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“Completely Integrated”
The Alienation and Integration of Robert Jordan in Ernest Hemingway’s *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

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Abstract

For Whom the Bell Tolls is Ernest Hemingway's story of the Spanish Civil War. This war has often been seen as a conflict between good and evil, and the novel is frequently viewed as a way of illustrating the brotherhood of man in its portrayal of how Robert Jordan fights as a volunteer for the republicans against the fascists. This essay shows that Jordan actually loses his faith in the war. I instead propose that his determination to perform his mission is regained through Maria, and that he integrates with her as he finishes his mission. Initially, Jordan becomes alienated because he discovers the hopelessness and immorality of the republican struggle. The fascists are really not true enemies, and the republicans seem to have become the very evil that they originally set out to destroy. His faith in his mission is regained through Maria, and the completion of his mission becomes entwined with his integration with her. It becomes clear that she, a character whose thematic importance has often been neglected, is a part of the natural world. By becoming a part of nature, Jordan can thus become an eternal part of her. As he finishes his mission, his integration with nature intensifies. As he awaits death after having finished his mission, he literally becomes a part of nature and thematically a part of Maria, and even though he will die, the lovers are united. This, I suggest, is the complete integration that Jordan experiences.

Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* is set during the Spanish Civil War. This conflict started in Spain in 1936 after an attempt by fascist rebels to overthrow the republican democracy, and resulted in victory for the fascists led by General Franco in 1939. The fascists were far superior to the republicans in military strength and were aided by Nazi Germany, Italy and Portugal. The republicans were aided by the Soviet Union and Mexico ("Spanish Civil War"). The war has often been viewed as a polarised conflict of "political virtue against fascistic evil" (Rothstein), or between "freedom and fascism" (Ruibal). Supporting the image of good fighting evil, circa 30,000 foreign volunteers joined the republican side to fight fascism in the International Brigades, which were led by the Russians ("Spanish Civil War"). The protagonist of the novel, Robert Jordan, an American volunteer with profound love for Spain, is fighting for the republicans in these brigades.

The book opens with a quote from John Donne: "No man is an *Iland* […]; every man is a peece of the *Continent* […]; any man's *death* diminishes *me* […]; And therefore never send to know for whom the *bell* tolls; It tolls for *thee*" (Hemingway epigraph). Many critics seem to agree with Alvah C. Bessie, who reads this as "the touchstone by which that novel must be evaluated […]. Donne was speaking of the universal brotherhood of man […and] we have a right to expect that Hemingway[…] will illuminate that text" (90). Thus, Jordan is seen as a fighter against evil when he joins the republicans. This essay will argue, however, that such a reading does the text an injustice, ignoring the difficult moral dilemmas frequently posed. Rather than a simplified polarised struggle between good and evil, the war is portrayed as a battle between two immoral sides, and I investigate Jordan's loss of faith and his alienation as he faces this. I will demonstrate that it becomes increasingly clear that Jordan does not fight for political or religious reasons, as his disillusionment with the republican cause grows because of its immorality and hopelessness. I suggest that his fighting instead turns out to be closely associated with his love for Maria, who is a part of nature, and that he physically integrates with nature and thematically integrates with Maria when he finishes his mission and awaits death.

The central focus of my thesis is the sentence at the end of the book that describes Jordan as "completely integrated" (Hemingway 471). What this means is never explained. It has been read as integration "with the rest of humanity" (Josephs 239), but such an interpretation is insufficient because it seems to relate more to the epigraph than to the actual story. I suggest that this refers to his integration with Spanish nature. For logical coherence, the structure of the paper loosely follows the chronology of the novel, since it offers an untraditional reading of Jordan’s development that suggests that he grows increasingly alienated but subsequently integrates as the story progresses.

Jordan’s loss of faith in the war and his mission is often indicated, but is persistently low-key, running beneath the surface of the story. Therefore, this might seem to be an insignificant part of the narrative, and it is easily – and has often been – overlooked.[1] It is, though, a crucial part of Jordan’s development. His symbolic starting point as a character can be seen in the very first sentence: “He lay flat on the brown, pine-needled floor of the forest, his chin on his folded arms” (Hemingway 1). The image of him lying on the ground corresponds to his full dedication to his mission at the beginning of the novel and hints at his upcoming with nature. At the end, he is back in the same position, which I propose mirrors that his faith in the mission is regained and his closeness to nature. To begin with, however, his faith is rapidly fading.

Jordan’s gradual loss of belief in the war and his mission starts with the realization that the republican cause – which is at this point seemingly his main reason for fighting – seems to have little chance of winning. This is seen in the depiction of military strength, which creates a feeling of hopelessness since the fascists are portrayed as substantially more powerful than the republicans. Allen Guttmann connects the loyalists to nature and the fascists to machines. He – creating a version of the familiar binary – sees the war as “a struggle waged by men close to the earth and to the values of a primitive society against […] men who had turned to the machine and […] an aggressive and destructive mechanical order” (98). This, however, does not quite match how the conflict is portrayed. The republicans, who use explosives and machine guns, evidently cannot be directly paralleled to nature, and the fascists, who use cavalry, do not always equal machinery. Even though Guttmann is correct when he asserts that the enemy is often represented by heavy arms and the bombers that often fly over the camp, I would say that what is emphasized is that the loyalist cause has little chance of victory. The impressive military strength of the fascists, seen in their machinery, is contrasted to the extreme ineffectiveness of the republicans, which is sometimes explicitly acknowledged: “Has *any* [republican] attack ever been as it should?” General Golz asks Jordan rhetorically (Hemingway 5). The overall situation seems hopeless regardless of whether Jordan’s mission succeeds or not.

As Jennifer Lester explains, one might read the war as a contrast to nature: “Juxtaposing the features of the natural world with war machines throughout the novel, Hemingway creates a consistent tension” (116). The war – as waged by either side – becomes an intruder in the natural landscape. Though most of the action takes place in the distant mountains, I think that the glimpses of civilization – or lack thereof – demonstrate that Spain is a country that does not function as long as the war continues: "four haycocks […] had stood there ever since the fighting in July of the year before […] and the four seasons that had passed had flattened the cocks and made the hay worthless" (Hemingway 363). While the people are battling over 'ideology', their country is dying. As the story progresses, the hero becomes entwined with a world of weaponry and destruction, and his fading faith reflects the image of dead Spanish landscape just mentioned; this is a land and a cause torn to pieces in an immoral war, not the country nor the values that he initially decided to fight for. There seems to be little left to believe in, and he is far from the closeness to nature later established through Maria.

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[1] In the critical material consulted for this essay, Benson is the only critic who treats this matter in depth.

With Lester's view in mind – contrasting war and nature – Guttmann's discussion of republicans and nature becomes relevant if one considers that the fascists are the ones who started the war and hence the cause for the destruction brought upon the Spanish earth. Ironically, the epigraph, which may have set so many readers off in the wrong direction, could be seen in a new light and given new importance if one considers the seldom emphasized natural dimension of it that Guttmann notes: "if a *Clod* bee washed away by the *Sea*, *Europe* is the lesse" (Hemingway epigraph). In particular, the natural dimension – through Maria – later proves to be a vital element of Jordan's reason for fighting and his return to faith, a reading that thus seems to be supported by the epigraph.

Besides the hopelessness of the republican struggle, the lack of ideological belief among the fighters of the war soon shows as well. As Richard B. Hovey writes, "[i]t is misleading […] to suppose […] that Hemingway is propagandizing a specific cause" (153). The primary concern, rather, is to show the immoral nature of the war as such, and the novel "transcends partisanship" (Kinnamon 165). This despite this war being "'the good fight'" (*For Whom the Bell Tolls* back cover), seemingly between good and evil. Jordan first fought for "Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" (Hemingway 305), words indicating that he initially did have an idealistic view of the war as being simply between forces of darkness and light, a conflict dominated by ideological beliefs. It becomes evident, though, that people end up as fighters for either side for wholly different reasons than moral correctness: Pilar mentions that the minor character Don Guillermo "was only a fascist to be a snob and to console himself that he must work for little" (Hemingway 117), and Andrés admits that he is a republican only because his father was and that, had things been different, he would have been a fascist (Hemingway 367). While Jordan initially felt that he was "taking part of a crusade" (Hemingway 235), it becomes increasingly obvious that the "things he had come to know in this war were not so simple" (Hemingway 248). All enemies are not devoted fascists, and not even his closest allies are genuine republicans.

The lack of moral values in the conflict, and the emphasis on the evil of both sides, gradually becomes abundantly clear when "[a]trocity by one side is balanced by atrocity on the other" (Benson 159). Striking examples are the plaza killings – where Don Guillermo and other fascists are unmercifully slaughtered by a republican mob – and the execution of Maria's parents. Because of the simple language, it is deceptively easy to think that Hemingway here uses his terse prose to celebrate "violent experience itself" (Trilling 87), as in some of his earlier stories. A closer reading, however, reveals that his imagery suggests that values at play in the war are barbaric. Maria's parents are not simply killed but executed against the wall of a "slaughterhouse" (Hemingway 350), which must be a hint that they are butchered like animals. The mother is not even a republican, which underscores the idea of butchery since ideology clearly has no importance. Similarly, the plaza massacre is "organized in terms of a pictorial metaphor of the bullfight" (Baker 129) and the fascists are forced to face the violent republican mob like bulls during the Fiesta of Pamplona. The animal imagery vividly illustrates the extreme brutality of the way the war is waged by both sides, and underscores that the methods used are specifically designed to humiliate the victims and cause fear among their sympathizers. That the victims of the massacre are likened to animals creates an ironic twist when the republicans, the perpetrators, are compared to animals as well: "They were shouting and pushing and they made a noise now like an animal" (Hemingway 121). This suggests that when the republicans succumb to ferine violence and an inhumane view of their enemy, they themselves become the very evil that they originally set out to destroy.[2]

In the chaos at the plaza, a 'republican' drunkard even sets fire to one of the corpses, and it is Pilar who involuntarily makes the burning possible by making "a shelter from the wind" (Hemingway 126) so that the drunkard's match can catch flame. When the match flares because of Pilar and the body is burned, this mirrors how the massacre organized by her and Pablo soon gets out of hand and turns into uncontrollable violence. There is a difference between them in that he believes wholeheartedly in these killings while she is doubtful, but the effect of their actions is still the same. The leaders and 'heroes' of the people are then in essence portrayed negatively, a recurring theme, since their leadership leads to more suffering for their own people. In this case there is both moral suffering – guilt and nausea – for the mob because of the brutal killings they are forced to commit, and physical suffering when the killings are avenged by the fascists: "[the day of the plaza killings] was the worst day of my life until one other day", Pilar says. "Three days later when the fascists took the town" (Hemingway 129). Even though Pilar does not go into details, there can be no doubt that the fascists brutally avenged the massacre. Hence, the republican atrocities lead to the forming of a spiral of more and more brutal violence, the opposite of the desired effect to spread fear and thus scare the fascists into passivity. The republican leaders have come far from the values they are supposed to be fighting for, and their leadership is counter-productive. And these leaders are two of Jordan's few allies.

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[2] Note that the use of animal imagery in this novel is multifaceted. While it is used here to illustrate the brutality of the war, it is later used in a different fashion to depict the main characters' ties to the natural world.

The proportion and tragic irony of the plaza killings, and their effect on Jordan, are foregrounded by his reaction. He remembers seeing "a Negro [...] hanged to a lamp post and later burned" (Hemingway 116) as a child. Ironically, what one presumes is one of Jordan's most terrible experiences has its equivalent in the war in an event that is carried out by the republicans. Hence, the unjustified brutality of the war is made evident and, most importantly for this reading, the republican use of "fascists methods to stop fascism" (Kinnamon 165) is brought into focus. His memory of the lynching, in connection to the plaza killings, highlights that the massacre is comparable to atrocious cruelty based on racist hatred. Jordan can only say "[w]hat barbarians" (Hemingway 134) about the fascists who killed Joaquin's parents, like he "always" (Hemingway 134) comments such atrocities. But with the growing realization of the nature of the war, he could just as well have addressed all participants in the war, including himself. As I have demonstrated, evil permeates both sides of the conflict and in its simplicity, Jordan's comment could be said to reveal his growing ambivalence towards the republican cause. It seems that he cannot wholeheartedly condemn the fascists because the methods of the republicans seem to be just as appalling.

The idea of deeply rooted moral corruption among the republicans is evident in Pablo. As Jordan finds out, the leader of the guerrilla band is a "symbol for the general canker of defeatism, gnawing the tissues of republican morale from within" (Baker 124). The real enemy turns out to be with Jordan's own people. Though he sees the "sadness they get before they quit or before they betray" (Hemingway 12), he is unable to properly deal with "the worst villain in the piece" (Hovey 153). Pablo risks the entire operation and his destruction of the explosives leads to the unnecessary death of Anselmo. Since Jordan cannot punish Pablo for fleeing and destroying the detonators because he depends on his partaking in the operation, he is forced to accept lack of discipline. This he earlier thought should be punished by death: "It had seemed just and right and necessary that the men who ran were shot" (Hemingway 236). The moral disease that plagues the republican side and which is specifically personified in Pablo has grown too strong to master. Thus, I would say that not only is the “canker of defeatism” (Baker 124) that Barker describes depicted, but also through the frustrated Jordan that rottenness among the republicans cannot be prevented. This is also one of few examples in the book where it becomes obvious that Jordan’s attitude and ideas have changed because of the circumstances in the war, although it is up to the reader to see the change since Jordan’s thoughts and actions are not commented on by the narrator.

It is also possible to view Pablo’s relation to horses as a contrast to how animals later reflect Jordan, and an additional way of portraying how the war has made Pablo evil. He may seem to be full of affection for his horses and he talks endearments “to the horse for a long time” (Hemingway 64), but his feelings are not genuine. The horse does not seem to like him, and when Pablo leaves the horse it feels “relieved now that the man did not bother him” (Hemingway 64). Pablo sees the horses as his property – Anselmo hints that they are the “riches” (Hemingway 26) that make him lose interest in the war and only see to himself – and he even kills republicans at the end to steal their horses. Animals are only a way of making money for him, not a connection to the Spanish natural world as it becomes for Jordan and already is for Maria: “In my happiness I would like to be on a good horse and ride fast with thee […] and we would ride faster and faster” (Hemingway 161). Pablo’s money-based interest in animals underscores his rottenness and insincerity.

Jordan’s fading compassion for the republicans – for the way they wage war and the unleashed evil personified in Pablo – is part of his loss of belief in the war. More than just dehumanizing the republicans, however, the text also humanizes the fascists. While for a large part of the novel the enemy does remain a faceless, impersonal representation of what Jordan at one point thinks of as “mechanized doom” (Hemingway 87), it is, as mentioned, an oversimplification to say that the war is portrayed as “the opposition of man and machine” (Guttmann 99). Indeed, there are certain points when such a comparison is deconstructed. An important example is when the enemy, recently portrayed as mechanized doom with the arrival of the planes, is suddenly given a face. The abstract enemy now becomes “an individual human being” (Benson 161) when Jordan reads the letters carried by the cavalryman he has just killed. The effect is all the stronger because this so abruptly contrasts the earlier depiction of the fascists. I would like to treat this as the logical next step after Pilar’s account of the plaza killings, when Jordan is first exposed to the human element of the conflict. Now, when he realizes that he has just killed a young boy who simply happens to fight on the fascist side, the idea that there are few real enemies in the war is reinforced: “How many of those you have killed have been real fascists?” Jordan asks himself, and answers: “Very few”. He continues: “Don’t you know it’s wrong to kill?” (303-04). The coldness with which Jordan just killed the soldier is not easily maintained when one discovers a sense of compassion for what is supposed to be the enemy. It is crucial, then, that the enemy *is* given a face, for in the long run, it is impossible to stick with the notion that the enemy in war is evil and can be viewed in abstractions such as ‘mechanized doom’. Just like the mob seem to kill Don Guillermo in the plaza because they are enraged and not because of him as a person or his politics (Hemingway 116), Jordan can only kill the cavalryman because of his emotional detachment to the act of killing. In war, “thought must be suppressed like speech and emotion” (Lester 123), but this suppression is now rapidly weakening for him. And while the view of the fascists as technologically superior might be psychologically challenging, this simultaneously creates a sense of distance that might in fact make it simpler to view them as an abstract enemy. Such notions disappear with the young soldier and the republican case becomes even more morally questionable since there is no true enemy to fight.

Though the argumentation of the main story is primarily highlighted through Jordan’s expressed thoughts, there are episodes in the novel where the narrative perspective shifts, hence confirming his view from very different views. In such a direct follow-up to his brooding over the killed cavalryman, the portrayal of the fascists is further nuanced. This time the matter concerns a living enemy, which I stress because one might think that Jordan’s thinking about the young soldier simply romanticizes a dead fighter. The humanized portrayal of the enemy is developed, for the reader, in the fascist Lieutenant Berrendo. He displays his humanity by shooting the mortally wounded Joaquin “quickly and […] gently, if such an abrupt movement can be gentle”, and he – a fascist – expresses words that could have been Jordan’s: “What a bad thing war is” (Hemingway 322). But things soon become multifaceted again, for Berrendo feels compelled to order the beheading of Sordo’s band and the removal of the heads. Thus, a character portrayed in a positive light – notwithstanding him being a fascist – is shown to be forced to use brutal methods *because of* the war, which reverses the logic of going to war in order to fight evil since it is war as such that unleashes it. Jordan’s thinking shows the barbarism of atrocities like taking the heads when he compares the fascists to Indians and thus clearly connects the warfare to savagery: “What if they took the heads? Does that make any difference? None at all. The Indians always took the scalps” (Hemingway 336). While Jordan may try to rationalize the Lieutenant's orders, I would say that his thoughts highlight the paradox that the modern mechanized enemy repeats the kind of savagery that made American Indians so dreaded. Savagery, whether a necessity or not, is an unavoidable element of war, and Jordan evidently cannot refrain from dwelling on this.

Ironically, as Benson notes, it is the humane Lt Berrendo that Jordan is aiming at as the novel ends (Benson 160), as yet another example of the brutality of war and how the honourable are killed impartially.[3]

The road that one risks going down by losing belief in republican values and the war, and the fine line that Jordan is walking, is shown when the structure of the novel is changed and parallel storylines are used. This narrative strategy also reinforces the suggestion that the republican cause is doomed because of its own people. Andrés is nearly killed by his fellow soldiers, who would rather see that an important dispatch is not delivered than to let the wrong person past the border and thus make an easily discovered blunder: “The best thing is to toss a bomb down on him” (Hemingway 373), which would be a quick solution to their problem. Concern for the cause is lost in concern for themselves. Andrés also meets the lunatic officer Marty, called “the crazy” (Hemingway 418), and he works against Andrés because he has become paranoid. Through this shift in perspective, more of the war is shown than possible within the strict confinement of the guerrillas, and the “impression that a radical inefficiency stretches all the way from the higher echelons in Madrid” (Baker 124) is created. It seems that the loss of genuine faith that I propose that Jordan experiences has permeated the entire chain of command and destroyed virtually all chance of republican victory by making many republicans cynical and their efforts for the cause counter-productive.

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[3] Their meeting also brings together the sometimes split narrative of the novel, which supports my suggestion that also events described from outside the protagonist reflect on or confirm his development, even though he might not always seem directly related.

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There are subtle hints that Jordan too is going down this road and turning away from a conception of faith, which underscores his increasing alienation. His doubt and sadness (Hemingway 17) resemble the very characteristics that he condemns in the cynical and disinterested killer Pablo, and he also admits having enjoyed killing (Hemingway 287). There is also an explicit comparison made. Though these words spoken by Pilar to Maria are about Jordan's habit of drinking absinthe, they could be argued to underline the similarities between Jordan and Pablo, especially since alcohol might be seen as a first step towards escaping the reality of war: "You are going to have a drunkard like I have" (Hemingway 67). There is apparently a desperate need to find personal motivation if one, like Jordan, is to continue the war and perform his mission without becoming cynical, indifferent, or insane.

For some of the characters, personal motivation and value stem from religious beliefs. Abu Hasan writes that "the novel glorifies the majesty of God and [...] Hemingway reveals the spiritual side of Jordan's rough band members when they are in the situations during which the reality of war becomes most terrifying" (105). The novel, however, does not glorify God or praying as such, but portrays the comfort experienced by some characters, such as Joaquín (Hemingway 321), when they return to the forbidden act of prayer in times of great distress. The solace *they* as individuals get from their prayers as an act of habit or as an actual display of religious faith is genuine for *them* personally. They manage to find comfort within themselves by going back to their true beliefs, and so must Jordan. Tyler notes that he too prays (121), but it would be a severe mistake to think that he has any serious religious faith: "Who do you suppose has it easier? Ones with religion or just taking it straight? It comforts *them* but *we* know there is no thing to fear" (Hemingway 468; my emphasis). Jordan's motivation and faith stem from quite a different source.

Jordan's love for Maria is profound, and the thematic importance of their relationship is evident. Later, it becomes clear that this love renews his faith in the mission. Jordan's alienation is strengthened by the indications that he is not fully accepted as a fighter side by side with the native Spaniards. Pablo makes the point explicit: "What right have you, a foreigner, to come to me and tell me what I must do?" (Hemingway 15). Maria ends Jordan's feeling of otherness. Kenneth Lynn suggests that when they first meet, his throat swells as a rewrite for erection, and that their relationship starts with sex but develops into something more (482). However, while such an interpretation of the love story is possible, I do not deem this a satisfactory reading. Rather, Hemingway works with the idea that the couple belong to each other, and Jordan tells Maria that “I love you” (Hemingway 71) the first time that they are alone. That they “could be brother and sister by the look” (Hemingway 67) also highlights Maria’s thematic importance and predestined link to Jordan. Hovey writes that “Hemingway dodges the give and take that go on between a real man and a real woman” (156), but such criticism is irrelevant because their relationship has a deep, thematic function: it ‘cleanses’ Maria from her having been raped by fascists and is Jordan’s first experience of real love. She turns the disciplined soldier into a loving human being and changes his fundamental view of life: “He had never thought that you could know that there was a woman if there was battle” (Hemingway 456). Jordan’s way of calling Maria wife, sister and daughter (Hemingway 381) also underscores her representation of all that he experiences through her. “[O]ne and one is one” (Hemingway 389), Jordan suggests, which makes the idea of these two as a spiritual one apparent. At this point, though, it seems that their relationship will end in only a few days when it is time to destroy the bridge and potentially sacrifice their lives.

Maria is so closely tied to nature that she seems to be a part of it, and Jordan’s tie to her becomes entwined with nature. This later proves to be the key to how the lovers can remain together. Baker reads the guerrilla hideout in the mountains as an idyllic place where the band manages to escape the outside world and the war (127), which means that he sees a contrast between the war of the plains and the peace of the mountains. I, however, propose a contrast between the war of the cave and the peace of nature when it comes to Jordan and Maria. The cave is the dark, grave place where plans about the bridge-blowing are being made, where Jordan argues with Pablo, and where the lovers openly cannot show their love. By contrast, outside of the cave is where they manage to escape the war and the enemies of their love. Their sanctuary, and closely connected to their love, is nature. Maria is even “a personification of […] Spain […] and a part of the […] natural world” (Josephs 239), and this gradually becomes evident. An early indication of her connection to nature is that she is restored from “the rocks” (Hemingway 23) or the wilderness when she is first found. This idea is developed through the use of animal imagery. Jordan’s nickname for her, “rabbit”[4] (Hemingway 159), may seem simply to reflect her shaved head, but that is only a partial explanation. As Joseph notes, it hints at her being “a part of the natural world” (239). It is important to note, however, that the animal imagery, which was used in a different way earlier to depict the brutality of war, here illustrates Maria’s connection to nature. As the context implies, the uses of animal imagery function quite differently. In relation to the execution of Maria’s parents and the plaza massacre, animal imagery illustrated the brutality of war since people were seen to behave and treat others as inhumanely as trapped and abused animals during, for example, bullfighting. Regarding Maria, her nickname shows that she physically belongs to the natural world since it hints at an animal that is repeatedly seen to live freely in the forests where the story takes place. The distinctly different connotations of the animals hinted at show that the uses of animal imagery function in divergent ways. That the natural dimension regarding Maria is central is clear: "We will be as one animal *of the forest*" (Hemingway 262; my emphasis), she says, and the choice of words demonstrate the lovers' closeness to each other and shows again that the animal imagery here works to physically place the main characters in the natural world. They actually 'become one' – an idea that is developed later – of the forest when they make love out in the open, and so Jordan's connection to Maria slowly becomes increasingly entwined with Spanish nature. Brent Winter notes that Maria's hair is "the golden brown of a grain field" (Hemingway 22), and it is described in similar ways throughout the text. This indicates that she and nature really are one. She bridges Jordan to these fields through their love, spiritually as well as physically, since they always make love outside in the midst of nature, at one time even in a meadow. The natural connection and the beginning of Jordan's integration here becomes apparent: "he was lying on his side, his head deep in the heather, smelling it and the smell of the roots and the earth and the sun came through it […] and the girl was lying opposite him" (Hemingway 159). Maria and nature are beginning to blend.

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[4] Several critics, including Lynn (481), note that ‘rabbit’ is Spanish slang for a woman’s genitals, but since this is not mentioned in the novel and does not seem to have any function within the story, I do not deem this relevant.

I propose that the bond to Maria explains Jordan's destruction of the bridge, for which there is no explicit explanation. Clear, however, is that this decision is the beginning of harmony: "The knowledge that he would […] blow the bridge came to him almost with comfort" (Hemingway 340). One cannot explain his decision rationally, because, as I have shown, the book portrays his growing disbelief with the war. The need for him to finish the mission is rooted at a different level. I suggest that he destroys the bridge because of his love for Maria and the thematic possibility for their love to continue if he does so. This is primarily implied through the rest of the text rather than Jordan's own reasoning, which makes this an untraditional reading[5], but the text is clearly going in this direction. She gives him a sense of having lived a full life, because they are determined that if they are together "it is possible to live as full a life in seventy hours as in seventy years" (Hemingway 166). While he would surely like to be with her, they feel that they have already experienced a lifetime together and so death does not seem frightening. Since Maria is a part of nature, there is even a chance for their love to continue if Jordan becomes a part of nature too. An indication that nature works as a link to Maria is the figure of the beating heart, which first bridges Jordan to Maria and then to nature, and underlines their strong transcendent bond.[6] Initially, it is used to connect the lovers, and she says that "[t]hou hast no heart but mine" (Hemingway 262). In the end, this image is extended to include nature as well: "He could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest" (Hemingway 471). This explains the thematic importance of Jordan's subsequent integration with nature: since Maria and nature are one, his integration with nature is also his integration with Maria. Jordan's war, then, becomes not a war of ideology and his alienation with the cause is no longer relevant because it is the deep connection to Maria through nature that is essential. The story can thus be read in quite a different way from the common conception of it as illustrating a clear-cut ideological fight against fascism.

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[5] I would not call this a reading against the grain, since it is possible, as I demonstrate, to see this pattern develop rather clearly throughout the book. It is, however, an easily overlooked dimension because its importance is not commented on either by Jordan or the narrator.

Pilar asks if Jordan is "building a bridge or blowing one" (Hemingway 444) because he takes so long to fasten the explosives, and Robert E. Gajdusek writes that "[t]he answer is, of course, both" (51). Gajdusek suggests a connection between Jordan's mission and Hemingway's process of writing the novel, but there is another simultaneous bridge-building and bridge-blowing, with a different, certainly more immediate, meaning that relates to this reading. As the mission reaches its end, Jordan's natural bond intensifies. Hence, while the literal destruction of the bridge draws nearer, the symbolic bridge between the hero and Maria through nature is being built. The fate of the hero and the bridge seem to be inseparable, and the important symbolic function of the literal bridge is even emphasized by Jordan himself: "As Jordan goes, so goes the […] bridge" (Hemingway 438). The destruction of one bridge becomes the building of another. The completion of the mission has little to do with ideology, but thematically reunites Jordan with Maria.

The intensification of the integration – or bridge-building – can be seen in the way nature seems to interact with Jordan as he approaches the bridge and finishes his mission. A squirrel looks "toward where the man [is] watching" (Hemingway 433), hence joining Jordan for a short while in his watching the bridge before the final attack. The squirrel might seem irrelevant, but one could read this as subtly demonstrating that animals, which Jordan has earlier only observed from a distance, have now joined him in his battle. The jerking tail of the squirrel may reflect the rising tension of the narrative, but also, in particular, the inner exaltation of the hero. A similar example is when he is placing the explosives on the bridge and notices, below him in the stream, “a trout r[i]se” (Hemingway 438) out of the water just like it is aiming for the bridge. That animal imagery is here again used to illustrate a connection to nature, like for Maria, is clear. Animals with the only obvious connotation that they belong to the natural world where the story takes place emerge from their natural environment, mirror Jordan’s focus on the bridge, and then quickly disappear again. The fish and the squirrel create the feeling that all focus in the natural world of the story is now on the bridge, just as it is for the protagonist. It is as if nature and Jordan are working together; nature and he are steadily becoming one as the completion of the mission draws nearer.

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[6] Tyler writes that Maria might be pregnant and that this provides for Jordan's immortality (121), but this possibility is only vaguely hinted at. In fact, the opposite is also true since Maria says to Jordan that she is not able to "bear […] a son or a daughter" (Hemingway 354) since she never became pregnant despite being raped repeatedly. Maria's s tie to Jordan works on a deeper level.

When Jordan observes the bridge in the morning of the day of the attack, the tie to nature seems to be building strongly because of this. The sun rises: “he watched it; feeling it gray within him, as though he were a part of the slow lightening” (Hemingway 431). The sunrise that he watches is not just the morning of the day of the attack, but also symbolically the dawn of his true integration with Maria. That he feels a part of the sunshine as he focuses on the bridge could also directly hint that he is slowly integrating with Maria, since she is “associated throughout with sunlight” (Sanderson 188). The integration seems to be waiting on the other side of the destruction of the bridge, and his connection to nature is intensified the closer he comes. Between him and the complete integration now only stands “the steel of the bridge” (Hemingway 431), the unnatural intruder in the landscape between him and nature, and, in the extended meaning of nature, Maria.

The concluding physical and thematic integration becomes apparent if one does a close reading of the last page and relates the events and imagery depicted to the rest of the story. Just before Jordan becomes “completely integrated” (Hemingway 471) – a phrase which is not explained – it is the first time in the novel when he stops arguing with himself, as a sign that he experiences internal peace. His desire to be with Maria and his determination to destroy the bridge are here again shown to be entwined with and to depend on each other: Maria first renews his faith and leads the way to his destroying the bridge and the turning away from his ideological conflict, and with the bridge destroyed he is ready to turn to nature and experience the integration that bridges him back to Maria. This might explain the sudden shift in narrative focus. Now, with Jordan’s inner arguing silent at last, the narrative turns outward because he experiences inner peace. The world around the hero, as well as his place in it, is now for the first time clearly more important than his mind and his thinking.

It may seem ironic that it is only shortly before his death that Jordan integrates, but his death is not the end. A hint of this is first seen when he fastens the explosives and sees “the sunlight on the green slope of the mountain”. He notes: “It was brown three days ago”

(Hemingway 438). This is a sharp contrast to the unseasonal snowstorm that raged earlier. Rather than being a bleak tale of doom, the story really shows to be one of spring and not of winter, and this is logical since the relationship between Jordan and Maria is only just beginning. The intensified integration and that this is really the beginning is seen again when he lies wounded and suffers from internal bleeding. He tries to "hold on to himself that he felt slipping away from himself as you feel snow starting to slip […] on a mountain slope" (Hemingway 470-1). The choice of words in this simile is crucial. It simultaneously illustrates the end of his life – blood leaving him like snow – and indicates a new beginning, since the mountain beneath the snow is emerging just like the tie between Jordan and Maria, and their troubles have disappeared like the snow. His death, then, is only the beginning of eternal love, which is logically reflected in the use of something as permanent or eternal as mountains. The simile also underscores Jordan's becoming one with nature by actually likening him to nature, which previously only reflected him. Now, the world around him is not simply mirroring him any longer; he becomes a literal part of "these hills" (Hemingway 381) that he earlier felt that he belonged to. That Jordan ends the novel in the same physical position that he starts it – lying on the ground – mirrors his return to faith in the mission and highlights his connection to nature. It also – since it gives the story a circular quality – further enhances the idea of this not being the end. The story and life of Jordan are over, but not the bond to Maria.

The complete integration is now imminent. Robert A. Martin notes that as the story progresses, "the imagery of pine trees increases, as does Jordan's awareness and feeling for them" (58). This could be said to include more than just the trees, because Jordan now integrates with all of nature. What might seem a mere description of his last glimpses of the world can be interpreted as depicting how he literally becomes one with his surroundings: "he looked up at the sky. There were big white clouds in it. He touched the palm of his hand against the pine needles where he lay and he touched the bark of the pine trunk that he lay behind" (Hemingway 471). This, however, is not just "integration with nature" (Martin 60) as Martin suggests because of the trees – that is to miss the thematic dimension. The figure of the beating heart, which earlier connected him to Maria, is now used again: "He could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest" (Hemingway 471; my emphasis). His heart is literally beating against the Spanish ground, which symbolizes his true integration with nature since he feels his heart against the ground just like the ground and he are now a part. The figure of the beating heart also shows that his bond to nature is also his bond to Maria by adding the natural dimension to the image that earlier united the two lovers. His heart beating against the ground thus forms the literal bridge between Jordan and nature, and the symbolic bridge between Jordan and Maria. That the lovers are separated by his death is irrelevant, since they are united spiritually. He says to her that “I am thee” (Hemingway 463) when she is forced to leave him, and, thematically, the reader can now see this happening. “[O]ne and one is one” (Hemingway 379), he noted earlier, and the text here shows that he was right. As he integrates with nature and becomes a part of it just like she is, he becomes one with Maria. The parts have joined into one, and this, I suggest, explains in what way Jordan is “completely integrated now” (Hemingway 471).

This essay proposes that Jordan loses his faith in the war because he experiences the immorality and hopelessness of the republican struggle. Through his experiences, he realizes that there is little left of moral and republican values in the fight, that republicans treat their enemies as animals just as the fascists do, and that there is little difference between the opposing sides. Gradually developed through Jordan’s experiences are also a dehumanization of the republicans and a humanization of the fascists. Supporting the realizations by Jordan, the narrative sometimes shifts focus and displays the inefficiency and madness of the republicans, exemplified by the bridge sentries and Marty, and the humanity of the fascists, seen in Lieutenant Berrendo.

I suggest that the road back to faith for Jordan starts with his love for Maria. She is closely connected to the natural world, and their sanctuary becomes nature itself, their place away from the war. Gradually, it becomes evident that Maria, nicknamed ‘rabbit’ and associated throughout with sunlight and nature, is really a part of the natural world. This explains how the doomed love affair between the lovers can continue in spite of the war even if he dies, because he connects with Maria through nature.

Jordan’s bond to nature intensifies as the bridge-blowing draws nearer, which shows that the bridge must be destroyed in order to complete his thematic bridge to Maria. The intensification of the bond to nature is seen in particular when the squirrel and the trout that he observes seem to mirror his feelings, his behaviour and his focus on the bridge. He is now becoming a part of the natural world. He is then back in the same physical position as when the story began, which mirrors his return to faith in his mission and foregrounds his closeness to nature. The imagery used towards the end also suggests that this is not really the end, which reflects how the love between Jordan and Maria can continue since he becomes a part of nature, and thus a part of her. This is seen in the figure of the beating heart, which simultaneously bridges him to nature and his lover. He now literally becomes a part of nature, and thematically a part of Maria. This, I suggest, is Jordan’s complete integration.

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