

Too Much Truth: The Door of *All* Possibilities

Amir Klugman

"Out of love and goodness they have lied to me. I am not he whom I was taught to believe I was. *The door of truth, which is the door of all possibilities, has been opened to me by a blow.*"¹ From the words of Thomas Mann's *Holy Sinner*, as from the congress argument, we can extract the idea of "**too much truth.**"

When Lacan speaks of the emerging dimension of truth in psychoanalysis, he emphasizes, following Plato, the difference between *episteme*—"knowledge bounded by a formal coherence"—and "true opinion," *doxa*, which is a "truth which cannot be grasped by a bounded knowledge."² I wish to read this contrast, including the signifier "bound", alongside *Beyond the Pleasure Principle*, where Freud sketches a different contrast and "binding": with the entry of an excessive stimulus, at the traumatic moment, "the essence of the 'binding' of the energy flowing into the psychic apparatus is a transition of freely flowing energy into a state of rest."³

Jacques – Alain Miller tightens the binding of Lacan's attitude toward truth with Freud's point of view on trauma: "In analysis, it is 'not about saying what is,' but 'about making truth out of what has been. Then there is that which was missing to make truth: traumas, that which made a hole.'"⁴ There is the "bounded truth," which pertains to formal and coherent knowledge, and there is another truth, unbounded, which is like the "freely flowing energy" or that which is situated "beyond truth." To say that bounded knowledge "does not cover the whole of the field of human experience"⁵ is to say that there is *another truth*, one outside our conventional definitions of truth (a Real truth?), and that we would do well not to ignore it—just as ignoring the death drive would empty psychoanalysis of its essence.

Truth, in certain situations, may be traumatic, belonging to the realm of the "too much," of *jouissance*; a dam against truth may be necessary. When Miller speaks of "bringing

¹ Mann, T., *The Holy Sinner*, trans., H.T. Lowe-Porter, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1951, p. 116.

² Lacan, J., *The Seminar of Jacques Lacan, Book II: The Ego in Freud's Theory and in the Technique of Psychoanalysis*, ed. J.-A. Miller, trans. S. Tomaselli, Cambridge Press, 1988, pp. 15-16.

³ Freud, S., "Beyond the Pleasure Principle" (1920), *The Complete Standard Edition of the Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud*, Vol. XVIII, London: Hogarth Press, 1955, p. 30.

⁴ Miller J.-A., "*L'orientation lacanienne. Choses de finesse en psychoanalyses*", teaching delivered under the auspices of the Department of Psychoanalysis, Université Paris 8, lesson of 18 March 2009, unpublished.

⁵ Lacan, J., *The Seminar, Book II, op.cit.*, pp. 15-16.

discourse to that which could not take its place within it,"⁶ he may be referring to such a dam: binding what has been into truth, but *with* boundaries, with the recognition of the "not-all"—there is a remainder that cannot become truth; truth *not without* a discourse, discourse in the place of truth.

"**Too much truth**" would be an excessive attempt to bind what seeks to remain unbounded. this is Thomas Mann's "blow of truth."

⁶ Miller J.-A., "*L'orientation lacanienne*", *op.cit.*, lesson of 18 March 2009, unpublished.