

ABSTRACT

Hunting as a Mechanism of the Biotic and Cultural Evolution of Man
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All over the world, the hunting of game in our time is rarely practiced for entirely necessary reasons (e.g. the hunting for food). Its motives are rather emotional (the excitement of killing the animal, pleasure, happiness, distraction, relaxation, adventure). Hunting is a great passion and a dedication.

Outsiders observe hunting actions mainly as the pleasure of killing. Most hunters agree to the following hypothesis of a basic human need (habit): They believe in an atavistically natural drive to make bag, an instinct which has “sneaked“ past the evolution of culture. For modern hunters, the killing of game is the necessary condition of reaching the often passionately intended emotional climax (the excitement). At the same time, they pretend that the act of killing is not constituting the experience: the death of the animal is the condition necessary for emotional success but it is not the whole experience.

This paradox is defined as the *Emotional Hunting Paradox* by the scholarly investigation submitted here. Light is brought into the dark of the hunting motive and its pre-conscious elementary needs by a scientific theory trying to explain the foundations of the hunting instinct. A hunting-oriented, cultural, and anthropological explanatory model which attempts to solve the *Emotional Hunting Paradox* was elaborated in this empirical and multi-disciplinary investigation. The research is based on the relevant approaches of updated brain research, genetics, evolution theory, and philosophy (fundamental ontology in the sense of Martin Heidegger).

The origin of the emotional hunting paradox evidently coincides with the evolution of human self-consciousness, including the consciousness of death. We have to deal with an elementary cultural instinct which is not represented in the consciousness of the subject. This instinct is founded on the drive to dominate (power motive) which has life as its object in its entity within the law of nature.

The excitement experienced by the killing of game consequently is not the pleasure of killing, but the experience of extreme satisfaction by the (virtual) power over nature, an idea of nature which seems indomitable and threatening to man in his consciousness of finiteness (the fear of death). The animal, respectively the individual life of the animal, is only the mediative “Gestalt“ (form).

The happiness experienced, joy and contentment, the distraction etc. are based by the individual on the virtual, never consciously experienced overcoming of the fear of death. The emotional and cortical processes are limbically structured, almost without exception. Therefore, the hunter is unconscious of the origins of his hunting instinct.

In addition to its research into the factors conditioning the motivation of hunting, the present doctoral thesis delivers a functional, future-oriented justification of a modern kind of WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT by adequate hunting according to the particular ecosystem.