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THE HUNT FOR SELF: WALDEINSAMKEIT AND DOPPELGÄNGER IN RICHARD CONNELL'S THE MOST DANGEROUS GAME

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This paper excavates the philosophical dimensions inherent in Richard Connell's *The Most Dangerous Game*, underscoring how they affect the story's deeper layers of meaning. Rainsford's initial indifference as the hunter is tested when he is thrust into the role of the hunted. This experience compels him to face the moral intricacies of existence. Central to his journey is the concept of *Waldeinsamkeit* – the solitary excursion found in the forest. The wilderness, a space evocative of primal instincts and survival, becomes the setting for Rainsford's personal transformation. His encounter with General Zaroff is not only a physical tribulation but also a symbolic confrontation with his darker self, or *doppelgänger*, revealing the opaque and unpredictable aspects of human nature. The story questions whether Rainsford's transformation ultimately leads to a more humanized perspective or further alienates him from his humanity, leaving this question unresolved.

Keywords: *Waldeinsamkeit, Doppelgänger, Dehumanization, Indeterminacy, Tribulation.*

Introduction

Richard Connell's *The Most Dangerous Game* (1924) is not just a thrilling adventure – it's a biting, cringe-making critique of what occurs when survival, morality, and civilization meet. Sanger Rainsford, a seasoned hunter who finds himself unexpectedly cast in a horrific role reversal, is no longer the hunter – he's now the hunted. His adversary, General Zaroff, views hunting humans as the ultimate sport. The story begins like an action film but quickly explores deeper themes, challenging our notions of society and ethics. It has sparked extensive discussion on themes such as power,

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dehumanization, and the predator-prey balance critics, including Smith (2005) and Johnson (2010), have remarked on how Connell criticizes the utilitarian pursuit of power. Meanwhile, Carter (2012) delves into how Rainsford's and Zaroff's actions expose the shaky underpinnings of human morality. But above the text itself, something more fundamental – a psychological something – is left hanging long after the final page.

Consider this: when Rainsford is cast into the jungle, all he thought about right and wrong begins to fall apart. Initially, he regards Zaroff as a beast, but as the game of death continues, he himself turns to the same brutal impulses. Does cruelty justify survival? Is right a privilege of the safe and complacent? It is these kinds of questions that render *The Most Dangerous Game* so current today though it was written one hundred years ago. Connell's tale is not so much a tale of a game of risk – it's what happens when man is taken to the breaking point. And perhaps, quite perhaps, it gets us asking ourselves: what would we do if we were Rainsford?

Anderson and Patel (2018) wrote about survival as a unifying theme in *The Most Dangerous Game* that centres on the ethical issues surrounding life-and-death. But there is one aspect that is most often overlooked, which is the application of isolation and symbolism. Take *Waldeinsamkeit*, a German term that describes the haunting quietness of standing alone in the woods. That isolation is crucial to Rainsford's transformation. And then there's the *doppelgänger* concept – the idea that every person has a darker, more sinister twin. Zaroff is not merely a villain; he's a twisted version of Rainsford, a man who has completely adopted the savagery that lies under the civilized surface. Their conflict centres on identity, not survival.

The jungle symbolizes wild, untamed nature, blurring moral lines. Away from society's comforts, Rainsford confronts uncomfortable truths about himself. Diguez (2013) explains how total isolation can cause deep introspection, even hallucinations. In that way, the jungle doesn't merely challenge Rainsford's survival abilities – it compels him to confront the darkness within himself. “Though visual, disembodied, and corporeal forms of self-portraits can be associated with autoscopic hallucinations, out-of-body experiences, and heautoscopy (*doppelgänger*-type phenomena) and respective neurocognitive processes, in this paper we outline a wider scope of literary and clinical phenomena, such as the sense of presence and so-called near-death experiences (Diguez, 2013, p. 78).

Zaroff isn't such a bad guy – himself the manifestation of something larger, something more disturbing. In so many ways, he is the double of Rainsford, the living representation of the potential for cruelty and utilitarian cruelty that ensues when survival drives one to pursue it at all costs. Theirs is more than a fight about survival – it's an experiment in what happens when the fragile veneer of civilization starts to erode. The story makes us question tough things: How much of our morality is true,

and how much determined by our situations? What would happen to the instincts if suddenly one night all of the social rules vanished?

The jungle is also a participant in this process. It's not merely the setting for the hunt – it's where Rainsford must face what he is. Anthropologist Janne Flora Lemoine (2021) discusses in *Wandering Spirits*, and considers how loneliness constructs identity and connection in remote Greenlandic communities. Similarly, in *The Most Dangerous Game*, Rainsford's solitude obliterates his social self. Without civilization to provide him with purpose, is he the same man? Or is he increasingly becoming like Zaroff? The true strength of Connell's narrative is rooted in its underlying themes. Beyond the suspenseful actions, it serves as a haunting examination of human nature. This tale is more than just a deadly pursuit – it's an investigation into what occurs when morality is severely challenged. It makes us question if the line between good and evil is clearly demarcated. This may explain why *The Most Dangerous Game* still resonates, tapping into something primal and unsettling, we'd rather not dwell on.

Review of literature

The doppelgänger, stemming from German Romanticism, acts as an instrument that underscores the internal conflicts within the human mind. This concept highlights the fragmented aspects of human identity, unfolding the complexities of moral struggle. According to Bell & Webber (1999), the doppelgänger signifies an encounter with one's hidden, often darker side, highlighting the line between awareness and repressed desires. General Zaroff embodies Rainsford's potential descent into moral corruption, acting as a distorted reflection of his primal instincts. Their dynamic shifts the narrative from a mere survival story into a psychological study of human nature's darker aspects.

Zaroff stands as both a counterpart and a caution – an embodiment of what Rainsford might become, exacerbating the story's moral conflict; "survival in literature often presents characters with moral dilemmas that challenge their ethical boundaries" (Anderson & Patel, 2018, p. 45). Rainsford's confrontation with Zaroff proves it to be true, forcing him to face the ethical costs of survival and the extent to which he was willing to sacrifice moral integrity to stay alive. Isolation, embodied by the concept of *Waldeinsamkeit*, captures Rainsford's psychological journey on Zaroff's Island.

The jungle becomes a space where social norms vanish, compelling Rainsford to face his survival instincts and ethical challenges. This setting intensifies the narrative's exploration of humanity's frailty when stripped of civilization's dictations. Thompson (2011) connects this theme to Darwinian ideas, interpreting the island as a microcosm for the survival of the fittest. Rainsford's journey becomes one of existential solitude and self-discovery, where the boundary between hunter and hunted blurs, reflecting the deep psychological and moral questions posed by Connell. Complexities of survival and the ethical dilemmas Rainsford confronts as he transitions from hunter to prey intensifies when "the shifting dynamics between hunter and hunted in *The Most*

Dangerous Game reflect the fluidity of power and the moral ambiguities that emerge when survival becomes the primary goal” (Carter, 2012, p. 25).

Connell's *The Most Dangerous Game* explores humanity's latent brutality when societal norms are stripped away. Scholars Vargas and Vargas (2018) compare it to Golding's *Lord of the Flies*, illustrating how people can become savage without civilization's moral framework. Rainsford's indifference to animal suffering mirrors the transformation of Golding's characters from innocence to brutality. Montgomery (2018) analyzes the use of the hunter-versus-hunted motif in both narratives to delve into ethical dilemmas.

Connell's *The Most Dangerous Game* explores two key themes: Waldeinsamkeit (solitude in nature) and the doppelgänger (self-reflection). By exploring Rainsford's isolation in the jungle and his intense psychological battle with General Zaroff, this study uncovers how these themes shape his transformation and force us to question our own understanding of morality and human nature. Waldeinsamkeit is a solitary moment of raw self-confrontation, where Rainsford must wrestle with his most instinctual nature. Zaroff, meanwhile, serves as more than just an antagonist; he's a doppelgänger, a distorted reflection of what Rainsford could become if he surrendered to brutality. As Bell & Webber (1999) suggest, the doppelgänger represents the hidden, darker impulses within the human mind. Zaroff is the embodiment of that idea – a version of Rainsford who has fully embraced cruelty, making their confrontation not just a fight for survival, but a battle over the very nature of morality itself.

To add a modern perspective, this study also explores the lasting impact of *The Most Dangerous Game*, particularly in Suzanne Collins's *The Hunger Games* (2008). Following Montgomery's (2018) insights, it examines how Collins reimagines Connell's hunter-versus-hunted dynamic within a dystopian setting, highlighting systemic violence and moral ambiguity. This comparison underscores why Connell's themes remain so powerful today, especially in the way Rainsford's isolation – his Waldeinsamkeit – shapes his transformation, forcing him to confront the rawest parts of his identity. Zaroff is more than just an opponent, he is a warped reflection of Rainsford, a doppelgänger who represents the darkness Rainsford risks embracing. The heart of *The Most Dangerous Game* lies in the uncertainty of Rainsford's survival: does it reaffirm his morality, or does it mean he has become just as ruthless as Zaroff? To explore these complex psychological and philosophical conflicts, this study draws on Connell's original text along with insights from scholars, weaving together literary analysis to uncover the deeper themes that make the story so compelling. It reveals why its exploration of human nature remains unsettling and relevant today.

Results and discussion

In *The Most Dangerous Game*, the jungle is not a location, nor an innocent one, but a lethal proving ground that tests Rainsford and makes him confront his savagery.

Cutting through dense underbrush, the refined niceties of civilization begin to fray, and he is overcome by the primal urge to survive. The jungle tests and ultimately reconditions Rainsford, pushing his roles as hunter and hunted to the fore. Häggström (2019, p. 9) adds that “orienteers have to make very quick decisions. This implies the sense of when, and how, to move their body”, a sense evident in Rainsford's relapse into a more animal-like state of decision-making when confronted with death as he flees. The jungle is therefore not just physical and psychological battlefield, but metaphorical battlefield where external danger forces Rainsford to undergo extreme internal struggle over his humanity.

The intensity of this development is underscored by the descriptive passages written by Connell. At one point, the jungle had been described as “some injured thing, by the evidence some large animal, had flailed about in the undergrowth; the jungle grass was trampled down and the moss was rent; one mat of grass was stained red” (Connell, 2009, p. 65). This violent scene does not only reflect the barbarous cruelty of Zaroff's game but is symbolic also of Rainsford's personal inner conflict. The uncontrollable savagery of the jungle symbolizes repressed savagery behind a veneer of civilization. Rainsford must strip off normal morality and remake the ruthless cravings he had otherwise abhorred. The confrontation between Rainsford and Zaroff is the turning point, especially according to the doppelgänger thesis.

Zaroff is a malevolent double for Rainsford himself. First, Rainsford is shocked that Zaroff can say that hunting human beings is an intellectual sport. Yet as the hunt itself goes on, Rainsford comes to enjoy life and death as Zaroff does. Zaroff's detachment, his quasi-cavalier attitude towards life and death, causes Rainsford to wonder hard questions about his own calling and personality. By the end of his argument, he is no longer arguing about the morality of what he has done, but arguing about what it means to be a hunter – a prey. The jungle is thick and smothering, a physical embodiment of Rainsford's desperation. Thorny vines catch at his clothes, filtered light struggling to cut through overhead cover. In the distance towers Zaroff's chateau as a preternatural oxymoron – a gesture of elegance and luxury in the midst of relentless savagery. And so, with every step of the hunt, Rainsford is driven deeper into the bush, his tidy, streamlined clothes rumpled and streaked with grime and sweat, a physical reminder of his fall. The jungle closes in on him from all directions like a living maze, and Zaroff's sinister mansion rises like a cold ghost of terror within. When Rainsford sees sadism in Zaroff's eyes, he is compelled to face the evil in his own heart.

In *The Most Dangerous Game*, General Zaroff is the realization of Rainsford's evil side, or doppelgänger, in which he plays a dual role, representing a role of challenge that compels Rainsford to examine the moral aspect of being a hunter. Rainsford, early on in the tale, is an assertive and experienced hunter who sees himself as morally higher than Zaroff, whose system of hunting people is repulsive to him.

Rainsford's initial reaction to Zaroff's proposal to hunt human beings as the finest quarry, is one of his deep horrors at the idea, seeing it as a vile perversion of the sport he loves. Zaroff is completely lacking in any sense of moralities, seeing human life as disposable and revalued to an entertainment worth.

This perspective becomes evident in Zaroff's chilling assertion: Life is for the strong, to be lived by the strong, and, if need be, taken by the strong. The weak of the world were put here to give the strong pleasure. I am strong. Why should I not use my gift? If I wish to hunt, why should I not? I hunt the scum of the earth – sailors from tramp ships: lascars, blacks, Chinese, whites, mongrels – a thoroughbred horse or hound is worth more than a score of them. (Connell, 2009, p. 70) Zaroff's philosophy not only reveals a profound moral corruption but also tempts Rainsford to consider the darker impulses inherent in the act of hunting itself.

The doppelgänger dynamic between the two characters creates tension as Rainsford grapples with his identity as a hunter. Zaroff's perspective challenges Rainsford's foundational belief that the line between predator and prey is clear-cut and unshakable. Although Rainsford rejects Zaroff's philosophy in the end, the conclusion remains uncertain regarding whether Rainsford has been totally unsullied. By killing Zaroff, Rainsford takes his place, sitting in the general's seat as both conqueror and would-be killer, and so obfuscating the lines separating moral superiority from base instincts. However, as the story goes on and Rainsford himself becomes the quarry, his own perception becomes complicated. Pushed into a desperate situation, Rainsford's survival instinct kicks in and he is forced to use means that are almost identical to those of Zaroff. The resourceful traps that Rainsford sets to attempt to escape Zaroff, initially created out of sheer necessity, start to mimic the cold, calculated manner that Zaroff treats hunting.

The same abilities that had previously made Rainsford feel superior to Zaroff become his own salvation, and he is forced to employ the same ruthless tactics he once despised. During the hunt, the lines between hunter and hunted blur. In the end, Rainsford realizes that he is doing the very same thing as Zaroff – the man he claimed he was not like. Zaroff's ominous assumption that the final challenge is stalking humans leads Rainsford to question his own hunting method and wonder how much they differ. In this story, hunting is no longer a recreation or sport; it is turned into a representation of power and control, in which the victor is the master of life and death. Zaroff's indifferent approach towards human life as mere game represents an unsettling parallel with Rainsford's initial attitude towards animals. At first, Rainsford does not consider his prey as a living object but merely an object of amusement for him. Such a utilitarian attitude is broken when Rainsford finds himself to be the prey of Zaroff; that his life now lies in the hands and fancies of another hunter. This role reversal compels Rainsford to confront the ethics of his own behavior since, for the first time, he has a direct experience of what it is like to be treated as nothing more than prey.

As Rainsford struggles to survive, the novel's probing of moral limits becomes even more profound. The same attributes that make Zaroff cruel: ruthlessness, cunning, and complete absence of compassion, are the same attributes Rainsford must assume if he is to survive. To be hunter and hunted is not merely a physical but a moral and psychological transformation, illustrating that Rainsford's survival hinges on adopting the same dehumanizing mentality that Zaroff has. According to Johnson (2010, p. 20), "dehumanization in early 20th-century literature often is a lens used to critique the societal norms which facilitate cruelty and the erosion of empathy", and this is best illustrated in *The Most Dangerous Game* because Rainsford's crisis of conscience comes about as a result of needing to embrace the very dehumanization that characterizes Zaroff.

This change compels Rainsford into a crisis of morality, in which he is forced to experiment with whether the ends justify the means. Has he, in desperation, lost the moral limits he had once held so dear? Or, has desperation merely uncovered the shadow within him that had long been hidden? The climactic battle between Rainsford and Zaroff is given a haunting twist, one in which Rainsford's transformation is left in doubt. Having triumphed over the slaughter of Zaroff in the ultimate test of survival, Rainsford returns to the comfort of his own bedroom, but the extent of his transformation is left uncertain. While Rainsford may appear to have overcome Zaroff, there is a deep sense of unease left. Has Rainsford really changed, or did he merely become proficient at using the same strategies Zaroff used to pursue him?

The tale makes us wonder, and it suggests that there is not quite as much of a distinction between savagery and civilization as Rainsford had believed. Zaroff, therefore, is less an antagonist or a villain and more a reflection of Rainsford himself, a representation of what Rainsford will become when pressed hard enough. In Zaroff, Connell satirizes the superficiality of human morality, showing that, in dire enough situations, the veneer of civilization can be stripped away to expose the baser passions below. Zaroff's personality is an irritant. He is a goad to Rainsford's inner struggle, which forces him to face the deep contradictions of his own character. Zaroff's ideals and actions force Rainsford to have to face his own self-identification as a hunter.

Throughout the story, Rainsford's survival is dependent on his ability to be like Zaroff in hardness, which is the vacuity of moral distinction between the two men. Therefore, then, Zaroff is Rainsford's double, reflection of his worst impulses, and tests him not only to reconcile with his survival instinct but with decency itself as a human. Finally, Connell's representation of Zaroff forces one to consider the boundaries of civilization and how readily available it is to cross over from being the civilized, higher plane human being to the predator willing to do whatever must be done to survive. Zaroff is not just the evil character of the tale, but also a reflection of the darker aspects of Rainsford, compelling Rainsford and the reader to face ugly realities regarding the true nature of man.

In Connell's tale, the jungle is not just a distant location; it is an inner battlefield which symbolizes Rainsford's inner change. The wilderness becomes *Waldeinsamkeit*, the deep sense of solitude that one experiences while alone in the outdoors, and forces Rainsford to ask himself if he is a human being or not. The thick rainforest, removed from the morality of society, compels him to lose the norms and refinement he had initially taken for granted. This solitude robs him of his initial identity and compels him to a situation where survival is all he can opt for, prompting him to develop a change of role from a detached hunter to a desperate animal. Zaroff's account of his sadistic "game" underscores the symbolic function of the jungle in the story. He states,

I give him a supply of food and an excellent hunting knife. I give him three hours' start. I am to follow, armed only with a pistol of the smallest calibre and range. If my quarry eludes me for three whole days, he wins the game. If I find him – he loses.

(Connell, 2009, p. 71)

This sentence encapsulates the inherent conflict in the story and sadistic psychological tension between Rainsford and Zaroff. The farther Rainsford ventures into the jungle, he is confronted not only with the issue of survival but with the ghastly notion of being hunted. By such a solitary environment, Connell dramatizes the frailty of civilization and human beings' proclivity to become savage when removed from social mores. The jungle savagery compels Rainsford to confront the darker aspects of his own nature, questioning his knowledge of hunting and survival. Zaroff, Rainsford's dark double, is a representation of the brute natures in the protagonist.

Even as Rainsford begins to represent the virtues of a "civilized" hunter, Zaroff reveals the less than altruistic desires hidden beneath the civilized virtues. Thompson (2011) suggests, in fact, that Zaroff's presence in the jungle itself is a horrifying sendup of civilization and the way conventions mask the ultimate brutality of man. This predator-prey conflict then unlocks the tension intrinsic in the dichotomy of civilization and its opposite, uncivilization, such being what lays bare the latter. Aside from its symbolic positioning as the jungle, the encounter between Zaroff and Rainsford also advances the critique of the story of civilization and breach of morals at the extremes. Zaroff's slide into savagery is emblematic of the way the veneer of civilization hides more bestial and savage desires. This aligns with Foucault's theory of individuality, that societal pressures mould and restrict the real nature of the individual (Shahabi & Saeidabadi, 2016, p. 20).

Zaroff exemplifies how societal norms of refinement and order can be easily discarded when survival becomes the primary concern. Stripped of civilization, both Zaroff and Rainsford are left to confront their raw, unfiltered instincts. The wilderness setting amplifies this transformation. As Rainsford grapples with becoming the hunted,

he is forced to reckon with the ethical implications of his former views on hunting and human life. Zaroff's lack of remorse for his game, offering his prey food and a hunting knife, serves as a grotesque mockery of civilization's ethical constructs. His "game" is not a fair contest of survival but a brutal display of moral decay hidden beneath the guise of cultured behavior. Through this encounter, Connell forces readers to confront uncomfortable questions about the nature of humanity and the ethical dimensions of survival in a world governed by instinct. Thompson (2018, p. 4) suggests that *The Most Dangerous Game* functions as a "contemporary political satire", urging readers to reflect on the failures of civilization and the potential for savagery lurking beneath its surface.

Zaroff, as the double of Rainsford, embodies the darker potential within human nature, demonstrating the fragility of moral frameworks when survival instincts are pushed to their limits. This psychological and philosophical tension between the two characters compels both Rainsford and the reader to confront fundamental questions about human nature: How thin is the veneer of civilization? How quickly can one descend into savagery when stripped of societal constraints? Connell's narrative, therefore, is not merely a thrilling survival story but a sophisticated exploration of the contradictions inherent in civilization. The crisis that faces Rainsford is not merely to evade Zaroff's pursuit but also to grapple with the darkness within, confront morality, and seek to understand the thin line that separates man from beast (Connell, 1924). The island, the jungle, and the evil solitude are rich metaphors for transformation, and the stage for Rainsford's coming of age in moral and existential understanding. Ultimately, the most pressing question he faces is whether he can retain his humanity in a world determined to strip it away.

In a nutshell, Connell's *The Most Dangerous Game* is both a literal fight for survival and a metaphorical examination of civilization's less humane aspects. Hunting, historically, has signified mankind's dominance over nature, often associated with the privilege of the elite. Vargas (2018, p. 33) explains that "hunting became a leisure activity reserved for a wealthy elite and, as a result, acquired the prestige that accompanied high-class pursuits." Traditionally, it symbolized human superiority through intelligence over raw animal instinct. But Connell reverses that assumption by exposing the ways in which hunting can be a force of moral decay. Zaroff's rotten version of the hunt, chasing human prey rather than animals, deprives the activity of its honor or even the appearance of ethics, turning it into a spectacle of unadulterated cruelty. His hunt highlights the ways in which the veneer of civilization can cover an inner life of more primitive, brutal purposes, revealing the nauseating speed with which the social and moral conventions can be shrugged off. This critique aligns with broader fears of dehumanization in the pursuit of power, demonstrating that unchecked dominance and control ultimately erode civilization itself.

The doppelgänger concept is particularly insightful in understanding the duality of human nature presented in *The Most Dangerous Game*. Autoscopia, a phenomenon in psychiatry described by Maack and Mullen (1983) as “viewing oneself from outside at a distance,” is often linked to conditions such as schizophrenia, migraines, or epilepsy. This notion offers a compelling framework for interpreting the doppelgänger trope in Connell’s narrative. Zaroff functions as Rainsford’s externalized darker self – the manifestation of his own latent capacity for violence and amorality. As Rainsford is fleeing physically from his pursuer, he is also fleeing figuratively from the unpleasant reality that there is more of him in Zaroff than he cares to acknowledge. Connell obfuscates lines between hunter and hunted, civilization and savagery, morality and amorality, and readers are left to ponder where such lines are.

As Smith (2005, p. 80) observes, “Connell’s work reveals how uncurbed power has the capacity to annihilate empathy and make brutality normal.” This theme reverberates across both *The Most Dangerous Game* and Collins’s *The Hunger Games*, as both authors use their protagonists’ struggles to critique societal structures that perpetuate inequality and exploitation. Through Rainsford and Katniss, Connell and Collins reveal how systems built on violence obscure the distinction between victim and perpetrator, civilization and barbarism. Both characters are compelled to battle their most animalistic selves, wrestling with the darkest corners of their own minds. In the end, these stories leave us with a disquieting question: If survival comes at the cost of morality, is it ever possible to be human? It is a question that haunts long after the last battle, which forces readers to balance the cost of survival against the tenuous nature of civilization itself.

Conclusion

Richard Connell’s *The Most Dangerous Game* is no easy action-adventure survival thriller – instead, it is a rich examination of the human condition, of morality, and of that fine line between civilization and savagery. Rainsford’s experience compels him to face up to the distasteful realization that survival will destroy moral certitude, unveiling the underlying raw instincts. His own metamorphosis from hunter to hunted, and then from conqueror, leaves questions hanging in the air: Is he restored to humanity, or has he fallen below that? The jungle is not merely a background; it is a crucible that makes pure and transform Rainsford, removing from him the comforts of civilization and dropping him into an arena where only survival is the key. His encounter with Zaroff is less a battle of intellect and more a test of how far he is willing to go to be as ruthless as the man he despises. The doppelgänger motif highlights an unsettling truth: the difference between hunter and hunted, man and beast, is often just a matter of perspective. Connell leaves us with an open-ended question. Has he conquered his fears or lost part of himself? *The Most Dangerous Game* challenges readers with truths

about power, violence, and choices defining humanity. It reflects on the unsettling question: Can we retain our humanity when survival demands everything?

Conflict of interests

The author declares no ethical issues or conflict of interests in this research.

Ethical standards

The author affirms this research does not involve human subjects.

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**ԻՆՔՆԱՈՐՍ. WALDEINSAMKEIT-Ը ԵՎ DOPPELGÄNGER-Ը
ՌԻՉԱՐԴ ՔՈՆԵԼԻ «ԱՄԵՆԱՎՏԱՆԳԱՎՈՐ ԽԱՂԸ»
ՍՏԵՂԾԱԳՈՐԾՈՒԹՅԱՆ ՄԵՋ**

Նարջես Ջաֆարի Լանգրուդի

Հոդվածն անդրադառնում է Ռիչարդ Քոնելի «Ամենավտանգավոր խաղը» ստեղծագործությանը բնորոշ փիլիսոփայական հարցերի: Ռեյնսֆորդ որսորդի անտաքերությունը որսի նկատմամբ փորձության է ենթարկվում, երբ նա ինքն է հայտնվում որսի դերում: Այս իրավիճակը նրան ստիպում է առերեսվել գոյութենական բարդությունների հետ, իրավիճակ, որի արդյունքում ձևավորվում է *Waldeinsamkeit*-ի՝ անտառում միայնակ մնալու սարսափելի զգացողությունը և գերիշխող են դառնում առաջնային բնագոյներն ու գոյատևման ձգտումը: *Waldeinsamkeit*-ը դառնում է Ռեյնսֆորդի անձնական կերպարանափոխության հիմքը: Նրա հանդիպումը իրեն որսացող գեներալ Ջարոֆի հետ խորհրդանշական առճակատում է մարդկային էության անթափանց և անկանխատեսելի կողմերը բացահայտող սեփական *Doppelgänger*-ի՝ մութ ես-ի հետ: Հեղինակը այդպես էլ չի բացահայտում, թե արդյոք Ռեյնսֆորդի փոխակերպումը հանգեցնում է ավելի մարդասիրական կերպարի, թե՛ նրան ավելի է հեռացնում իր մարդկայնությունից:

Բանալի բառեր՝ *Waldeinsamkeit*, *Doppelgänger*, *անմարդկայնացում*, *անորոշություն*, *տառապանք*: