

# The Perils and Possibilities of Mistranslation: Equivocation and Barbarism in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*

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*Hemingway's For Whom the Bell Tolls is highly innovative in incorporating the structures and idioms of Spanish into its English prose. His literal translations, puns and false cognates (false friends) have upset many critics, but they reveal that, in spite of his 'shaky grammar,' Hemingway had a fine ear for linguistic nuance. By exploiting the overlapping and diverging meanings of cognates in the two languages, Hemingway not only gave historical and cultural substance to his work, but exposed both the difficulty and the necessity of 'keeping it accurate,' and ultimately attended to the ethical dimension of translation.*

In *The Translation Zone*, Emily Apter argues that the events of 9/11 revealed – among other things – the linguistic deficiencies of an obstinately monolingual USA, and its naïve or arrogant failure to anticipate the hostility directed towards it from abroad. Her book is an attempt to consider translation, both linguistic and cultural, as the basis for a comparative literature that takes stock of the ‘complexity of language politics in a world at once more monolingual and more multilingual,’ as the blurb indicates. As a discipline, translation studies has itself paid increasingly close attention to the cultural, ethical and political dimension of its practice, as Antoine Berman’s *L’épreuve de l’étranger* (*The Trials of the Foreign*, 1985), Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak’s ‘The Politics of Translation’ (1992) and Lawrence Venuti’s *The Scandals of Translation: Towards an Ethics of Translation* (1998) perhaps most famously attest. With their shared emphasis on preserving what is foreign in the foreign, of avoiding the ‘impoverishment’ that for Berman is typical of the ‘deforming tendencies’ of translation (2012: 244), the focus of translation has for some time now – at least in theory – been shifting away

from a 'domesticating' tendency to erase the act of translation altogether, and towards a more ethically and politically aware act of 'foreignisation.' 'Translations... inevitably perform a work of domestication. Those that work best, the most powerful in recreating cultural values and the most responsible in accounting for that power, usually engage readers in domestic terms that have been defamiliarised to some extent, made fascinating by a revisionary encounter with a foreign text' (Venuti 1998: 5).

Of course, there is a contrast to be drawn here between a translation prone to 'rationalization,' 'clarification,' 'expansion' or the various types of destruction that Berman includes in his list of 'deforming tendencies,' and a translation that just gets it plain wrong. Sometimes, after all, accuracy and clarity remain the order of the day, especially where the stakes are high. Apter reminds us, for example, of the famous 'Ems dispatch' that contributed in no small part to the tensions leading to the outbreak of the Franco-Prussian war, thanks to the mistranslation of a key word (Apter 2006: 19-20). Most mistranslations are less catastrophic. In the age of machine translation and globalised business there are numerous very funny examples of it, from the shop front decked out with the name 'Translate server error' or the Welsh road sign reading 'I am currently out of the office,' to the jam that 'tastes like grandma' or the assurance that 'we are in this construction for the inconvenience.' This points not just to the difference between poor translation and mistranslation, but also to the difference between communicative language – which tries (and sometimes fails) to transfer meaning – and literary language, which tries (and sometimes fails) to say more than it appears to say, to expand meaning. There is no clear demarcation point between these two types and uses of language, and translation can sometimes blur the difference even further, contracting or expanding the communicative or poetic reach of a statement considerably, if accidentally. For example, in a subtitled Bollywood film the corny but clearly figurative 'you are one in a million' became the deflationary 'I have selected you from among several other people,' while the sign on the lawn presumably reading 'Keep off the grass' became the much nicer, 'Do not disturb: Tiny grass is dreaming.'

But mistranslation can also, in the right context, be productive. This is the case, I want to argue, in Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, a novel whose unusual and innovative use of language has perhaps alienated more readers than it has won over. In this novel Hemingway brought to fruition a stylistic strategy that had appeared in earlier works, but which had not yet reached its full expression: the incorporation into English of the structures and idioms of another language, in this case Spanish. He does this largely through the literal translation and transposition into English of idioms and false cognates, or words that appear to be the same in two languages but which in fact have different meanings, often referred to in language teaching as false friends. Expressions relying on such translations and transpositions, such as 'Not even in a joke,' 'The blond one with the rare name,' or 'I besmirch the milk of thy duty,' generate a style both jagged and aggravating, though often tersely

beautiful. Since the novel's publication in 1941 many critics have found fault with Hemingway's Spanish, finding it inaccurate to the point of 'chauvinism' (Josephs 1983). Especially irritating to Hispanophone critics has been his sloppy spelling and accenting of Spanish words incorporated untranslated into the novel, regarded as symptomatic of a generally arrogant, and probably ignorant, manhandling of the Spanish language. But there is plenty in Hemingway's translated Spanish to suggest that in fact he had a fine ear for language, especially linguistic nuance, and that though there might have been errors in his written Spanish, there was also great subtlety in his semantic and syntactic incorporation of it into English. In what follows I will argue that the 'mistranslations' that have so upset critics are not surface errors pointing to ignorance, but are rather rich sources of alternative meaning.

### **Equivocation**

In 1943, Edward Fenimore wrote that Hemingway used Spanish in *For Whom the Bell Tolls* as a pretext for bringing echoes of epic and Elizabethan language to the Anglophone reader's ear. This is in keeping with the quote from John Donne – 'No man is an *Iland* intire of it selfe [...]' – that forms the novel's epigraph and provides the novel's title, framing its concern with ethical community. For Fenimore, the Spanish idiom is used to defamiliarise English but also to make it resound with its own history, generating an epic quality in the prose through a sense of remoteness in time and space, which in turns grants universality to the novel's themes. But Spanish is not only a pretext for bringing to bear archaic meanings and uses of English words; it also offers overlapping yet differing ranges of meaning to imply values that would not be immediately obvious to an Anglophone reader. Hemingway exploits the Spanish idiom in order to multiply meaning, to generate even at the level of single words the sense that ideas can contain their opposite, which is perhaps not as opposite as it seemed; to find in the 'translation' of a word a range of meaning that both overlaps with and extends its meaning in English.

In many cases Hemingway uses cognates, often false ones, to open out and multiply the meaning and the expressive power of words. The word 'illusion' provides an interesting example of this, as a cognate both real and false depending on its context. It crops up on two occasions. Firstly, when Pilar says to Robert Jordan:

*I put great illusion in the Republic. I believe firmly in the Republic and I have faith. I believe it with fervour as those who have religious faith believe in the mysteries.*  
(96)

And secondly, when Pablo says to the band:

*I have thought you are a group of illusioned people [...] Led by a woman with a brain between her thighs and a foreigner who comes to destroy you.* (224)

Pilar's use of the word is unnatural in English; it draws its inferred meaning from the hope, excitement and anticipation that is proper to the Spanish 'ilusión.' But when Pablo uses it, it implies the fiction, fantasy or mirage that we would exclusively associate with it in English. The meaning of the word in Pablo's mouth is impoverished, negative, lacking its wider remit; but Pilar is equally deaf to the word's alternative meaning, which for an Anglophone reader bleeds through her use of it and taints her hope with the threat of a lost cause. In this way it adds to the novel's strong sense of foreboding, combining both the promise and lost cause of the Republic in a single word.

The literal translation of false cognates can of course lead to misinterpretation, and Hemingway – contrary to what has often been suggested – was no doubt well aware that there were both risks and opportunities in playing on double meanings. There is one word in particular that suggests this is the case. As the band makes its preparations on the day of the attack, Pablo apologises to Robert Jordan for having stolen some of his equipment, saying:

*I am sorry for having taken thy material [...] It was an equivocation. (421)*

This statement does not make sense in English, unless we correctly infer from the context that the Spanish 'equivocación' means 'error' or 'mistake.' In English to equivocate is to 'use... words or expressions that are susceptible of a double signification, with a view to mislead; esp. the expression of a virtual falsehood in the form of a proposition which (in order to satisfy the speaker's conscience) is verbally true.' To equivocate is, 'in bad sense: "To mean one thing and express another;" to prevaricate; to insinuate by equivocation; to evade (an oath, a promise) by equivocation' (OED). The meanings of the verb and the noun gravitate around ambiguity and falsehood, a reminder of all that Hemingway despises in literature: namely, the failure to 'keep it accurate.' But at the same time it seems to be a joke about his own linguistic technique in the novel. Obsolete meanings of 'equivocation' in English include 'a word identical in form but not in meaning;' to equivocate in the 17<sup>th</sup> century was 'to have the same sound with; to resemble so closely as to occasion mistake; to use a word in more than one application or sense; to use words of double meaning; to deal in ambiguities; to misapprehend through ambiguity of language.' To equivocate is quite a risk for a writer for whom 'style was a moral act, a desperate struggle for moral probity amid the confusions of the world and the slippery complexities of one's own nature. To set things down simple and right is to hold a standard of rightness against a deceiving world' (Barrett 1972: 65). But the language of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* consistently acknowledges the slipperiness of language, and employs translation to generate both misleading and overlapping meanings. How does this function as a strategy of translation in a novel with such powerful ethical and political concerns? Is it rendered suspect by its linguistic 'equivocations'?

The vexed question of Robert Jordan's use of the nickname 'rabbit' for his beloved Maria presents itself here, because it indicates a degree of both humour and trickery in linguistic equivocation which is nevertheless superseded by more significant interlingual resonances. The Spanish 'conejo' is not only the word for rabbit, but also the euphemistic slang term for female genitalia, a fact that has exercised and offended critics in equal measure. One critic argues that the love affair between Robert Jordan and Maria is too heartfelt for Hemingway to make such a crude joke at his character's expense, and so concludes that the author, with his 'poor Spanish,' is the butt of his own ignorance (Josephs 1983); while another is convinced that Hemingway not only knew what the word meant but made Robert Jordan the butt of the joke because, as a university instructor, he represented the literary critical establishment that Hemingway so disliked (Rudat 1990). This is incoherent in my view, given that Robert Jordan is so clearly a man of action and a writer in the making, rather than a pretentious intellectual. Though we cannot know whether or not Hemingway knew the Spanish meaning of the word, his colloquial knowledge of the language makes it highly unlikely that he did not; and so it seems more useful to ask how the novel exploits the word's various associations in the two languages.

As others have noted, Maria is clearly associated with the natural world, and the word 'rabbit,' even in English, suggests sexuality and fertility. She is also associated with Spain through the likeness of her tawny cropped hair to a field of grain in the 'yellow and tawny' Castile (Hemingway 2004: 81), in a physical echo of the landscape that, like her name, suggests she is an archetype. Alex Link argues that these symbolic associations are reinforced by her nickname:

*The 1898 edition of Brewers gives the first origin of "Hispania" as the Punic word "Span" for rabbit. According to Trench H. Johnson, when Phoenician explorers arrived at what is now Spain, they named it for the "wild rabbits which abounded in the peninsula." The narrative's thematic investment of national and political values in Maria clearly reflects this etymology. (2009: 135)*

Andrés's reminiscences about the *capeas* or local bullfights in his *pueblo*, Villaconejos (town of the rabbits), further suggest that Hemingway ascribes an emblematically national quality to both the bull and the rabbit. In Hemingway's depiction of Maria, with her colt-like movements and her 'long and light' body like a hare's (Hemingway 2004: 74), she is young, fresh and delicate like new grain and perhaps, through association with the peasant community, like the Republic; but the hair that marks this newness is also the constant visual reminder of her rape by the fascists, who named her a 'Bride of the Red Christ' (365) and daubed her with the socialist acronym U.H.P. before raping her. Maria is physically marked by this rape, the cutting of her hair a symbolic divesting of power that is also proper to rape. The word 'conejo,' in its grosser meaning, marks the brutal reduction of her body to its sexual organs, and a violation of the natural, innocent sexuality that Robert Jordan discovers in her later. Her choice to have sex with Jordan is a transforming of that act of violence into an act of love; and in the same way the gentle word 'rabbit' restores the crude image to sweetness. Jordan himself is associated

with the hare when, between his final love-making with Maria and his presumed death at the end of the novel, Rafael discovers a pair of rutting hares that end up in the cooking pot. This illustrates the physical connection between Jordan and Maria, who bear some considerable physical likeness to each other and who become 'one body' in improvised marriage; but it also hints at the somewhat gruff irony that Hemingway employs to counter sentimentality.

Hemingway therefore exploits differences in connotation to widen his range of meaning, to imply more than would be possible without recourse to the second language. He is evidently not averse to a joke or some linguistic trickery, but it is clear that he is engaged in something far more significant and profound than just that. In *For Whom the Bell Tolls* words resound and reverberate with history and culture through the act of translation; and this generates a sense of both difference and integration between languages. Though Walter Benjamin's famous essay on translation would no doubt constitute the kind of intellectual abstraction that Hemingway disliked, it nevertheless offers a very illuminating frame for thinking about the author's technique. Benjamin describes the 'task of the translator' as 'finding the particular intention toward the target language which produces in that language the echo of the original' (2012: 258). He dismisses the debate between 'freedom' and 'fidelity' in translation and instead considers the power of translation to supplement meaning. He observes that in every language 'one and the same thing is meant', yet no language on its own can supply total meaning. And while 'individual elements of foreign languages – words, sentences, associations – are mutually exclusive, these languages supplement one another in their intentions' (257). In an example that seems especially pertinent to Hemingway, Benjamin goes on:

*In the words Brot and pain, what is meant is the same, but the way of meaning it is not. This difference in the way of meaning permits the word Brot to mean something other to a German than what the word pain means to a Frenchman, so that these words are not interchangeable for them; in fact, they strive to exclude each other. As to what is meant, however, the two words signify the very same thing. Even though the way of meaning in these two words is in such conflict, it supplements itself in each of the two languages from which the words are derived; to be more specific, the way of meaning in them is supplemented in its relation to what is meant. (257)*

Benjamin describes a 'pure language' that brings together these identical and yet mutually exclusive meanings, pointing towards the 'hitherto inaccessible realm of reconciliation and fulfilment of languages' (257) where sense is multiplied. Rather than usurp the source language, he argues, translation should 'release' and 'liberate' pure language: 'Just as a tangent touches a circle lightly and at but one point, [...] a translation touches the original lightly and only at the infinitely small point of the sense, thereupon pursuing its own course [...]' (261). Benjamin's essay is highly illuminating of

Hemingway's technique in *For Whom the Bell Tolls*, in spite of the fact that the author's 'translations' are constitutive of, rather than secondary to, the original text.

## Barbarism

The notion of 'barbarism' offers an extended example of the way Hemingway exploits the supplementary, rather than identical or mutually exclusive nature of intention in the two languages, generating in the process an enlarged verbal concept in relation to the novel's themes. Barbarism in relation to both culture and language derives from the Greek word *barbaros*, denoting the uncivilized foreigner or outsider, a word that conveys the stuttering or repetitive sound (*ba-ba, bla-bla, bara-bara*) of incomprehensible foreign speech. In relation to language it has come to mean an error, usually the result of an imported foreign element, drawing on the association of foreignness and difference with the incomprehensible and inarticulate. Because of its association with the uncivilized it has come in our own time to stand for explosive and extreme forms of savagery and brutality. Not surprisingly, and in keeping with the oppositional rhetoric of the day, in Hemingway's novel the fascists are often referred to as 'barbarians,' a word that Hitler unashamedly embraced after his infamous political 'blood purge' of 1934: "People accuse us of being barbarians; we are barbarians, and we are proud of it!" ("fascism"). It is possibly the contemporary prevalence of the idea that fascists were barbarians that makes the word sound somewhat mechanical, though not inaccurate, in this context:

*'There they shot my father. My mother. My brother-in-law and now my sister,'  
[said Joaquín].*

*'What barbarians,' Robert Jordan said.*

*[...] Nearly always they spoke as this boy did now; suddenly and apropos of the  
mention of the town and always you said, 'What barbarians.' (140)*

*'So they shot her because she would not tell them where he was.'*

*'What barbarians,' said Pilar. (145)*

These exchanges take place very shortly after Pilar's account of the Republican atrocity committed under Pablo's command at the start of the war, recounting how in a small Spanish town the peasants and republicans beat to death and threw over a cliff anybody believed to be a fascist or to have fascist sympathies (the fact that not all of those killed were true fascists is emphasised repeatedly). This powerful, protracted and controversial episode reminds Robert Jordan of the guilt on his own side – he reflects that he has always known of and hated the crimes committed by the Republicans – and his response to Joaquín suggests a weariness caused not only by the prevalence of his experience and his

inability to connect with it emotionally, but also by the knowledge that the violence was not one-sided. If 'barbarian' implies the radically foreign, as well as the savage and uncivilized, the word is hollowed out as a marker of difference in the context of a fratricidal war in which both sides have committed atrocities. Pilar's account is shocking not only because it is violent, but because those perpetuating the violence are those we would like to think of as victims, challenging a mechanical acceptance of the word's referent and its use. Hemingway challenges the simplistic distinctions that arise through mechanical repetition and uncritical thinking, something that concerns Robert Jordan throughout the novel and that speaks especially to the dangers of slogans and the language of propaganda:

*Enemies of the people. That was a phrase he might omit. That was a catchphrase he would skip [...] He had gotten to be as bigoted and hide-bound about his politics as a hard-shelled Baptist and phrases like enemies of the people came into his mind without his much criticising them in any way. Any sort of clichés both revolutionary and patriotic. His mind employed them without criticism. (171)*

He instantly undermines this little speech to himself by observing that 'of course they were true;' but the point is that 'it was too easy to be nimble about using them' (171). Language is an instrument that operates independently of truth, and the connection of ideas to the truth is weakened by 'easy' catchphrases. Robert Jordan is concerned throughout the novel with finding a mode of expression that will be truthful, accurate, and not simplistic or 'nimble;' and his knowledge of Spanish, French and some German gives him a sense of the reverberations of meaning in different languages, as his reflections sometimes explicitly indicate (174; 396). Perhaps more than any political commitment, it is these two things – the awareness of writing as an ethical act and the sense of linguistic difference and possibility – that inform both the novel's style and its value structure.

The work of stripping the word 'barbarian' of its rhetorical value is given a further dimension by the wider range of meaning that Spanish lends to the adjective 'barbarous.' The word crops up on a number of occasions in the novel, most notably in relation to the central figures of Pablo and Pilar. The once brave Pablo has become a cowardly, untrustworthy drunk, a slide brought on by his role in the massacre at the start of the civil war, or perhaps simply by fear. Both Pablo, the ringleader in that atrocity, and Pilar, who gives such powerful testimony of it, are described in the novel as 'barbarous' in ways that are best understood by reference to the meanings of the adjective 'bárbaro' in Spanish. It is in relation to Pilar that the word is first and most emphatically used:

*"And how is she, the mujer of Pablo?"*

*"Something barbarous," the gypsy grinned. "Something very barbarous. If you think Pablo is ugly you should see his woman. But brave. A hundred times braver than Pablo. But something barbarous." (28)*



*"The mujer of Pablo reads in the hands," the gypsy said. "But she is so irritable and of such a barbarousness that I do not know if she will go it." (30)*

*"She has gypsy blood," Rafael said. "She knows of what she speaks." He grinned. "But she has a tongue that scalds and that bites like a bull-whip. With this tongue she takes the hide from anyone. In strips. She is of an unbelievable barbarousness." (30)*

But Pilar is not merely 'barbarous' in the common sense that both English and Spanish allow, meaning uncultured and coarse, harsh and aggressive, though she is those things too. She is also surprising, daring, large and magnificent, all of which the Spanish adjective 'bárbaro' accommodates: *arrojado, temerario; grande, excesivo, extraordinario; excelente, llamativo, magnífico* [daring, reckless; great, excessive, extraordinary; excellent, impressive, magnificent] (DRAE):

*Robert Jordan spoke to the wife of Pablo who was standing, still and huge, by the fire. She turned towards them and said, 'I am for the bridge.' Her face was lit by the fire and it was flushed and it shone warm and dark and handsome now in the firelight as it was meant to be. (56)*

Pilar is a force to be reckoned with, tough, uncompromising and loyal, believing in the Republic 'as those who have religious faith believe in the mysteries' (96); a Spanish Marianne with her rough, earthly power, 'her heavy brown face with the high Indian cheekbones' (309), her gypsy knowledge and her instinctive fear of the planes that fly overhead. Pilar's association with the ancient and the aboriginal brings to mind the Greek and Roman association of barbarians not only with the foreign but with the primitive and uncivilized; and certainly as an illiterate gypsy, a Republican, and a virile woman, Pilar would represent to the fascists an alien threat, one more terrifying member of the 'revolutionary hordes who obey the orders of foreign governments' that Franco identified in 1936. Her virility also suggests a link with the Spanish 'barba' or beard, and this false etymology (*barba* is derived from Latin, *barbarism* from Greek) is one that Hemingway undoubtedly exploits. If Pilar is in some sense 'bearded,' this is assigned a positive value in contrast to the sinister depiction of the figure of the barber, both in connection with Maria's rape and with the foreshadowing of death towards the end of the novel. In the value system of the novel Pilar is the salt of the earth, an incarnation of Spain as Maria and Anselmo are too, and her storytelling capacities give her an implied connection to oral culture that roots her powerfully in home soil.

Later in the novel Pablo, 'rendered useless by his fear and his disinclination to action' (99), drunk on wine and shame and wishing he could restore to life all the men he has killed, acknowledges that the

massacre 'was barbarous [...] In those days I was very barbarous' (217). But for Pilar, the time when Pablo was barbarous was also the time when he was brave: 'thou hast seen the ruin that now is Pablo, but you should have seen Pablo on that day [the day of the massacre]' (104). Here it is worth noting again the other meanings that the Spanish word 'bárbaro' supplies, which bring to mind a more epic conception of warrior-like behaviour. This is important in the context of a novel in which modernity and modern warfare are so strongly at issue, especially given the 'epic' and 'Elizabethan' overtones that connect the novel remotely to more ancient values. From Achilles to El Cid the warrior was praised for his courage and prowess, not for his sensitivity to life; and Pilar, herself 'barbarous' and a lover of the bullfight, recognises in the earlier Pablo a certain warrior-like greatness. In her telling of the massacre, Pilar distinguishes between 'the depriving of life' with 'good taste' (124) and 'dignity' (134), the almost sacramental act of committing a communal crime in which all would 'share the guilt' (124), and the 'repugnant,' drunken 'cruelty' (124) that actually ensues. 'I myself had felt much emotion at the shooting of the *guardia civil* by Pablo,' Pilar says, referring to the first killings of the day:

*It was a thing of great ugliness, but I had thought if this is how it must be, this is how it must be [...] But [...] with the coming of the drunkards and the worthless ones into the lines [...] I wished that I might disassociate myself altogether from the lines. (124-25)*

'Emotion' and 'ugliness' are both strongly connected to Hemingway's understanding of the bullfight, which should have 'valor, art, understanding and, above all, beauty and great emotion' (*Death in the Afternoon*: 177). It is significant too that the word 'emoción' in Spanish should differ from its English counterpart by inclining towards excitement rather than sorrow, and away from sentimentality. The emotion of the bullfight is produced by the matador's controlled artistry and the valour of both man and beast; but the anarchic slaughter Pilar witnesses produces not emotion but 'shame and distaste,' 'a sweating and a nausea as though I had swallowed bad sea food' (125). When Robert Jordan asks Pilar what happened she replies, 'Much. And all of it ugly. Even that which was glorious. [...] It was brutal' (104). If beauty is proper to the bullfight because the bullfight shares the ritual power of the sacrament or the sacrifice, then ugliness refers to the absence of those ritual elements that give killing and dying some noble and redemptive quality. The shooting of the civil guards was ugly, but done cleanly enough for Pilar to accept it as a necessity; just as Robert Jordan and Anselmo accept the necessity of shooting the sentries on the bridge. To emphasise the difference, Pilar describes how the peasants line up respectfully, even sorrowfully, to share in the guilt of their 'necessary' crime, before turning gradually but irrevocably into a baying mob unable to distinguish between those who 'deserve' and do not 'deserve' death. She tells Pablo afterwards that she only enjoyed watching the killing of one man, Don Faustino the coward, the implication being that because he lived without dignity or bravery he deserved to die in the same way. So Pilar's reaction is a complex one: she maintains the tension

between brutality and glory that belongs to an epic conception of war and which is contained in 'bárbaro;' but she recognises that 'all of it [was] ugly,' 'even that which was glorious.' It is not just that the sacrificial act conceived according to the same set of aesthetic values as the bullfight has been betrayed; it is that *even* that which was glorious is, in fact, ugly. She is sickened by the brutality she witnesses, but she is pleased to see a coward dispatched, in however degrading a manner. Pilar's response navigates between an epic sense of war and a modern, humanitarian sensibility; between a formalised value system based on honour, courage, and summary justice, and a looser, incipiently modern sense that human life is the ultimate cost. This is important because it would be easy to believe that Pilar, imbued with the aesthetic values of the bullfight, represents a nostalgically primitive culture; but in fact it is arguably the nascent modernity in Pilar's attitude to death and killing that becomes most significant to the novel's broader ethical concern with barbarity and war.

Whatever the complexities of Pilar's barbarousness, her humanity and sense of duty are never in doubt. What makes Pablo truly despicable in the value system of the novel is his disloyalty, his individualism, and the associated pleasure he takes in killing; and perhaps also, in either moral or existential terms, his inability to atone or take responsibility for what he has done. Returning to Pablo's use of the word 'equivocation,' it is especially notable that the question of conscience should arise in the dictionary definition: 'the expression of a virtual falsehood in the form of a proposition which (in order to satisfy the speaker's conscience) is verbally true.' As noted above, Pablo's conscience has been troubled since the massacre of the fascists at the start of the war, and his theft of Robert Jordan's equipment is a petty act that makes him realise how lonely it is to act selfishly. But for Pablo (Paul), this is no Damascene conversion (410); rather he is restored to his full sinister power as they prepare to blow the bridge, his hand 'strange, firm, purposeful' (421) and the smell of death upon him (473; 480). Though he apparently redeems himself after sabotaging Robert Jordan's dynamiting equipment, returning to the guerrilla band with reinforcements and renewed courage and purpose, he shoots the very men he has brought into battle (473). Pablo's apology is certainly an equivocation, a slippery falsehood in keeping with his untrustworthy character; just as his apparent humility veils the murderousness that is again to express itself in battle, this time against his own men. Pablo is simply 'murderous,' a 'murderer,' a 'bastard' (473); the brave, epic quality of 'barbarousness' is in reality entirely lacking in him, or has been corrupted out of him, or has been overrun by his murderousness. And it is of course vital to remember that for Hemingway the bullfight was noble, rule-bound and ceremonial; not savage, arbitrary or cruel; and that while the killing of the bull was necessary, the most intelligent bullfighters were never those that enjoyed the killing.

Hemingway's play on the senses and forms of barbarity in English and Spanish creates a nexus of meaning around brutality, magnificence and foreignness that generates a sense of what is at stake in the war: the grotesque and astonishing violence, the perceived difference of the opposing force, and

the impressive courage and daring, as well as the brutality, of those who fight. Arguably, the most common meaning of the word in both English and Spanish prevails, leaving roughness and brutality uppermost in our understanding; but it is undoubtedly inflected with those other meanings. With his use of the word 'barbarous' Hemingway implies that more ancient sense of largeness and magnificence, present in the epic conception of war and in the ancient ritual of the bullfight, but also projected in any era by true fighters for any cause. To lose that sense of magnificence is to know the true brutality of war, and to acknowledge the lie that it would be to glorify or romanticise it; but it is also to lose the idealism that is the source of the original impulse to fight. It is, indeed, the crude violence of Pablo and his like, on both sides of the political divide, and the cynicism of those who fight only for themselves or for their vested interests, who allow the war to become barbarous in its more restricted sense. Hemingway employs the overlapping range of meaning in the two languages to draw out the ethical complications of war: the 'barbarity' of the fraternal and fratricidal civil war is underwritten by daring bravery, and undermined by callous brutality.

Robert Jordan is obsessed, throughout the novel, with expressing himself truthfully and with learning how to give the kind of powerful, unsentimental and uncompromising testimony that Pilar gives in her account of the republican atrocity. Hemingway's literal translations, his puns and his use of false cognates point towards mistranslation as a theme, towards a sense of the danger that language will fail him in attempting to capture the civil war and that comprehension will founder. The novel's epigraph and title place its ethical concerns squarely on the issue of shared and mutual responsibility, and its principal and final images – the bridge and the integration of Robert Jordan into the Spanish earth – reinforce this emphasis on connection and a common humanity. But though the bridge is a symbol of connection it must also be blown; and though Robert Jordan integrates as well as he believes any foreigner can, he is also forever foreigner, 'inglés.' Equally, the novel offers a foreigner's perspective on the war coloured by other historical events, remote to the novels' characters but close to the implied readers – especially the American Civil war and its own Republican cause – and other cultural frames of reference, especially native American culture. The fact that these referents often rest on false cognates – to be a Republican in the USA is not the same as to be one in Spain, as Maria and Robert Jordan recognise – creates overlapping frames while pointing also to difference. There is, therefore, a value structure based on integration and ethical community that nevertheless rests on a persistent recognition of foreignness; and at the same time there is a denial of the total foreignness implied by the word 'barbarian.'

The language of *For Whom the Bell Tolls* does two things at once. It brings English and Spanish into dialogue with one another, allowing each to resound in the other and enriching literary language in the process. It offers a creative interpretation of the spirit of a language and a culture that, though it may be marked by cultural assumptions of the age, does not simply attempt to assimilate the one into the

other. The translational technique that Hemingway develops is, to my mind, profoundly in keeping with Berman's understanding of ethical translation in three notable respects. Firstly, it does not displace Spanish unconvincingly to a dialect of English, or simply pepper it with stereotypical exclamations or interjections, for 'an exoticisation that turns the foreign from abroad into the foreign at home winds up merely ridiculing the original' (Berman 2012: 250; emphasis in the original). Secondly, Hemingway does not destroy expressions and idioms by finding 'equivalents' in English, but rather taps into what Berman calls a '*proverb consciousness*' that 'detects, in a new proverb, the brother of an authentic one: the world of our proverbs is thus augmented and enriched' (251). Finally, the language of the novel preserves in literalness the alternative mode of signification of the other language, avoiding the over-interpretation, clarification, or impoverishment typical of conventional modes of translation, and attending less to the 'restitution of meaning' than to the 'signifying process' itself (253). Far from negating, acclimatising or 'naturalising' the foreign (241), Hemingway's use of language tends towards integration while 'receiving the Foreign as Foreign,' and in this way attends to the 'properly ethical aim of the translating act' (241). Even if he couldn't spell.

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