

**(160) TO BE INTERESTED, TO BE EXCITED,
TO BE NERVOUS, TO BE AFRAID**

Being interested, excited, nervous, to be fearful, afraid, all these are feelings. In all these cases, the other, the Other, the others of our history and of our present, are in us and make us unfree. We are drawn towards the other, the Other. We are captivated by them. In the same time we try to get away from them.

If are feelings, thus we are fascinated. We are prisoners of those who bring themselves, whom we let enter into us. We adore them, because they are like gods. We wish to be with them, in fact have them, to be like them and, because we take their being from them, more than they are. In the same time we are afraid, we try to get away, as far away as necessary or possible, because they are dangerous for us. We might lose. Thus both the aspects, the “positive” and the “negative” one are always present in these feelings, although mostly we only acknowledge one of them.

Fascination finally always has to do with power. The power of the Other over us, a power which we wish to have. Consequently these feelings always being us, be it in quite a different intensity, in the neighbourhood of the sacred, of violence. Thus, again, we wish to be with the Other, in order to win over him. In the same time we try to fly away or wish to fly away, because we are afraid that we will lose, that we will be scapegoated.

In daily life we very often don't know about the other. We “simply” are interested, excited, nervous, afraid. We don't have the slightest idea because of what. Our body, our being knows, but consciously we know nothing about it. Our body, with its awareness, gives signals to us, on which we react with these feelings.

They certainly are not about nothing, although we often try to convince ourselves that that is the case, hoping to get rid of them by doing so. They are warning-signals, telling us that we are in a situation in which the Other has or gets power over us. The other may be someone or people from the (long) past, but even in that case there is a reason that they stir again just now.

All these feelings are finally always provoked by human beings. We can have, and often in fact have the impression that it are certain deeds, or circumstances, certain things, which give us these feelings. Finally however it is always the humans behind all these realities or possibilities, who fascinate us, by their power, their abilities, for the good or for the bad, by their god-likeness or devil-likeness.

We can have these feelings when we are together with people, with whom we automatically come in the mimesis. We move around in their life, their life becomes part of our life. It is as well possible that the feelings are provoked, not directly by the people themselves, but by stories they tell, about themselves or about others, or by stories which we read. The stories too represent a, the Other. We move around in these stories as we move around in reality. They fascinate us in the same manner.

In the following paper only the possibility of being fascinated by people is treated. The other possibility, of the fascination by stories, should however not be forgotten. We reach on them

as we react on people. The difference is that our reaction on people is more direct, which of course is not always the same as more intense. There is internal mediation.

When we hear or read a story, we are in a triangulated situation: The storyteller, either personally present or via the media, or the author, the story as we ourselves. With a story there is as such external mediation when it is not a story about people who are present.

When we read the story, we are in external mediation with the author as well. The two external mediations however reinforce each other, positively or negatively. Much depends on the “mimetic mass” of the author for us and consequently, on the “mimetic mass” he gives the story by showing his interest in it by telling it.

In the case that story-teller is with us, we are in internal mediation with him. His personal influence in the power of the story consequently is big. For him the story is important, otherwise he would not tell it. Thus he gives directly “mimetic mass” to the story. Thus both relationships reinforce each other. This of course is again more-so the case if the story-teller himself features in the story.

This does not necessarily mean that we are an easier prey when stories are told. Story-teller and story can reinforce each other negatively. The other aspect is, that we can have more distance to stories than to somebody who is present. We have two relationships in the same time. The relationship with (the Other in) the story can diminish the “mimetic” mass of the teller.

It could be worthwhile to elaborate all this further. In that case the media, as a very complicated “Other” should be taken into account.

1. To be interested, curious

Interesse is originally a Latin verb, meaning “to be in between”, “to find oneself in between”. The impersonal use of the verb, “interest”, means: “it is important”, “it means something that”. To be interested means, that you find yourself in between, amidst of people, in between interests in the modern sense. You are already the interested onlooker in things happening, in a fight, the fight of people amongst each other. You are not yet actively partaking, but you might do so. You are, without eventually being conscious of it, looking for gain, trying to prevent loss.

In The Oxford dictionary of English Etymology the following meanings of the noun are, between some others, given: (legal) concern or right, in XV; advantageous or detrimental relation XVI; injury, damages, money paid for use of money lent XVI. In Old French interest is: Damage, loss. The verb interest means in XVIII: affect with a feeling of concern.

Thus being interested means that standing on the sideline the Other is already in you. Or you move in fact already amidst of the crowd, looking for your interest. You still have some freedom, you are not yet actively partaking, but you are already in the mimesis, part of the game. You have already (mimetic) influence on the others. The others are already in you, influencing you. Inwardly you are rivalling, consciously or still unknowingly seeking and measuring the possibilities for advantage, for gain. It is already clear, that this can go right or wrong, we are cautious, eventually again without being aware of it. It is not yet clear enough which the possibilities and the chances are. We are still “only” interested.

Being interested always is about us ourselves, about our personal interest. People may be very interesting people, but they only can be so, because they are of interest for us. Because of things and acts, of thoughts and science, of beauty and wealth, of power, of their goodness or their badness.

We might still think that we have and eventually try to keep an attitude of inner detachment, but when we are interested, we are in fact already part of the game, of the fight. Finally interest always is already about being, about metaphysical desire. Interest is the beginning of the road, leading to the power fight for it. And of course, we can again lose interest and get out of it.

In interest there are already the two sides: The positive one, being drawn, and the negative one, of flying away. Even when we are extremely interested, the fear, down there, however not acknowledged, always is there. It might eventually warn us, to get out, to lose the interest.

Curiosity is the beginning of interest. In fact they are very much the same. Curiosity (The Oxford Dictionary again) is: carefulness, attention XIV [thus the same as interest]; eager desire to know, inquisitiveness XVI. I give my attention, because I am interested. I am still a little bit outside, not yet amidst of "things", as when I am interested, although the difference is a gliding scale.

When we are curious we cannot hide for ourselves and very difficultly for others, that we are in fact already interested, although we still can decide that we are not. Curiosity, being curious is already a fascination, in which the other is in us and in which we are in ourselves already rivalling with the other, seeking, sorting out if we will try to achieve or to get something, in the end "being", for ourselves.

It is true of course that there is no development of culture and of our personal life without interest and curiosity. Nevertheless, the type of curiosity which is described here belongs to a certain stage of culture. In all cultures people probably wished to know how things were and had to be, how the ancestors did things and how they thought about things. We however always are interested in something new, in something unheard of, which gives us new possibilities to look at things, to find our place in the whole, which really gives us (back our lost) being. Cf. Acts 17, 21. These Athenians were people belonging to a seeking culture, a culture with deep uncertainties, as ours is. Consequently there were literally madly curious, hoping to escape out of the madness of so-called normal life, finally in search of a possibility really to be, to have peace.

2. To be excited, enthusiastic

To excite means: to stir up, to rouse. Excitation: Encouragement, instigation, stimulation; excitement. Excitement: instigation, incentive XVII. Moral stimulation XIX. (All again from the Oxford Dictionary etc). The words excite, excitement, are beautifully clear: What happens to us comes from elsewhere. It is the movements of the other, it is the being of the other, the feelings of the other, which come mimetically into us, with which we come into the

mimesis and which consequently make us excited. We are rivalling with the other in us. Excitement is a stage further than interest. With excitement we are more clearly amidst of the turmoil, more part of it. In the same time we more lose control. The other becomes so powerful in us, that we can do very stupid things. Because we are more deeply drawn into the turmoil of the Other, our critical possibilities are dwindling and we are more willing simply to give in to our excitement, which in fact means to give in to the power of the other who excites us.

Giving in to the excitement means for us, that we will have what excites us, the man, the woman, who excites us, the prospect which excites us. It means giving into the fascination. We lost ourselves in the hope, or conviction, that we get what attires us, richness, honour, kudos, to be like a god, to be.

When we are excited, we are more near to violence and to chaos than when we only are interested. The plus-side is still upside. We still fly forward. The fears, downside, are as big, but as long as we are excited, we don't know about them. Nevertheless, the balance can switch in the twinkling of an eye and we become horribly afraid.

Excitement always has to do with danger, although we are mostly not aware of it. Just because the danger is that big, because we are so near to it, we become excited. The nearer the violence, the danger is, the more excited we become. It is clear that excitement shows that we are in the neighbourhood of the sacred. We are in the neighbourhood of a new life, the life of sacrificial peace [if, in the end, we belong to the victimizers], and we are in the neighbourhood of doom, of hell, of death [if, in the end, we belong to the victims].

Excitement has nothing to do with ethics, with moral choice, with freedom. Excitement is unfree. We can give in, fly forward, or we finally fly away, backward, at once having become very afraid. We are drawn into it, fascinated in the common sense of the word, or the scale turns around and we are terrified.

Enthusiasm is a form of excitement. It is the ritualised excitement of a group, in which every member of the group reinforces the excitement of the others. Because we are together in a group, a group of scapegoaters, we often feel very safe when we are enthusiastic. All the private excitements flow together. All the members of the group are in a strong mimesis with each other. We are in fact the crowd of the scapegoaters, free of the fears of the scapegoat.

Just as with excitement, it can be a very calm enthusiasm, able to talk quietly about itself. There still is rational thinking. The members of the group are not yet estranged from themselves. It can as well be an everybody overpowering enthusiasm, in which all words stop and only yelling or some kinds of singing remain. Enthusiasm means to be in the gods. All the enthusiasts are gods for each other. In the end the enthusiastic crowd destroys randomly everybody and everything it meets.

Enthusiasm is, as excitement, a non ethical reality. It is again the Other in us, who makes us enthusiastic and thus unfree. As long as we are in it, we are victims of it. The feeling might be beautiful, wonderful even. We can do culturally good things in our enthusiasm, deeds of self-denying which astonish ourselves deeply and which in the same time we do without thinking. We can in the same manner do very bad things. In that case too we simply do, overpowered by a reality which is stronger than we are and which we follow blindly, with

maybe somewhere in us a slight memory that what we are doing we never would do before we became enthusiastic at all and that in “normal life” they certainly would be seen as bad. When we are enthusiastic, we are prisoners, of the Other. We do the deeds of the Other, which finally always are the deeds of the scapegoating, murdering crowd.

Of course all this would become much clearer when it is broader elaborated. Enthusiasm very often looks so human, so beneficial. But in that case it is like comedy, which too very often looks so human, so nice, so beneficial. Nevertheless it is a stage on the road to scapegoating and killing. The women in *The Bacchae* of Euripides, who tear Pentheus into pieces, they really are enthusiastic.

3. To be nervous

When we are nervous everything is unclear. We feel threatened and we feel attired. There is an undercurrent that we would like to fly away, but there are in the same time big interests which prevent that, which induce us to fly forward instead of backward. Or the reverse: We wish to go forward, but the undercurrent, nearly as strong, tries to push us into flying backward.

We are nervous when we go to and are on the stage. We wish to achieve, to fulfil our role, to be (a) god. And we are very afraid that we will be driven out, killed in a sense, that we will be the devil. We become nervous when we hear horrible tales. We have the impression that we can't endure them. It is tales about horrible deeds, about cruelties, horrible happenings. We wish to be part of them. We wish to be members of the scapegoating group. And we are afraid, because we could become victims as well. Or we are nervous, hearing of beautiful deeds of others, which we would like to be ours, and in the same time we are afraid, out of reasons we don't understand.

In these cases again the people about whom the stories are, or who tell the stories, are in us. We are fascinated by them. We can try to get them out of us, by condemning what we hear, what they were or are doing. But this again is scapegoating, making others responsible for our feelings, for our own possibilities to be cruel, to be inhuman.

We can only be a little bit nervous. That means that we are not that much fascinated. That might be the case because it is about something small or far away. Another possibility is that it is about something big and near, but we are not deeply fascinated. We remain partly free. When we become very, very nervous, when our fascination destroys all freedom, when the violence in fact becomes very powerful in us, we become unable to act in whichever manner. We are blindly driven forward or backward, forgetting all risks. We even can become unconscious to get out of the situation and, when the situation becomes too difficult to handle anyway, even die on the spot.

4. To be afraid, fearful

When we become afraid, the other side of the fascination, which is hidden when we are interested or excited, comes to the upside, becomes conscious. The interest, the excitement disappears, in that sense that we are not any longer aware of it.

When we are afraid we still are drawn, but the fear that we will be, in some manner, the loser has a bigger force. As long as we are interested we see the possibility to be the winner. Excited we even are quite sure of that. Nervous we are not any longer sure. When we are afraid, the scale turned to the other side. We will, that is our fear, be the scapegoat, we will be harmed.

Nevertheless, the attraction still is there. If we would not be fascinated, we would not be afraid. We only are afraid when we are attracted in the same time. If we would not be fascinated, we would, with a clear eye, see the danger and we would use our intellectual and physical possibilities to get out of the situation as good as possible. We would measure the risks and act accordingly.

When we are afraid, none of that is the case. We are not able to stay on the spot and think in order to act wisely. If the attraction still is big, although we are afraid, we fly forward. Is the fear overwhelming then we fly backward. By far the most soldiers in all wars are killed flying backward. It always was and is asking for disaster.

Fears are always real. When we are afraid the other is in us, in some manner. We always are fascinated when we are afraid. That is even and certainly the case when we don't know why we are afraid or depressed by a continual anonymous fear in us. In fears we are, as in all fascinations, very often in a string temporal mimesis with old experiences, which are revived by new ones, which we eventually don't even acknowledge.

In any case, it does not help to fight against fears as it does not help to fight against interest, excitement and nervousness. We rival, in that case, again, deepening the problem. When we can try to understand what is happening with us when we come in those states. Seeing them with clear eyes we can get out of them, leave them. And we can seek freedom, finally, of the Kingdom, the New Earth.

