*, Gerald Kennedy explicates how Hemingway at once hated and loved the district in Paris where many homosexuals lived.

Hemingway was both reactionary and progressive regarding some social issues of his time. I think this attitude is similar toward another important issue: how to understand time. His technique - the emphasis on "the present" and the insertion of fragmentary episodes as in *In Our Time* - obviously belongs to high modernism, which is experimental in dealing with temporality. However, he sometimes seems to take a conservative view. In some stories and novels, including "The End of Something," "The Three-Day Blow," and *The Sun Also Rises*, he scarcely conceals nostalgic feelings, which is rather based on a traditional view of time.

This essay will explore what these ambivalent attitudes mean and how they are reflected in his works by examining his early short stories, "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" with an eye to the social trends of his time.

The beginning of "The End of Something," Ernest Hemingway's early story, describes the decline of Hortons Bay, which had once prospered, in two paragraphs.

In the old days Hortons Bay was a lumbering town. No one who lived in it was out of sound of the big saws in the mill by the lake. Then one year there were no more logs to make lumber. The lumber schooners came into the bay and were loaded with the cut of the mill that stood stacked in the yard....The schooner moved out of the bay....And it moved out into the open lake, carrying with it everything that had made the mill a mill and Hortons Bay a town.

The one-story bunkhouses, the eating house, the company store, the mill offices, and the big mill itself stood deserted in the acres of sawdust that covered the swampy meadow by the shore of the bay. (200)

This opening is followed by Nick and Marjorie's arrival at this place, where Hortons Bay had once existed, and his bringing up breaking up with her.

But while some critics see a consistency between the opening and the following part, not a few critics have been perplexed by it.<sup>3</sup> For, the tone of this opening part, which describes a social history that Hortons Bay has fallen prey to, is quite different from that of the following part that details a tense conversation between Nick and Marjorie. There would probably be no problem for this story without this opening part, and it is unclear whether it increases the artistic value of this story. It is strange for Hemingway, who is famous for

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<sup>3</sup> For example, though admitting that there is "an apparent inconsistency between introduction and main story" (214), Horst Kruse asserts the opening part presents the lesson we should draw from the rest of the story, saying:

The introduction, in fact, elucidates the lesson that the story has for the protagonist: all things run their natural course, and submission and acceptance are the only sensible responses. (214)

Lisa Tyler associates the virginity of the forest around Hortons Bay with that of Marjorie from an ecofeministic perspective.

On the other hand, Paul Smith introduces the opinions of the critics who are perplexed by the inconsistency between the two parts (204).

omitting the unnecessary, to add this part, which is called by Joseph DeFalco an "appended parable."

Why did Hemingway need this part? I would like to start with this question. Then I will argue how Hemingway's sense of time is related to the issue of masculinity, by examining his early works, "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow."

Whether it fits well with the whole structure of the story or not, the function of the opening part seems obvious. Critics have agreed that this story depicts the end of the relationship between Nick and Marjorie, and most readers would have the same impression. In this context, the opening part can be considered to symbolically express the theme that something has ended and is irrevocable and to foretell the end of the relationship between Nick and Marjorie. But the bewilderment of critics, who consider the opening part is not necessarily in harmony with the following, would stem from the suspicion that this symbol does not work well, in addition to the astonishment that Hemingway, who seldom uses a symbol in his stories, should do so in this story, as we can see in Takaki Hiraishi's essay.

It is certain that the end of good old Hortons Bay, described at the opening, seems to anticipate that of the relationship between Nick and Marjorie. However, careful reading reveals that unlike the end of Hortons Bay, which tells us that something has ended and we can do nothing about it, the relationship between the couple is more complex. Nick's friend Bill plays an important role here.

He comes to meet Nick after Marjorie has left and rowed away in a boat. The fact that he appears immediately after she leaves is important. Paul Smith points out that Bill and Marjorie are juxtaposed. According to Smith, in the first draft of the story Bill touches Nick while Marjorie does not. But in the final draft the sentence "without touching each other" is added after "[Nick and Marjorie] sat on the blanket" (203), while the statement that Bill touches Nick is removed, and the sentence that "Bill didn't touch [Nick], either" is added. This revision shows that Hemingway tries to make sure that their functions in this story are very similar. In other words, Hemingway wants them to be equally important for Nick. They represent, as it were, two choices that Nick, who stands at an important crossroad in his life, faces, and we can probably say that the fact that Bill appears as soon as Marjorie leaves means that Nick abandons the option represented by Marjorie and chooses the one represented by Bill.

This idea is confirmed by Bill's remark in "The Three-Day Blow" that depicts Nick and Bill after the event in "The End of Something." When Nick is with him in his house, Bill says:

"You were very wise, Wewedge," Bill said.

"What do you mean?" asked Nick.

"To bust off that Marge business," Bill said.

"I guess so," said Nick.

"It was the only thing to do. If you hadn't, by now you'd be back home working trying to get enough money to get married." (213)

Even after this Bill continues to talk about the harmfulness of marriage. What he tries to say is, in short, that Nick would not be with him any more if Nick had decided to continue the relationship with Marjorie. In other words, he implies that Nick would have had to give up the relationship with him if he had chosen the option represented by Marjorie.

Re-reading "The End of Something" with this in mind, we can find that Nick actually had faced not only the end of the relationship with Marjorie but also another latent one. He would have had to part with Bill if he had not given up Marjorie. Of course, that does not

mean he could never have seen Bill again; it means he would have to part with the kind of time which Bill and Nick spend in "The Three-Day Blow," that is, the time in which they can chat the whole day without working. We can call it boyhood or adolescence. It will naturally end if one gets married, has a child and takes the responsibility to maintain his family. But Nick avoids a marriage and returns to his irresponsible boyhood or adolescence. Of course, one cannot stay there forever. This harsh fact overshadows "The End of Something."

Toward the end of "The Three-Day Blow," Bill's remark, "You might get back into it again" (215), brightens up Nick's heart. Nick thinks:

He felt happy. Nothing was finished. Nothing was ever lost. He would go into town on Saturday....There was always a way out. (216)

This idea that "nothing has ended and we can always recover it" merely expresses Nick's childish and overtly optimistic hope. For, the passage, "[o]utside now the Marge business was no longer so tragic. It was not even very important. The wind blew everything like that away" (216), gives us an impression that this buoyant mood of Nick's stems from his drawing on Bill's remark in order to avert his eyes from his psychological burden rather than the revelation of some important truth.

The reason Nick tries to draw on the idea that he can always recover what he has lost is, of course, that he feels bruised from the breakup with Marjorie. But if we consider that Nick feels an emotional upheaval when facing the two options embodied by Marjorie and Bill, the idea that "one can always recover what has been lost" applies to Bill.

It would be possible to see Nick's anxiety here because even if Nick parts with Marjorie now, it is clear that there will appear another Marjorie, and it is uncertain whether Nick will be able to recover the time with male friends, or adolescence, if he chooses marriage. Moreover, if Nick wants to be a member of society, he will have to choose a Marjorie and finish an irresponsible life with male friends. In fact, in "Cross-Country Snow," Nick is married and has to sacrifice the time with male friends.

Thus in "The End of Something" there is more than one end. Though the end of the relationship between Nick and Marjorie is explicit, there is the latent end of the relationship between Nick and Bill behind it. We can guess that the latter will inevitably happen even if Nick avoids it temporarily - especially the readers who have read the stories that depict later Nick such as "Cross-Country Snow." This complexity is inconsistent with the unequivocalness of the opening part. While the opening part makes clear that the good old days of Hortons Bay have ended, it is very hard to determine what has ended in the following part. In short, the assertion that something has decisively ended and the question of whether something has really ended coexist in "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow." I think that is why the opening part seems to be an "appended parable."

Then why do these stories have such a structure? I would like to tackle this question by examining Hemingway's sense of time. Hemingway was obviously under the influence of the change a conventional sense of time underwent in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century.

A conventional way of understanding of time began to be called into question at the turn of century. Various objections were raised against it. For example, thinkers such as Henri Bergson, Walter Lippman, and Sigmund Freud contributed to the change in the definition - or perception - of the conventional sense of time. Henri Bergson, whose theory had a strong influence over Willa Cather, famously doubted a linear flow of time. He argues against the conventional understanding of time that sets a demarcation between the past and the present, or the present and the future. Walter Lippman divided time into the three kinds: social, immediate and perceptual, and insisted that all of them can be illusory (Berman 7).

The concept of the unconscious, proposed by Sigmund Freud, who definitely had a strong influence over high modernism, point to the realm where a conventional temporality is no longer valid. In the scientific world, Einstein's publication of the special relativity theory in 1905 also had a great impact. Stephen Kern says these movements challenged the validity of a conventional understanding of temporality and created "two kinds of time:" "public and private" (33). He says that only Einstein challenges the uniformity of public time, but:

All others left public time to flow irreversibly forward but insisted that the direction of private time was as capricious as a dreamer's fancy. The temporal reversals of novelists, psychiatrists, and sociologists further undermined the traditional idea that private time runs obediently alongside the forward path of public time.

The thrust of the age was to affirm the reality of private time against that of a single public time and to define its nature as heterogeneous, fluid, and reversible. (34)

The theories proposed by Husserl and Heidegger also encouraged a subjective view of time and focused on its ambiguity. On the whole, we can say the great change that occurred in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century regarding how to understand time went hand-in-hand with the ideological change that shifted the focus to more subjective realm. Many thinkers rejected a traditional view of time that guaranteed objectivity and certainty and began to look into a more uncertain subjective understanding of time.<sup>4</sup> By focusing on subjectivity, they tried to make more ambiguous the distinctions of time periods such as the past, the present, and the future. If we measure time with a clock, there seems to be an objective standard of time. But a subjective understanding of time denies any clear-cut definitions of time. It regards temporal experience as more chaotic and disorienting.

When William James states about "the stream of thought" that "no state once gone can recur and be identical with what it was before" (231), he obviously mentions the heterogeneity of subjective, "private time," and there is no doubt that many high modernist works try to explore this unique and newly-found experience, and that the private time became more important than public time.

We can probably say that the inconsistency in "The End of Something" reflects this private/ public time duality to some extent. The opening part shows a linear time flow in the form of an irreversible decline of Hortons Bay, which is a public event and has a characteristic of public time. On the other hand, in Nick's episode a sense of time is not so simple. It is related to Nick's private perception of time and more confusing than the public time scheme.<sup>5</sup>

This duality can be paraphrased as that of new and old. Frederick Jameson points out that there coexist old and new senses of time in the sensitivity of some modernists:

I want to conjecture that the protagonists of these aesthetic and philosophical revolutions were people who still lived in two distinct worlds simultaneously; born in those agricultural villages we still sometimes characterize as medieval or premodern, they developed their vocations in the new urban agglomerations with their radically distinct and "modern" spaces and temporalities. The sensitivity to deep time in the moderns then registers this comparatist perception of the two

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<sup>4</sup> This mostly occurred within modernist movement. Certainty of "Public" time was reinforced regardless of this intellectual movement. For example, four time zones took effect in 1918 in the USA, and time signals of Greenwich Mean Time were first broadcasted in 1924.

<sup>5</sup> This type of perception can be related to Hemingway's antipathy toward the concept of progress, which is common to many of his contemporaries. For the concept of progress is based on the idea of a linear and developing time. Ronald Berman discusses how Hemingway and other modernists champion "relativity of time" (41).

socioeconomic temporalities, which the first modernists had to negotiate in their own lived experience. (699)

Hemingway spent his childhood in Michigan and then came to New York. It is highly possible that he has a "perception of the two socioeconomic temporalities." Though "The End of Something" is set in a rural area, Nick's sense of time is quite new compared with the simple time flow suggested at the beginning. Moreover, the structure of this story itself elucidates the new sensibility to time. The biggest difference between old and new perceptions of time is that the latter is heterogeneous and does not have definite demarcations while the former is homogenous and linear.

Ronald Schleifer points out:

Bourgeois sensibility, as Newton's reference to "mathematical time" and "duration" suggest, apprehends time in terms of formal, spatial metaphors that above all emphasize the continuity of time I have described. Such an emphasis on continuity leads both to the repetition and interchangeability of the elements of and in time and also to a sense of development, in which "discrete forms are replaced by continuities. (Ermarth 1983: 16)" (74)

He also says because time is homogenous and interchangeable for writers such as George Eliot, "the otherness of the past is immediately recovered as another version of a (universalist) present" (119). If Hemingway had had the same time perception as Eliot's, "The End of Something" could not have had the form it took. In that case, Nick's episode should repeat the opening part. But actually in terms of time there is a considerable difference between the two. Nick's relationship with Marjorie does not end in the same way as Hortons Bay does. In the story time is not homogenous or interchangeable. Nick's episode cannot be another version of Hortons Bay's decline. The story itself makes clear that time is heterogeneous and every moment is unique.

This partly answers the question I raised at the beginning of this essay: "Why did Hemingway need this opening part?" With it, the text can effectively show the difference between the old and new understandings of time and how the new sense of time works with the difference, that is, the inconsistency, in the center of the story.

But in addition to this, we can find another reason why the opening part is needed. Hemingway clearly has a new understanding of time, and he tries to show its complexity in the story. But there are other aspects in his works.

While Hemingway's works often show a new understanding of time, some characters sometimes try to draw a clear distinction between two periods. As I will state later, in this process something that is gone becomes the object the character longs for. We can call it nostalgia. In this case, the opening part is the object of the nostalgia.

In the following section, I will show how Nick and Bill react to a new understanding of time and how this attempt of theirs is related to gender issues. These arguments will show Hemingway's ambivalent attitude toward time and gender issues.

### **Desire for the end of something**

As I have stated, in Nick's episode, unlike the opening part, it is unclear what has ended. But Nick seems to try to go against the ambiguity his whole episode implies.

The reason Nick tries to part with Marjorie is not clearly shown. Nick only says, "I don't know" (203). But the text strongly implies he does not like Marjorie's invasion of the male world. Nick tells Marjorie that the trouble is "You know everything" though it is he who has "taught [her] everything" (203). Marjorie obviously has learned her skills in fishing

or rowing a boat from Nick. Now that Marjorie, a woman, has acquired outdoor skills, she seems to cross the border between the two sexes and "know everything." Nick is displeased with this idea. He apparently does not want the woman who can perform like a man in spite of the fact that he himself led her to do so. We can discern his desire to protect "the male world" in his attitude toward Marjorie.

As I have stated earlier, Nick faces two options here and chooses the one represented by Bill. In doing so, he banishes Marjorie from his "male world" and determines to stay there with Bill. This "male world" is closely linked to adolescence and will disappear in the near future. For, though Bill says Nick would have got married if he had not "bust[ed] off that Marge business" (213), which means the end of their relationship, many readers know that it is hard to avoid a marriage and maintain such a "male world." Nevertheless, Nick chooses to maintain the status quo. Nick, in a sense, refuses to mature. With this refusal, he tries to stay in the present, which is the only place where he seems to be able to contact an intact masculinity.

In short, here Nick makes an attempt to draw a clear distinction between the present and the future and associate each time period with a certain image. He tries to think that the present, when he can be with male friends, is linked to a masculine image but that he will lose such a happy time in the future, when the time with his male friends will be limited. Contrary to those who focus on the ambiguity of time, Nick sets definite time periods. Then he understands the present as the time to which he will never be able to return once it has ended and tries to stay there.

We can understand this attitude of his, considering the predicament his father is in. In "The Doctor and the Doctor's Wife," we can see a lack of masculinity in Nick's father. Though insulted by an Indian, he cannot retort, and his wife holds a dominating position in his house. The fact that Nick's father, who is the closest adult man to Nick, spends an unhappy life no doubt urges him to stick to the present status.

Considering Nick's age, the intensity of his desire stands out. Carlos Baker indicates Nick is over 20 in "The End of Something" (132-33). In editing *The Nick Adams Stories*, Philip Young put "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow" after "Big Two-Hearted River." He apparently thought those two stories depict Nick after his return from the war. As Takaki Hiraishi points out, if Baker and Young are right, Nick's attitude is too immature for his age.<sup>6</sup> He cannot, or does not want to, explain why he wants to leave Marjorie. What he can only say is that he does not "know what to say" (204). He is immature - probably wants to stay immature by evading the responsibility of convincing Marjorie. This desire for staying immature is, as I have stated, closely related to the impulse to stay in the present.

We can easily find this adherence to the present in Hemingway's works. Most of his works focus on depicting present moments. This concentration on the present is often accompanied with a fear of the future, as in the case of Nick, who is afraid of what awaits him in the future.

For example, in "Big Two-Hearted River" Nick is reluctant to fish in a swamp, which is geographically and temporally ahead of him. A swamp is down the stream, and "Nick did not want to go in there now" because "[i]n the swamp fishing was a tragic adventure" (198). Critics have argued that a swamp embodies something menacing. Some of them associate it

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<sup>6</sup> Hiraishi also points out that Nick's immaturity partly stems from Hemingway's style. Hemingway's writing technique, which is famous as the tip of iceberg technique, refuses to give detailed explanations. Thus sometimes it makes his characters appear immature. Considering that Hemingway's emphasis on description of the present is linked to his understanding of masculinity as I will state later, this indication is interesting.

with Nick's fear of femininity (Smith 92). Nick reacts to this menacing swamp by deferring the time to face it. This story ends with the passage, "[t]here were plenty of days coming when he could fish the swamp" (199). Nick knows an ominous swamp is down the stream and will fish there some day. But he seems to reassure himself that it is in the future when he will "fish the swamp." Meanwhile he and the narrative focus on the present. In other words, he tries to avoid thinking of facing a swamp though conscious of its inevitability. He can enjoy the pleasant time fishing in the present but at the same time senses that the happy time will inevitably end. To put it another way, the present becomes more valuable because it will necessarily end.

We should also pay attention to the meaning of fishing for Nick. The readers who have read other Nick stories in *In Our Time* ("Big Two-Hearted River" is put at the end of the novel) know an outdoor recreation such as fishing is closely related to his remembrance of the past. Nick's behavior in this story is usually understood as the ritual to recover his lost innocence. He repeats what he did in his boyhood and tries to get back the innocence he once had. His almost mechanical movement contrasts with ominous fluidity of swamp. If Nick's hard work that is reminiscent of his boyhood connotes masculinity he once had, the swamp's lack of distinct movement implies the opposite.

The present, which is linked to masculinity, is valuable because it is destined to end. Bill's attitude demonstrates this view. He tries to persuade Nick that their relationship will end if Marjorie comes between them. In other words, he champions the idea that their time will end some day due to intervention of a woman.

It is quite unclear how Nick thinks about Bill's idea. He basically keeps silent and sometimes nods. He seems to be almost persuaded, but his silence shows that there is a possibility that Nick does not agree with Bill's simple view. As I will state later, the difference of their stances reflects Hemingway's ambivalent view on temporality.

Before examining it, I will explore what Bill's desire means. It stems from a certain discourse about masculinity in the early 20th century.

### **Masculinity in Crisis**

In Hemingway's time masculinity faced a serious crisis. Women's increasing participation into the workforce, the establishment of women's suffrage, and the appearance of sexually bold flappers aggravated male anxiety about the meaning and definition of masculinity in the 1920s. Of course, there was a backlash. According to Michael Kimmel, the early 20<sup>th</sup> century saw what might be a compensatory popularity of boxing, the idolization of the frontier, as well as some educators' assertion that boys and girls should be offered differentiated educations, as well as movements meant to promote a recovery of manhood, for which Theodore Roosevelt was famous. All of them intended to reestablish gender distinction and increase the value of masculinity again. Hemingway's macho appeal is usually considered to be one of such attempts.

His attitude has a great similarity with an important social movement that tried to link masculinity with the outdoors. Theodore Roosevelt is well known as an ardent advocate of the movement. In his preface to *The Wilderness Hunter* he says:

In hunting, the finding and killing of the game is after all but a part of the whole.... The chase is among the best of all national pastimes; it cultivates that vigorous manliness for the lack of which in a nation, as in an individual, the possession of no other qualities can possibly atone. (viii)

It is obvious that Hemingway shared this idea, which James Fenimore Cooper had embodied as Natty Bumppo as early as the first half of 19<sup>th</sup> century and writers such as



Owen Wister, Jack London, and Roosevelt began to stress in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. In Hemingway's works hunting in the wilderness is definitely masculine behavior. For example, in Book Two of *The Sun Also Rises*, Nick experiences a "men without women" world during the short fishing excursion with Bill, which is completely idyllic and peaceful, in contrast to urban Paris, where the complicated relationships centering around Brett always distress him. Also in "The Short Happy Life of Francis Macomber," the wilderness is the place where masculinity is tested.

As I have said, this idea has a long history but in Hemingway's time it began to carry wider implications at least for some men. Longing for the outdoor life came from "an effort to restore manly vigor and revitalize American men by promoting separate homosocial preserves when men can be men without female interference" (Kimmel 64). American men who considered their life unmasculine tried to establish a geographical distance from women. In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century a temporal aspect was added to that.

The popularity of the boy scouts is important in addressing this issue.<sup>7</sup> Established in 1910, The Boy Scouts of America had attracted 361,000 boys by 1919. David Macleod points out that reaction against an increasingly complex civilized world underlies the basic philosophy of the boy scouts. He introduces Joseph Kett's study, which asserts that "modern adolescence was - at least for boys - an innovation of, by, and for the middle class" (xv). Advocates of the boy scouts nostalgically dreamt of the time when boys had been able to perform manfully and tried to recover such an ideal boyhood. Adolescence was the place created for that.<sup>8</sup>

Kimmel explained that this tendency came from a nostalgic desire for a "secure past, evoking an age before identity crises, before crises of masculinity" (119). As Lawrence Levine discusses in *The Unpredictable Past*, various forms of nostalgia against dramatic progress in diverse fields appeared in this period. The nostalgia for intact masculinity might be one of them. American masculinity of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century became ever more threatened by drastic social changes. Dreaming of a period that is completely different from the present means imagining the past untainted by the distresses that haunt the present. At least for some advocates of masculinity both the historical and personal past functioned as antithesis to the present. Hemingway and Theodore Roosevelt doubtless had a similar idea. In addition to their fascination with primitiveness, they share a longing for adolescence as the period for intact masculinity.

When Theodore Roosevelt said, "It was my last chance to be a boy," asked why he would go on the dangerous excursion to South America, he clearly associated the experience of wilderness with that of boyhood. Hemingway's works also often show a strong link between outdoor experience and boyhood ease. For example, in "Cross-Country Snow" Nick irresponsibly enjoys skiing with George. But the idyllic time does not last long. After skiing, Nick sees a pregnant girl, which reminds him of the pregnancy of Helen, his wife. While they stay together, "George and Nick were happy" (252), but, as Joseph Flora says, there is a strong implication that this happiness will vanish after they return to the U.S. George has to go back to his school, and Nick will have to be responsible for his wife and yet-to-be-born child.<sup>9</sup> George, who tries to persuade Nick into going somewhere with him, resembles

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<sup>7</sup> Hemingway's father was committed to YMCA activities, which have many similarities with those of the boy scouts, and young Ernest joined them. (Senaha 61-2)

<sup>8</sup> Thus two nostalgias are in play here: for the old days and for one's boyhood. The nostalgic desires for both the historical and personal pasts are intricately linked. But Macleod also points out that what character builders often modeled on for their educational policy for boys "was a world that never quite existed." (52)

<sup>9</sup> "Nick and George are bidding adieu to the period of youth and irresponsibility that skiing party symbolizes, and both of them know it." (195)

Bill in "The End of Something" and "The Three-Day Blow." He makes it clear that the delightful time for men ends once they have returned to their ordinary adult life. George and Bill are similar in that they want to set a boundary and champion the time with men, in which they can escape responsibility and the complexity of the adult world.

There is little doubt that Hemingway himself shares this almost naive idea in spite of his acute sense of the complexity of his time. His 1922 poem "Along with Youth" laments the loss "of his unattached bachelor youth - of the pleasure inherent in camping, hunting, and fishing with friends" (Jobst 26) in a more direct way.<sup>10</sup> His unfinished story "The Last Good Country" is also filled with strong nostalgia for the lost good boyhood. Moreover, it is known that Hemingway liked the works of Rudyard Kipling, who often depicted masculinity of boys.<sup>11</sup>

However, this dream of an intact boyhood masculinity is unrealistic. Michael Kimmel and Anthony Rotund's books about the history of masculinity argue that there was hardly a time when men are at ease with their masculinity at least after the earliest 19<sup>th</sup> century, when most men were no longer landowners and independent artisans and began to be hired by companies. They had to look for self-definition in the instability of the marketplace and thus "[n]ow manhood had to be proved" (Kimmel 9). This quest for true manhood is the never-ending process that has been repeated again and again until now. Considering this, the assumption that there was a certain period in the past which was completely different from the present is doubtful.

Actually, despite George and Bill's desire and the narrators' seeming agreement with them, Hemingway's works sometimes show a dismal picture of boyhood life. For example, as I have said earlier, "Doctor and Doctor's Wife" reveals that Nick's mother has strong power over his family, and the masculinity of Nick and his beloved father are more or less threatened by her. Perhaps this bitter experience makes Nick's attitude different from Bill's.

### Two perspectives on time in Hemingway's works

As I have argued above, Bill, and some other Hemingway characters, desire a certain period that will inevitably end as they grow up. Because it will end some day, it is different from the adult world, in which masculinity is constantly threatened. Adult men can "re-live"

<sup>10</sup>

"Along with Youth"

A porcupine skin,  
Stiff with bad tanning,  
It must have ended somewhere.  
Stuffed horned owl  
Pompous  
Yellow eyed;  
Chuck-wills-widow on a biased twig  
Sooted with dust.  
Piles of old magazines,  
Drawers of boys' letters  
And the line of love  
They must have ended somewhere.  
Yesterday's Tribune is gone  
Along with youth  
And the canoe that went to pieces on the beach  
The year of the big storm  
When the hotel burned down  
At Seney, Michigan.

<sup>11</sup> Mark Spilka and Jeffery Meyers examine how Kipling's works influence Hemingway.

this desired period through an outdoor life, but only in an imperfect way.<sup>12</sup> However, it does not deny the existence of a period of intact masculinity. Rather, by strengthening homosocial ties in wilderness, men tend to become confident that their boyhood is/ was the ideal period for true masculinity. This belief is shared by Hemingway himself to some extent. One can see his macho attitude is consistent with this idea. Some of his works such as "The End of Something," "The Three-Day Blow," "Cross-Country Snow," and *The Sun Also Rises*, seem to have a structure that endorse this idea.

Nick often desires what Bill and other similar characters desire. Nevertheless, his reaction is not always simple. When demanded a clear answer, he agrees with them, but, it seems, not in a wholehearted way. He silently nods or immaturely keeps saying, "I don't know."<sup>13</sup> As opposed to a simple depiction of some of his characters, with Nick's reaction Hemingway opens up a possibility for a more complex understanding of time and gender. This understanding, as I have discussed earlier, seems to be also shared by Hemingway himself. The difference between characters like Bill and those resembling Nick points to Hemingway's wavering attitude toward two concepts that underwent drastic changes in the early 20th century: the perceptions of time and of gender.

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<sup>12</sup> It is also valuable because it will end soon.

<sup>13</sup> In "Cross-Country Snow" most of Nick's answers to Geroge's questions about his future plans are ambiguous, including repeated "I don't know."

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