The education through nature of Robert Jordan in "For Whom the Bell Tolls"

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THE EDUCATION THROUGH NATURE
OF ROBERT JORDAN IN FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

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Master of Arts

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ABSTRACT

This paper examines the influence of nature on the education of protagonist Robert Jordan in Ernest Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*.

Several of the Spanish characters among whom Jordan lives during the novel are shown to be depicted in terms that are intended to emphasize their intrinsic ties to nature.

The extensive use of natural imagery, serving to maintain the prominence of nature in the novel, also receives attention.

It is suggested that Jordan's increased understanding and acceptance of nature's simpler and more fulfilling priorities enable him to live a satisfactory life in three final days and to die well.
For Whom the Bell Tolls realistically portrays three days of the Spanish Civil War which culminate in the destruction of a bridge at the beginning of the Loyalist offensive aimed at the taking of Segovia. The bridge presumably must be destroyed to forestall the arrival of Fascist reinforcements during the assault. Robert Jordan carries out this mission with the help of a band of peasant guerrilla fighters, but he does so in vain, for the reinforcements previously advance to the front, and he is killed shortly thereafter. In the course of the novel, Jordan becomes intimately acquainted with a group of people very unlike those he has known, in a setting equally unfamiliar to him. These Spanish peasants enjoy a close association with the natural world. Though hardly primitives, they live in ways less complicated and substantially more fulfilling than does Jordan.

The importance of nature in For Whom the Bell Tolls has not gone unnoticed. Noting the "immediate" ties that exist between the characters and nature, Leo Gurko calls the Spanish landscape and earth "central to the novel."¹ More specifically, Warren French refers to "the insistent emphasis at key points in the novel upon this virtual integration of man into nature."² For Jordan this integration into nature involves much more than an augmented awareness and

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appreciation of rustic surroundings. For Jordan it is an essential, educational process. The place of Jordan's education in the novel has been noted by critics, including Lionel Trilling and Alfred Kazin, who complains that "the Spanish war is essentially only Robert Jordan's education." The importance of nature to that education has not received the attention it deserves, for it is from nature and from the Spanish peasants, who are depicted in terms that are intended to emphasize their intrinsic ties to nature, that Jordan learns how to live and how to die, basic but, for him, indispensable lessons.

Robert Jordan is a young, fair-haired, American intellectual on leave of absence from the University of Montana where he teaches Spanish. Like many others he has volunteered his services in support of the Loyalist faction out of his love for Spain and his belief in "Life, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness" (p. 305). Jordan is no Marxist, though, and holds no purely materialistic conception of society. He has come to Spain in search of an education he could not obtain back in Missoula. This education begins with his disillusionment concerning the running of the war by the Loyalist command. The setting for this stage of learning is Gaylord's, a luxurious hotel in Madrid occupied by the Russians, where it had at first seemed to Jordan that "the food was too good for a besieged city and the talk too cynical for a war" (p. 228). But Jordan admits to having been very easily corrupted, and it pleases him to be counted
among the informed: "Sure, Gaylord's was the place you
needed to complete your education, he thought. He wondered
whether he would continue with it long. Gaylord's was good
and sound and what he needed" (p. 230). In fact, however,
Gaylord's was not all he needed. No man can subsist on the
meager fruits of disillusionment alone. What Jordan learned
at Gaylord's served only to adulterate his former naive
devotion to the Loyalist cause, leaving him more accurately
informed regarding the war but, perhaps, even less satisfac­
torily oriented to life than when he first left Missoula. In
the same paragraph that divulges Jordan's name, he is
described as one who "did not give any importance to what
happened to himself" (p. 4). What Jordan needs to
further his education to the point where life again seems
important to him, he discovers not in sophisticated Madrid
but in the uncultivated, mountainous territory inhabited by
the guerrilla bands of Pablo and El Sordo.

It is here that Hemingway's use of natural imagery is
extensive and purposeful. In the speeches and thoughts of
the characters encountered by Jordan amid these mountains
appear numerous references to the natural world, references
which serve to reiterate the close ties of these individuals
to the land. Jordan, too, employs such natural imagery, and
does so increasingly as the novel and his education proceed.
Thus, as Jordan comes to understand and accept more of the
ways of the Spanish peasants, his diction likewise becomes
steadily more similiar to theirs.
The characters of Pilar and Maria are most responsible for the changes that occur within Jordan. Pilar, ugly Pablo's even uglier woman, is second only to Jordan in importance. Experienced in the ways of both city and countryside, and the veteran of numerous sexual liaisons, she is a most appropriate and qualified instructor. She is also extraordinarily perceptive; the mere sight of Maria upon her return from her first meeting with Jordan convinces her that these two will become lovers. Pilar's ties to the natural world are multifarious, as evidenced by her seemingly instinctive mystical powers, her maternal tendencies, and her barbarous behavior.

Pilar's mysticism is introduced during her first meeting with Jordan, and it reappears periodically throughout the novel. How Pilar acquired these powers is never stated. She seems to possess this mystical knowledge. Indeed, while Pilar is questioning Maria regarding her sexual relationship with Jordan, he senses a sort of "spreading...as a cobra's hood spreads" (p. 173). Reading Jordan's palm, she presumably foresees his approaching death but wisely claims to have seen nothing. Jordan assumes a skeptical pose during this scene, which scarcely conceals his actual interest in knowing what his hand has revealed. When Pilar later speaks of the odor of imminent death, which certain gypsies can smell on the person of any doomed individual, Jordan responds cynically and incredulously. But what the professor is too sophisticated to credit is acknowledged to be true by most
of Pablo's band, and even thoughtful Anselmo says to Jordan, "I am against all such wizardry. But this Pilar has the fame of being very advanced in such things" (p. 250). At Fernando's request, Pilar begins to explain how one can approximate the smell of death-to-come. The first scent involves a ship at sea, and since Fernando refuses to board any such ship, Pilar stops explaining and speaks instead of her trips to Mexico and Venezuela. But Jordan wants to know about the rest of the smell. Pilar's response of "All right, Inglés. Learn. That's the thing. Learn." (p. 250) makes plain the instructional nature of her relationship with Jordan.

Pilar's maternal instincts underlie several of her activities and concerns. With Maria's help Pilar cooks and maintains some degree of domestic order within the cave. She also regulates the conduct of its inhabitants, as would a mother her children. At her first appearance she tells Rafael to relieve Andrés, who is on guard duty. When in leaving he says he will see Jordan at the next meal, Pilar interjects, "Not even in a joke. Three times you have eaten today according to my count" (p. 30). And much later when Fernando spits onto the dirt floor of the cave to show he is not afraid before the attack, Pilar instantly scolds him: "You filthy mule. Spit in the fire if thou must vaunt thy courage" (p. 388).

It is as Maria's protectress, however, that Pilar becomes most motherly. Having achieved Maria's rescue from the train by means of violent threats and exhortations of her comrades, Pilar has since ministered to her psychological
recovery. For reasons unspecified, but likely having to do with Pilar's wanting Maria removed from Pablo's company to a home where she can be properly cared for, Maria is prevented from becoming anyone's woman until Jordan arrives. In the course of their introductory interview, Pilar claps Jordan on the back, comments, "you're bigger than you look," and approvingly runs "her hand over his shoulder, feeling the muscle under the flannel shirt" (p. 31). After satisfying herself that Jordan will do nicely for Maria, Pilar states the conditions of a relationship: "And listen to me about another thing. Be very good and careful about the girl. The Maria. She has had a bad time...I do not ask any promise because what will happen, will happen. Only if you will not take her out, then I ask a promise" (p. 32). Pilar subsequently instructs Maria in the ways of pleasing a man, and does what she can to enable the couple to most fully enjoy each other in the short time she believes is remaining to Jordan. That Pilar's attitude toward Maria is that of a mother to her child is suggested not only in Pilar's use of the appellation of daughter, but most poignantly during the discussion of the smell of death-to-come. Here Pilar taunts Rafael with the allegedly perpetual pregnancies endured by gypsy women, and rhetorically asks, "Hast thou ever seen a gitana who was not about to have, or just to have had, a child?" Stung by Rafael's terse rejoinder of "Thou," Pilar meekly replies,"Leave it. There is no one who cannot be hurt" (p. 255). More significant than the cause of Pilar's
childless history is the mere fact of it, which explains in large measure her feelings for Maria. Though less prominent than her mystical powers, these manifestations of Pilar's maternal instincts serve to further establish Pilar as an embodiment of the union that can and ought to exist between man and nature.

Seemingly contrasting with Pilar's maternal tendencies are the more barbarous aspects of her character. To Jordan's first query concerning Pablo's woman and Maria's overseer, Rafael describes Pilar as "something barbarous" (p. 26), later adding, "She is of an unbelievable barbarousness" (p. 28). The clearest demonstration of Pilar's barbarousness is provided by the story she tells Jordan and Maria of Pablo's ritualistic slaughter of Fascists at the beginning of the movement. In retrospect Pilar claims to have been sickened by the sanguinary events of that day; however, according to her own version, she seems to have been morbidly fascinated by the murderous proceedings. When she finally disassociates herself from the lines manned by "the drunkards and the worthless ones" (p. 119), she goes to the Ayuntamiento where the remaining Fascists are confessing and praying with a priest, guarded by Pablo and a few others. Here Pilar makes every effort to provide herself with what amounts to a ringside seat in order to better observe the carnage demanded by the Loyalist mob:

All I could see was that someone was being pushed out by Pablo and Cuatro Dedos with their shotguns but I could not see who it was and I moved on close toward the lines where they were packed against the door to try to see...I picked up a chair and set it against one of the pillars and mounted on it so that I could see over the heads of the crowd...With many people pushing me, I moved the chair close against the wall.
shoving it ahead of me as they shoved me from behind. I stood on the chair with my face close against the bars of the window and held on by the bars. A man climbed on the chair too and stood with his arms around mine, holding the wider bars...His breath on my neck smelled like the smell of the mob, sour, like vomit on paving stones...the mob was shouting to open up and the man on the chair with me was holding tight to the bars of the window and shouting to open up until it deafened me with his voice roaring past my ear and his breath foul on me and I looked away from watching the drunkard who had been trying to set fire to Don Anastasio and into the hall of the Ayuntamiento again" (pp. 120-23).

This is hardly the behavior of one whose presumable reaction to the massacre has been revulsion. On the contrary, Pilar's appetite for bloodshed and brutality seems insatiable. After forcing her way to a satisfactory vantage point, she tolerates being manhandled, deafened, and enveloped by the rank exhalations of a loathsome sot so that she may not miss the vicarious enjoyment of a single atrocity. Pilar may take pride in being able to report accurately how the movement began in this small town, and she may pity the crying wife of Don Guillermo, but for Pilar the day's events were a great and barbarous delight. Pilar's barbarousness is not likely to endear her to anyone; however, it is certainly an attribute common to wild animals and to men who live in a rude and savage state free of the constraining influences of civilization.

Jordan owes much to Pilar, and he knows it. Although he is never completely convinced of the validity of Pilar's "wizardry," he questions Pilar with genuine interest in the matters of the palm-reading, the smell of death-to-come, and the movement of the earth that signifies a kind of sexual zenith. She answers his questions in a manner that indicates clearly
that she regards Jordan as naive and needful of instruction. When he refers to la gloria as "nonsense," she chides his use of this word and addresses him as "little English" (p. 175). To a less flippant question from Jordan, Pilar responds by looking at him "oddly" and by saying that he is "too young" for her to speak to. The pupil is thus put in his place.

Jordan also learns much about facing death from Pilar. Her long and detailed accounts of her years with the bullfighter Finito and of Pablo's massacre of the Fascists unintentionally provide models of behavior for Jordan. Of course, he is influenced most strongly by his admiration for his grandfather, a cavalry officer during the American Civil War, and by the shame occasioned by the suicide of his own father. But the conduct of several of the men of whom Pilar speaks is not lost on Jordan. Finito's shortness causes him to receive internal injury from almost every bull he fights. He is shown, just months before his death, filling handkerchiefs and napkins with blood from his stomach during a banquet he will not leave because "it is a club named for me and I have an obligation" (p. 186). Pilar remembers him lying on a bed in such pain that he can barely stand to be touched. And in recalling his fear of bulls, she compares it to Pablo's present fear of death: "You are afraid to die now. You think that is something of importance. But Finito was afraid all the time and in the ring he was like a lion" (p. 185). Pilar tells the story of Finito for all to hear; however, when Primitivo annoys Pilar by saying that Finito should not have tried to be a matador because of his height, it is at Jordan she looks, shaking her
head. Although no response from Jordan is indicated, it is obvious that he is listening and it is significant that attention is thus called to him almost immediately after that part of the story dealing with Finito's death.

Reactions to fear and imminent death are also important in Pilar's telling of Pablo's massacre. The actions of those Fascists compelled to walk between two lines of armed peasants towards the edge of a cliff are carefully described. The deaths of Don Ricardo and Don Faustino produce the strongest emotions, causing the initially reluctant peasants to become cruel and bloodthirsty. Don Ricardo, whose bravery is noted by Pilar, wins for himself a quick death by insulting those in the lines, whereas the cowardly Don Faustino clutches the ground and cries for life. Both men meet death, but in the words of Don Ricardo, "To die is nothing. The only bad thing is to die at the hands of this canalla" (p. 111). This theme, common to Hemingway, is stated directly by Pablo in reaction to the death of the priest in the Ayuntamiento, where he tried to flee from the attacking mob. Pablo says he is "disillusioned" because the priest in the last minute was frightened and "died very badly...He had very little dignity" (p. 127).

Thinking of the role played by Pilar in bringing Maria and him together, Jordan gives Pilar credit for being much more than a perceptive matchmaker: "She is a damned sight more civilized than you are and she knows what time is all about" (p. 168). Thus, the university professor looks with envy upon the orientation to life and upon the understanding of time.
possessed by a crude and barbarous woman, but one having ties to nature that Jordan can only recognize and begin to comprehend. Although he would like a future with Maria that includes a house, clean pyjamas, and morning papers, Jordan advises himself to "love her very hard and make up on intensity what the relation will lack in duration and in continuity" (p.168). This is advice of which Pilar would approve.

This praise of Pilar's knowledge of how best to use time is later tempered by Pilar herself in a manner that reveals much about her symbolic purpose in the novel. Recalling her years with Finito and, subsequently, with Pablo, who reminds her of the bulls Finito used to kill, Pilar considers her own durability: "neither bull force nor bull courage lasted, she knew now, and what did last? I last, she thought. Yes, I have lasted. But for what?" (p. 190). Hemingway may have answered Pilar's question in telling Max Perkins that The Sun Also Rises was meant to be "a damn tragedy with the earth abiding forever as the hero."

The earth in For Whom the Bell Tolls is personified most obviously in Pilar, who lives on after the end of Jordan's short happy life, a life which she knows will be short and which she helps to make happy. Pilar may not know why, like the earth, she has lasted so long, but she does know, as does Jordan, that with her years has come the knowledge of how to live fully and die well.

While Pilar contributes to the re-education of the professor, it is Maria who truly revitalizes him. Indeed she first appears carrying sustenance to Jordan and the
others. The picture of Maria drawn by the narrator warrants close attention: "Her teeth were white in her brown face and her skin and her eyes were the same golden tawny brown. She had high cheekbones, merry eyes and a straight mouth with full lips. Her hair was the golden brown of a grain field that has been burned dark in the sun but it was cut short all over her head so that it was but little longer than the fur on a beaver pelt" (p. 22). No other character in the novel is depicted in such glowingly natural terms. Her features are seemingly flawless and her complexion of such a golden richness that good health can serve only as a handmaiden to her beauty. Jordan is instantly smitten, and she who moves "awkwardly as a colt moves, but with the same grace as of a young animal" (p. 25) soon becomes his rabbit and his short-lived salvation. Their sexual encounters all take place outside either in Jordan's sleeping bag, placed upon lengths of cut pine boughs, or in the heather of a mountain meadow where the description of sexual intercourse emphasizes nature, and in particular the sun and the earth (p. 159). In the sleeping bag with Jordan, Maria removes her wedding shirt and assures Jordan that "afterwards we will be as one animal of the forest" (p. 262). Jordan's union with Maria, then, seems to unite him with the surrounding forest as well. From Maria, Jordan obtains much more than just sexual satisfaction. Of this he is aware, for during their last moments of intimacy before the attack, he says, "I have learned much from thee" (p. 380). When she protests that he
is the one who is educated, his thoughts give him credit for having only "the very smallest beginnings of an education" (p. 381).

The importance of the natural realm to the novel and, specifically, to Jordan's education is further indicated by the number of characters whose thoughts and comments contain natural images. While Jordan does not hear all of these bucolic comments, he does hear many of them. Those to which he is not exposed serve at least to reaffirm the pervasive influence of nature on the lives of his Spanish mentors. The first of these encountered by Jordan is the old man Anselmo, who, unlike Jordan, enjoys the hunting of animals "more than anything." His greatest pride, that of the hunter, is invoked by the memory of various successful encounters with wildlife; his home in Avila was a veritable museum of trophies. Still more significant is the discussion that follows Anselmo's story of nailing the paw of the bear he had slain to the door of his village church. He and Jordan point out some physical similarities between bears and men, and they compare the gypsies of Spain with the American Indians in their mutual belief in the brotherhood of men and bears. This exchange, which occurs early in the novel (p. 40), introduces clearly the theme of the essential kinship of man to nature.

Although Jordan has little direct contact with El Sordo, Hemingway uses this character, whose thoughts are expressed in terms of earth and sky, to give a metaphorically similar definition of life. On first meeting El Sordo, Jordan notices that "his eyes were yellow as a cat's and flat as a reptile's eyes are" (p. 141). El Sordo's later attempt to
steal some needed horses proves disastrous because of an unexpected snowfall. A Fascist cavalry unit follows the tracks left in the snow and attacks suddenly, forcing El Sordo and four of his men to flee to a hilltop where they are trapped and exposed to attack from the air. Awaiting the planes, El Sordo feels utterly naked: "A flayed rabbit is as well covered as a bear in comparison" (p. 310). Duped into believing that these survivors have shot themselves, the Fascist captain first tries to provoke them with insults, but only makes the waiting El Sordo "as happy as only a hunter can be happy" (p. 314). As Captain Mora approaches the hilltop, he is regarded by El Sordo as "an animal" and as company on the voyage of death. El Sordo has no conception of life, however, are vivid and significant, for they consist almost entirely of natural elements:

Dying was nothing and he had no picture of it nor fear of it in his mind. But living was a field of grain blowing in the wind on the side of a hill. Living was a hawk in the sky. Living was an earthen jar of water in the dust of the threshing with the grain flailed out and the chaff blowing. Living was a horse between your legs and a carbine under one leg and a hill and a valley and a stream with trees along it and the far side of the valley and the hills beyond (pp. 312-13).

El Sordo's imagistic thoughts serve also to call to mind the characters of Maria, Anselmo, and Pablo through the references to a field of grain, to a hunter's happiness, and to the satisfactory feeling of a horse between one's legs respectively. Thus, indirectly, those persons with whom Jordan is in closest contact are made part of a vision of life defined and illustrated by nature.
The hunting motif is used extensively when, escorted by Anselmo, Jordan first meets Pablo, the nominal leader of the group of peasants Jordan hopes will help him blow up the bridge. Evincing the dangerous "sadness that comes before the sell-out" (p. 12), Pablo expresses his opposition to Jordan's mission because he knows that his safety depends on not operating in the immediate vicinity. Anselmo accuses Pablo of selfishness in putting his "fox-hole before the interests of humanity" and of cowardice in adhering to "the principle of the fox" when that of the wolf is needed; the guardia civil are said to be "big game" by Jordan; and Pablo, after gloomily noting the growing strength of the Fascists, mutters, "And what can I look forward to? To be hunted and to die. Nothing more" (p. 15). This sharp exchange is precipitated by Pablo's proximity to his beloved horses, of which he is as proud as is Anselmo of his prowess in the chase. To Pablo a knowledgeable appreciation of good horse flesh is a far more reliable guide to the trustworthiness of a man than papers he cannot read or seals he may or may not recognize. Anselmo avers that the possession of these horses has caused Pablo, in effect, to abandon his enthusiasm for the Loyalist movement. Jordan agrees with his mentor and wonders what could make himself feel the same way the beautiful horses have made Pablo feel.

But Anselmo does not completely comprehend the relationship that exists between Pablo and his horses. Later, after being humiliated and told that he is no longer in command
because of his continued reluctance to aid Jordan, Pablo retreats to the company of his horses. To the attractive, white-faced bay stallion he says, "Thou art no woman nor a fool...Thou, oh, thou, thee, thee, my big little pony. Thou art no woman like a rock that is burning. Thou art no colt of a girl with cropped head and the movement of a foal still wet from its mother. Thou dost not insult nor lie nor not understand. Thou, oh, thee, oh my good big little pony" (p. 64). Such is not the talk of a capitalist, as Anselmo has called Pablo, to his commodities. The endearingly affectionate tone employed and especially the disparaging contrast with Pilar and Maria indicate a rejection of human society for that of animals that do not "insult nor lie nor not understand." Pablo's attitude towards his horses recalls sentiments expressed by Walt Whitman in section 32 of "Song of Myself": "I think I could turn and live with animals...They do not sweat and whine about their condition...Not one is dissatisfied." Pablo has gone too far though, and is deceived in thinking the horse genuinely understands him. While the stallion recognizes the tone of Pablo's speech, he has no interest in or capacity for requiting this unsought human love. He desires no more that to satiate his hunger and to have the man stop bothering him. Pablo's preference for the company of animals is clearly excessive and meant to be viewed as such. While mankind may gain much from living in harmony with nature, their affections are most suitably directed towards other humans. Eden devoid of mankind is mere wilderness.
Additional references to nature are provided by nearly all the minor characters. Since many of these references serve only to maintain the prominence of nature in the novel, a few examples will suffice. In Rafael's version of the destruction of the train, the iron horse is stricken like a living creature: "at the moment of the explosion, the front wheels of the engine rose up and all of the earth seemed to rise in a great cloud of blackness and a roar and the engine rose high in the cloud of dirt and of the wooden ties rising in the air as in a dream and then it fell onto its side like a great wounded animal" (p. 29). Later, when some Fascist cavalry approach Pablo's cave and a skirmish is narrowly averted, Augustín heatedly remarks, "when I saw those four there and thought that we might kill them I was like a mare in the corral waiting for the stallion" (p. 286). During the annual capeas in his village, Andres would manage to attach himself to the bull and sink his teeth into an ear, holding on in this manner until the bull finally toppled and died. He was expected to do this every year and was respectfully called "the Bulldog of Villaconejos" (p. 365). Andres is challenged as he approaches the first Loyalist position with Jordan's message for General Golz. He is then escorted down a trench where he smells the unburied human waste left by "the ones with the black-and-red scarves." Disgusted by this, Andres thinks, "It is not liberty not to bury the mess one makes...No animal has more liberty than the cat; but it buries the mess it makes. The cat is the best anarchist. Until they learn that from the cat I cannot respect them" (p. 377).
Occasionally, as in the previous passage, the theme of man's need to learn from superior nature is somewhat forced into view. Such literary heavy-handedness is indicative of how important to the novel Hemingway considered the educational relationship existing between man and nature.

Another characteristic that links the guerrilla fighters to nature is that of sharing. Their concern for each other's welfare calls to mind the protective instincts displayed by packs of hunting or hunted animals. Indeed, at one point Anselmo compares his companions to just such a pack: "we live in a hole in the rocks like beasts in the mountain" (p. 193). Although fully aware of the dangers involved in Jordan's plan to destroy the bridge by daylight, El Sordo agrees to supply men and horses because "We are here to do what we can" (p. 152). Listening to the sounds of battle coming from El Sordo's camp, Primitive becomes greatly agitated and insists that "We have to aid them...we cannot leave them alone to this. Those are our comrades" (p. 296). Agustín, too, on first learning of El Sordo's plight, wants to "go to aid them" (p. 294). This willingness to help their own kind also appears in Agustín's conversation with Jordan regarding Maria. Convinced of Jordan's honorable intentions, Agustín, who feels great affection for the girl, gives Jordan repeated assurances that he is willing to "do anything" to "aid" them (p. 292). How central to these Spaniards is the almost instinctive urge to support each other is stated simply by Pilar in response to Joaquín's apologizing for
having spoken at length of the shooting of his family by the Fascists: "you should speak...For what are we born if not to aid one another?" (p. 139). It is then, perhaps, only natural for these people to do what they can to help Jordan to carry out Agustín's wish that Jordan and Maria "should make use of what time there is as two human beings" (p. 292).

The use of natural imagery is certainly not restricted to the Spaniards. Both Jordan and the narrator make regular use of such imagery. As a narrative technique, these inclusions of natural elements continually reestablish the place of nature in a plot that is at times dominated by physical action and interpersonal tension. Jordan's use of natural imagery is one of the more obvious ways in which he becomes more like his peasant tutors. He thinks and speaks in terms of nature more often as his education and the story proceed. When Pilar, depressed by the sight of enemy aircraft, confesses to feeling sad, Jordan says this sadness will "dissipate as the sun rises. It is like a mist" (p. 89). As Joaquin escorts Pillar and Maria to Ed Sordo, Jordan follows and regards them as the best-looking products of Spain: "She is like a mountain and the boy and the girls are like young trees. The old trees are all cut down and the young trees are growing clean like that" (p. 136). It is noteworthy that in this passage Pilar and Maria, the two characters who have the greatest effect on Jordan, are compared by Jordan to natural objects bearing unmistakable resemblance to the mountainous and forested
setting of Jordan's educational metamorphosis.

Returning from El Sordo's cave, Pilar leaves Jordan and Maria alone to enjoy each other in what time remains. The narrator tells of their holding hands and of something coming to Jordan from Maria "that was as fresh as the first light air that moving toward you over the sea barely wrinkles the glassy surface of a calm, as light as a feather moved across one's lip, or a leaf falling when there is no breeze" (p. 158). During their final night together, Jordan speaks of Maria's hair, echoing the narrator's earlier description in saying that it is "like the fur of an animal" and that it "rises like a wheatfield in the wind" (p. 345). He goes on to tell her how he would have her wear her hair: "So it will hand straight to thy shoulders and curl at the ends as a wave of the sea curls, and it will be the color or ripe wheat" (p. 346). Later that same evening, sleeping Maria's head lies under wakeful Jordan's chin and feels "as alive and silkily rolling as when a marton's fur rises under the caress of your hand" (p. 378). These similes serve also to reaffirm the association of Maria with nature. And as Jordan is drawn to Maria, so is he drawn to the natural realm which she clearly represents. This drawing together of Jordan and nature not only results from an increased understanding and acceptance of nature's simpler and more fulfilling priorities, but also engenders more of such understanding, as to use a phrase Jordan employs in a different context, "a snowball rolls up wet snow" (p. 386).
The importance of Jordan's involvement with nature becomes clearest in the final chapter. With his guerrilla forces in position, Jordan lies listening for the sound of the bombs, signaling the beginning of the Loyalist offensive. He watches a squirrel and wishes he had it in his pocket to touch. The next sentence states that he would like to have "anything" that he could touch. But apparently just anything will not do. Jordan has with him binoculars, a submachine gun, and all the equipment he will need to destroy the bridge. None of these things does he choose to touch. Instead, he tries rubbing "his elbows against the pine needles, but it was not the same" (p. 433). Unable to touch the squirrel and dissatisfied with the feel of the dead pine needles, he seeks escape from the loneliness that precedes military action by thinking of Maria in whom nature is personified and through whom Jordan has formed his most passionate bonds with that abiding force. Thus, in the seemingly insignificant actions before battle, Hemingway gives tangible evidence of Jordan's need for communion with the natural world.

During the escape following the destruction of the bridge, Jordan suffers a badly broken leg which necessitates his being left behind. As he awaits the arrival of the Fascist soldiers, he reflects on the nearly three days spent in this area where he is about to die. He believes he has had "as good a life as any one because of these last days" (p. 467). Jordan's luck remains good, for as he feels himself "slipping away from himself as you feel snow starting
to slip sometimes on a mountain slope," the enemy cavalry
draws near. With death only moments away, Jordan "was comp­
letely integrated now and he took a good long look at
everything. Then 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 touched the bark of the pine
trunk that he lay behind" (p. 471). Hemingway's use of the
word "integrated" here merits attention. The word means "to
make up or complete as a whole, as parts do." If, then,
Jordan is now "completely integrated," something has happened
to make him complete. That something is essential to an
understanding of Jordan's development or education.

Since first entering the domain of Pablo's band, Jordan
has undergone a profound personal metamorphosis. He who "did
not give any importance to what happened to himself" at the
beginning of the novel now believes the "world is a fine
place and worth the fighting for and I hate very much to
leave it" (p. 467). There is no single person or series of
events responsible for this. Jordan has been influenced by
all he has encountered in these mountains, and, more to the
point, he is aware of both the changes within himself
and their cause. He entered this natural realm needing and
unconsciously searching for he knew not what. Its discovery
entails a new and better life: "I have been all my life in
these hills since I have been here. Anselmo is my oldest
friend...Agustin, with his vile mouth, is my brother, and I
never had a brother. Maria is my true love and my wife. I
never had a true love. I never had a wife...I hate to leave a thing that is so good” (p. 381). That this discovery resulted from an educational process is recognized by Jordan: "Christ, I was learning fast there at the end" (p. 467).

This change within Jordan is depicted symbolically in the vernal transformation of the landscape. While placing explosives about the bridge, Jordan notices "through the metal of the bridge, the sunlight on the green slope of the mountain. It was brown three days ago, he thought" (p. 438) The use of natural imagery to illustrate Jordan's inner growth is deliberately framed by the metallic bridge. Additional examples of this counterpointing appear in the same short paragraph: the noise of battle is driven from Jordan's ears by the sound of the stream boiling up below him; there a trout circles about an insect on the surface of the water while Jordan twists the wire tight with pliers to hold grenades in place.

Thinking of Madrid in the final scene, Jordan pictures the terrain that lies between that center of his political development and those mountains where he has lived most fully. His detailed picturing of the intervening countryside suggests an awareness of a journey more meaningful than geographical: "That is in Madrid. Just over the hills there, and down across the plain. Down out of the gray rocks and the pines, the heather and the gorse, across the yellow high plateau you see it rising white and beautiful. That part is just as
true as Pilar's old women drinking the blood down at the slaughterhouse. There's no one thing that's true. It's all true" (p. 467).

Determining what is true is very important to Jordan, who hopes to write "a true book" about Spain, one much better than his first. He claims to have "noticed, and listened to, and remembered everything" (p. 136) to this end. When Pilar finishes telling of the slaughter of the Fascists by Pablo at the start of the movement, Jordan asks her to tell him sometime of the worse things that followed the Fascists taking of the same town. To Pablo he says, "I am learning much from thee," and he is curious concerning the course of Pablo's political development. His desire to return to Gaylord's involves his wish to "find out what was going on in the war." However, Jordan is most severe in ferreting out the truth of his own motives and feelings. He constantly keeps himself in check and in touch with what he can regard as truthful by means of second thoughts and conversations with himself. As he examines the papers of the horseman who rode into Pablo's camp and whom Jordan shot, he carries on one of these conversations:

You never kill any one that you want to kill in a war, he said to himself. Well, hardly ever, he amended... How many is that you have killed? he asked himself. I don't know. Do you think you have a right to kill anyone? No. But I have to. How many of those you have killed have been real fascists? Very few. But they are all the enemy to whose force we are opposing force...Don't you know it is wrong to kill? Yes. But you do it? Yes. And you still believe absolutely that your cause is right? Yes... But you mustn't believe in killing, he told himself. You must do it as a necessity but you must not believe in it. If you believe in it the whole thing is wrong (pp. 302-04).
These inner dialogues do much to enlist sympathy for Jordan. This is necessary, for if what Jordan learns during the three days is to be of interest, so must Jordan himself. He must be made to appear worthy of the close attention paid to his very personal progress. He is, therefore, shown to be brave, dedicated, fair-minded, perceptive, and likeable. As demanding as he is of those under his command, he is more demanding and more critical of himself. With Maria he is tender and loving. And always he seems convincingly human and believable: he says the wrong thing at times; appears slightly selfish at others; and gives vent to a "red, black, blinding, killing anger" that makes him consider "what an animal is in a rage" (p. 370). But he remains a man of many scruples, with an active and highly developed moral sense.

In the passage previously quoted, Jordan's internal questioning of his right to kill for a cause clearly aligns him with the character of Anselmo. While keeping track of enemy movement along the road by the bridge, Anselmo dwells at length on such killing, which he considers to be "a very great sin" and "the only thing that I have done in all my life that makes me feel badly when I am alone" (p. 198). He, too, knows that most of those men he fights are not real Fascists, but only "poor men as we are." Jordan is delighted to discover that the old man has remained at his post for so long in the cold and snow. Knowing how reliable Anselmo will be, Jordan thinks of him as "a good man" to have in the battle to come. But Anselmo's goodness goes far beyond the holding of flanks;
he is without question the most Christian character in the novel. And it is he whom Jordan calls his "oldest friend" and to whom Jordan is made to seem akin.

The reader is thus led to wish Jordan well, to desire for him success against the bridge and a life together with Maria. However, these desires are tempered by several indications that Jordan is not going to survive. Pilar does not need to say what she reads in Jordan's hand. The difficulty of the mission is made clear from the beginning and is recognized by all. Jordan is repeatedly associated with the ill-fated Kashkin, another foreigner who worked as a dynamiter behind the enemy lines. The crafty Pablo asks Jordan, "And you...If you are wounded in such a thing as this bridge, you would be willing to be left behind?" (p. 21). Long before he is wounded, Jordan attempts to convince himself that "it is possible to live as full a life in seventy hours as in seventy years" (p. 166). He resists such pessimistic ideas but they recur nonetheless. The title and epigraph of the novel also foretell Jordan's fate, for it is his story and he who must die. How to meet one's death with grace and without humiliation is a theme in this novel and a part of Jordan's education. It may be said to be his final lesson. The realization that Jordan is to die in carrying out his mission draws attention to the events of his final days and to the changes that occur within him.

Near the end, struggling against pain and unconsciousness and yearning for the arrival of the enemy, Jordan tries to think of other things. He tries to think of
Madrid and Montana but finds he cannot. Yet he can think in detail of the fleeing guerrillas "going through the timber...crossing a creek...riding through the heather" (p. 470). He can also think of death, which he compares first to "a cool drink of water" and then to "nothing." The comparison of death to nothing is also made by Don Ricardo and El Sordo, both of whom die in admirable fashion. The contrast between what Jordan can and cannot give thought to is sharp and indicative of the major influences upon Jordan and of the strength of the ties to nature he now feels. At the end, as death and Lieutenant Berrendo approach, the "completely integrated" Jordan "could feel his heart beating against the pine needle floor of the forest" (p. 471). So the novel ends and so it began, with Jordan lying "flat on the brown, pineneedled floor of the forest" (p. 1) in what Warren French calls "the most intimate possible association with Nature." In the beginning, however, Jordan merely lies on the ground, observing the Fascist positions and all but ignoring the natural surroundings, whereas in the final scene he seems intent on establishing a physical relationship with those same natural elements. The nearby pine needles and tree he touches; at the more distant sky and clouds he stares; against the forest floor his heart beats. Certainly there is a cycle here, but one ending only physically where Jordan began. During the three intervening days, Jordan lives in an area that appears almost pristine alongside sophisticated Madrid. In Madrid Jordan becomes informed and disillusioned in the limited sphere of
political development. As the priest in "The Capital of the World" observes, "Madrid is where one learns to understand. Madrid kills Spain." Away from Madrid, Jordan claims to "have learned much about life...more, I think, than in all the other time" (p. 380). This education Jordan received from persons who lack formal education but who are much closer to nature and to the essential in life.

The treatment of time exemplifies this closeness. After handing his watch to Rafael, Jordan asks the gypsy if he can tell time. In Rafael's response time is calculated by simple human needs: "Why not? Twelve o'clock mid-day. Hunger. Twelve o'clock midnight. Sleep. Six o'clock in the morning, hunger. Six o'clock at night, drunk. With luck. Ten o'clock at night--" (p. 79). Examining the watch, Rafael says, "Look at what complications." In this region such complications as those Jordan has brought with him--his work, his devotion to the cause, his unsatisfactory past--are made to seem less important, even trivial. While Rafael is supposed to be guarding the approach to Pablo's cave, he goes hunting for hares because, as he tells Jordan, "Never would such an opportunity as the two hares present itself again" (p. 275). Disgusted by Rafael's action, Jordan regards him as "truly worthless. He has no political development, nor any discipline" (p. 275). But these are the values of Madrid, not of the mountains where the opportunities of nature matter more than the arbitrary standards of men detached from the soil. One of the soldiers in the sawmill makes this point rather clearly while discussing the weather: "Any one who lives
either by the sea or by the land knows that it is the moon
and not the month which counts...You are from a town...What
would you know of the sea or of the land?" (p. 195).

Jordan, too, is from a town, and although that town
is nestled in a most natural setting, he does not begin to
understand and share the values of those who do live by the
land until he enters the forested mountains of Spain where,
he says, he would rather have been born (p. 15). The conflict
engendered within Jordan by the combination of old and new
influences is responsible for much of his inner debating and
for occasional inconsistencies of thought. Referring to the
war, Jordan tells Agustín, "Unless we win, all other things
are futile" (p. 292). Yet in the same conversation Jordan
speaks of caring for Maria "As there can be nothing more
serious in this world" (p. 290). Some allowance must be made
for Jordan's confusion here. He has never loved as deeply
before: "when I am with Maria I love her so that I feel,
literally, as though I would die and I never believed in that
nor thought that it could happen" (p. 166). Thus Maria
enables Jordan to love truly for the first time, while the
others teach him not everything they know -- there is too
little time for that -- but enough to enable Jordan to say
that since "there is only now, why then now is the thing
to praise and I am very happy with it" (p. 166).

His education helps prepare Jordan to die, but, more
importantly, it allows him to live. For he who entered this
region not giving any importance to what happened to himself,
has "learned that he himself, with another person, could be everything" (p. 393). To learn this, Jordan must stop conversing with the likes of cynical Karkov and start listening to the simpler wisdom of Anselmo and Pilar; he must interrupt his political development within the walls of Gaylord's to realize his human potential in the arms of Maria; and, before all else, he must leave the unsatisfactory settings of Madrid and Missoula for an area rich in rocks and trees and heather. There, close to nature, his essential education can begin.
FOOTNOTES


4 Ernest Hemingway, For Whom the Bell Tolls (New York: Scribner's, 1940), p. 305. All subsequent textual references will be from this edition.


8 French, p. 60.

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