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Driven Again? Reconsidering Psychoanalysis between the Theoretical Models of Jürgen Habermas and Amy Allen

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Abstract

This paper aims to reconstruct elements of the current debate on the incorporation of psychoanalysis into Critical Theory, contrasting two of its main models: the model of self-reflection, proposed by Jürgen Habermas in Knowledge and Human Interests (1968) – and which is reflected in recent developments by Axel Honneth – and the attempt to reintegrate drive theory according to a Kleinian model, developed by Amy Allen. Based on this interlocution, the aim is to investigate the reasons that led Habermas to distance himself from Freud's drive theory, discussing its possible consequences, and then to revisit Allen's argument regarding which psychoanalytic version would better serve the objectives of Critical Theory in order to raise some questions about it.

Keywords: psychoanalysis, critical theory, self-reflection, drive theory

The study of Jürgen Habermas' late work [1] displays something intriguing: one will find it hard to conceive the idea that psychoanalysis has ever been a central theme in his philosophical project. However, in his book *Knowledge and Human Interests*, published in 1968, psychoanalysis is claimed as one of the book's main pillars, capable of continuing an intellectual heritage marked by the constitutive link between theoretical reflection and emancipatory interest. Psychoanalysis appears in this work as the culmination of a long theoretical journey characterised both by the struggle against positivism – which defends the denial of reflective experience in the context of the theory of knowledge – and by the attempt to argue that the aim of Critical Theory would be to delimit the role of interest and its connections with different fields of knowledge, as well as to situate, with a view to identifying and overcoming obstacles to the process of self-awareness, an emancipatory interest that could grant the so-called 'sciences of the spirit' a fundamentally critical aspect.

However, despite Habermas' initial interest in psychoanalysis, in the works that followed *Knowledge and Human Interests* he seems to have prematurely distanced himself from the important role attributed to psychoanalysis in his own methodological project, henceforth marked by scarce and increasingly inconsequential references to psychoanalytic theory in his subsequent works. From this, Habermas adheres to the cognitive-developmental psychology of Lawrence Kohlberg and Jean Piaget, in an attempt to reconstruct a model of subjectivation based on cognitive stages of moral competences. Although this displacement led by the author himself, the work has been revisited in important debates in recent critical theory[2], being

[1] For instance: *Technology and Science as 'Ideology'* (1968) and *Theory of Communicative Action* (1981).
[2] The following works are representative debates: *Critique on the couch: why critical theory needs psychoanalysis* (Allen 2020); *The critique of power: reflective stages in a critical social theory* (Honneth 1991); *Perversion and Utopia* (Whitebook 1996);

considered one of the significant chapters in the already extensive trajectory of incorporating psychoanalysis by this current of thought.

In this context, we see *Knowledge and Human Interests* once again placed at the centre of methodological debates in Critical Theory in Amy Allen's recent work, *Critique on the Couch: why critical theory needs psychoanalysis* (2020), in which the author questions the reading of psychoanalysis as critical hermeneutics and as an interpretative model for social analysis. Here, Allen draws on Sigmund Freud and Melanie Klein in an attempt to develop a more realistic line of psychoanalytic thought. She argues that the critical method developed by Habermas in *Knowledge and Human Interests* conceives of psychoanalysis as a process of enlightenment that only works through rational insight, thus neglecting the affective dimension present in the blockages to subjective experience. From this perspective, one of Allen's main objectives, especially in Chapter Five of *Critique on the Couch*..., is to rearticulate the relationship between the psychoanalytic method and the critical method from a less rationalist and less cognitivist understanding of psychoanalysis.

In light of significant psychoanalytic concepts, Allen also engages in debate with Axel Honneth in an article predating the publication of *Critique on the Couch...* – a work in which Allen indeed delves deeper into these issues – emphasizing the importance of reaffirming the necessity of psychoanalysis for critical theory. In *Are We Driven? Critical Theory and Psychoanalysis Reconsidered* (2015), Allen argues that the approach found in the Kleinian elaboration of drive theory would better fulfil the aims of critical theory, especially in terms of providing a more realistic conception of personhood and a richer explanatory approach to human aggression and destructiveness.

Kritik als soziale Praxis. Gesellschaftiliche Selbstverständigung und kritische Theorie (Celikates 2009).

Although Allen agrees with Honneth's assertion[3] that Critical Theory needs psychoanalysis, particularly due to meta-normative and explanatory roles[4], the relevant point here is which psychoanalytic version should be embraced by Critical Theory: whether the Kleinian approach to drive theory, as Allen argues, or the Winnicottian approach to Object Relations theory, as defended by Honneth.

In an attempt to contribute to these debates, this paper seeks, through the articulation of psychoanalytic pillars with those of Critical Theory, to establish a guideline for discussing some of the reasons why Critical Theory would need psychoanalysis and which psychoanalytic version should ultimately be adopted. Here, we do not intend to present keys to understanding or definitive assessments regarding one psychoanalytic version over another. Inspired by the pivotal subject of the controversy, the expectation is to establish an initial understanding in an attempt to follow arguments aimed at defending Critical Theory's interest in psychoanalytic theory, in such a way as to bring to light some of the main theses and their potential limitations. The set of questions and debates gathered throughout the article suggests both the richness and the unsaturated and still fruitful nature of this link between Critical Theory and psychoanalysis, which deserves to be more widely explored in future research.

1. Rationalism and its limits in the Habermasian interpretation of Freud

Before the publication of *Knowledge and Human Interests* (1968), Habermas, in his inaugural lecture in Frankfurt in 1965, introduced, albeit roughly, the critical model that would later be prominently

[3] The assertion is primarily made by Joel Whitebook in the chapter 'The Work of Negativity: A Psychoanalytical Revision of the Theory of Recognition', found in his 2007 work: *Recognition, Work, and Politics: New Directions in French Critical Theory.*
[4] This point will be explained later in this paper.

elaborated with more attention and rigour in the aforementioned book. In this lecture, which gives its title to the book, the author attempts to develop a response to positivist approaches in social sciences, particularly by characterising the categories involved in the investigative processes corresponding to the three guiding interests of knowledge: (i) empirical-analytic sciences, which are driven by an interest in knowledge for the technical arrangement of objectified processes; (ii) historical-hermeneutic sciences, which are based on a practical interest in knowledge for a possible consensus of action within the framework of a transmitted self-understanding; (iii) sciences of social action, which reveal their determination by an emancipatory interest in knowledge, through the reflexive act, endeavouring to test theoretical statements capable of capturing invariant legalities of general social action, as well as relations of dependence ideologically solidified in modifiable principles (Habermas 1968/1972: 308).

As far as they are concerned, the interests that drive knowledge can be characterised within three main means of socialisation, namely labour, language and interaction. Through labour – within which the empirical-analytic sciences are included – it is possible to ensure humanity's interest in adaptive forms of survival in the face of external living conditions. On the other hand, through language – encompassing the historical-hermeneutic sciences – humanity, guided by a practical interest, asserts its social insertion through common values transmitted in everyday communication. As for interaction, this guides critical self-reflection and the subsequent identification of ideological sciences that legitimise oppression and domination, driven by humanity's emancipatory interest in the face of individuals' instinctive motivations and the impositions of social norms (Habermas 1968/1972: 305, 310).

Three years after presenting his research project at the aforementioned inaugural lecture, Habermas publishes *Knowledge and*

Human Interests, in which the emergence of a new connection between theory of knowledge and social theory can be observed. Habermas finds in Hegel's writings preceding *The Phenomenology of Spirit* the three means of social formation that correspond to the three guiding interests of knowledge. Given that each form of knowledge is driven by respective interests, each possesses its own dialectic, namely: 'the empirical-analytic sciences are agents of the dialectic of labour; the historical-hermeneutic sciences, of the dialectic of language; and the sciences of social action, which operate as a critical self-reflection of the other sciences, of the dialectic of moral life' (De Caux 2016: 61[5]).

In this work, the author argues that the task of critical theory would be to delimit the role of interest and its connections with knowledge. This would require understanding that the task of Critical Theory 'Involves reconceptualising the social conflict within which it operates, understanding the relative autonomy of the dialectic of ethical interaction in relation to those of labour and language' (*Ib.*). According to Habermas (1968/1972: 212), 'the concept of interest [...] precedes knowledge even as it only realises itself through knowledge', meaning that knowledge involves two formative moments: knowledge and interest. He therefore addresses the question of the connection between knowledge and interest, seeking to develop a social theory that would be endogenously connected to a practical-political interest in emancipatory reason, aiming to aid in the dissolution of domination. Through this approach, Habermas reveals the connection between his theory of knowledge and his social theory in the following terms:

> I only claim that successful self-reflection becomes part of the process of formation of which one has become aware. I

[5] The translations of quotations taken from papers and works in Portuguese and German were made by the authors.

> emphasise the connection between the Theory of Knowledge and social theory for two reasons. On the one hand, the constituents of the social system cannot be adequately grasped without an elucidation, in the context of the Theory of Knowledge, of the cognitive operations, which are both dependent on truth and oriented towards action; on the other hand, attempts to reconstruct cognitive competence, in the terms of the Theory of Knowledge, also take the form of hypotheses which can be indirectly tested by employing them as tools for constructing a theory of social evolution. (Habermas 1973: 372–373).

Thus, Habermas describes his own theory as being one that implies, at the same time, a philosophy of history with practical intent and a critique. This critique will occur on two main fronts: (i) a critique of the positivist approach to the theory of knowledge, social interaction and technocratic models of science as 'ideology'; (ii) a critique of the radicalization of the dialectical-materialist post-Marxist and hermeneutic-critical theory of the knowing subject, understood as a theory of interests guiding knowledge rooted in human *praxis*.

Habermas proposes an analysis of the development of his theory of knowledge, based on three main approaches: positivism, pragmatism and historicism. He initiates this investigation by revisiting the prehistory of positivism, whose primary objective would be 'to exclude [...] the role of reflection in the process of knowledge construction' (Medeiros & Marques 2003: 3). This trajectory is delineated through a scheme that crosses the contributions of Kant, Hegel, Marx, Peirce, and Dilthey, culminating in Freud, with the purpose of 're-establishing the lost connection between knowledge and the transcendental conditions of possible knowledge' (Rouanet 2001: 265).

> The reconstruction of Peirce's, Dilthey's, and Freud's methodological reflection would lead to self-reflection on what positivism denies and conceals: the connection between theory and *praxis*, between knowledge and interest. The immediate critical purpose, therefore, is given by the critique of positivism, within the reflections on the theory of knowledge and methodology. In this sense, the underlying project of *Knowledge and Human Interests*, as expressed in the homonymous conference of 1965, originates from a theoretical context marked by the so-called 'positivism quarrel' (Repa 2017: 18).

To enable the renewal of Critical Theory of Knowledge from outside the positivist field, it would be essential to incorporate self-reflection into methodological questions. Habermas attributes this crucial role to psychoanalysis. In this sense, Freud's concepts emerge in Habermas' theoretical project in *Knowledge and Human Interests* as a methodological model whose foundation is the interest in emancipation, achieved through self-reflection facilitated by the dialogue between analyst and analysand.

It is worth highlighting that Freudian psychoanalysis is called upon in Habermas' work precisely at the moment when the author considers how self-reflection within the cultural sciences leads Dilthey towards the discovery of communicative interest (Rouanet 2001). From this perspective, according to Habermas' understanding, Freudian theory would be relevant to his project as it would be able to continue what Dilthey did not. Freud would continue the hermeneutic reflection that had been interrupted in Dilthey, due to the positivist assumptions of his time. In other words, while the hermeneutic pillars postulated by Dilthey are solely concerned with the interpretation of intentionally distorted symbolic expressions, seeking to remove these

communicative distortions, Freudian theory would be able to transcend the barrier of what would appear as consciously intended. It understands that these distortions would no longer reside solely within the realm of intentionality, but would rather be systematically deformed linguistic objectifications[6], requiring an analysis of the very structure of the corruption of meaning within the emitted text. As Repa (2017: 20) explains, psychoanalysis would present itself 'as a methodological model of critical theory, because it makes systematic use of self-reflection, of the dialogical situation between analyst and analysand'. Thus, precisely the patient's interest in emancipation from dominations – which prevent him from knowing himself and the subjects around him –, guided by the self-reflective act, would characterise the driving force of the analytic dialogue between analyst and analysand.

For Habermas, psychoanalysis would thus present satisfactory insights into this process, since it is 'relevant to us as the only tangible example of a science incorporating methodical self-reflection' (Habermas 1968/1972: 214), as it would enable methodological access to this reflexive dimension that was once buried by positivism. In its clinical practice, psychoanalysis aims to avoid adopting objectifying and distant knowledge of human world affairs and would, instead of that, seek to facilitate the self-awareness of the analysand. On the other hand, rather than merely confirming the patient's self-elaboration and sense-making, psychoanalysis would focus on overcoming the barriers to self-awareness, found in repressive structures that distort and hinder access to meaningful symbolic materials and take place within the psyche itself.

[6] For further reading on the subject, see Entrudo, P. M., (2023). *Conhecimento e Interesse* e sua Recepção na Teoria Crítica Recente. Dissertação de mestrado – Universidade Federal do Rio Grande do Sul. Available at: https://lume.ufrgs.br/handle/10183/271638 (last accessed: 5/11/2024).

In *Knowledge and Human Interests*, the author employs psychoanalysis as a methodological framework to support his critique of positivism. In this context, he confronts both the empirical-analytic sciences of nature and the historical-hermeneutic sciences, countering the objectivist self-understanding of these disciplinary fields with a model of self-reflection inspired by analytical healing (Carré & Alvarenga 2008). He takes the psychoanalytic cornerstones as an elementary piece in the task of giving continuity to an intellectual heritage marked by the constitutive connection between theoretical reflection and emancipatory interest—an association directly related to the significance and necessity of critical social theory: psychoanalysis 'inevitably leads to the discovery of its rootedness in an emancipatory interest, which is that of dissolving the blockages to the self-communication' (Rouanet 2001: 324).

However, throughout his project, Habermas would neglect an important concept of Freudian psychoanalytic theory, namely, the concept of drive (*Trieb*). According to Bento Prado Jr., in his essay *Self-reflection or interpretation without a subject?* (1985/2000), this distancing from the term could result in losing sight of the very meaning of the Freudian concept of the unconscious and in an 'intellectualist degradation of the psychoanalysis'. For Prado Jr., this understanding becomes evident from a specific point in Habermas' work, where he provides a commentary on the Freud's notion of 'psychic defense' that seems to set aside the concept of drive. Here is the excerpt from Freud for which Prado Jr. claims a different reading from the Habermasian one: 'It then seems clear that the defence process is analogous to the flight by which the ego escapes from an external threat, that it represents an attempt to flee from a danger originating from drives [*Triebgefahr*]' (1926/2000: 285). In this passage, Freud establishes a relationship of analogy between defence and flight and between internal and external danger, i. e., the Ego

reacts to an internal (drive) danger as if it were an external danger, as if the danger came upon it from outside: 'if the thing, *Id,* is outside of me, it is somewhere, in the vast external space, from where I must flee' (Prado Jr. 1985/2000: 61).

Habermas comments as follows on the Freudian excerpt:

> This attempt to conceive the internal defensive process on the model of flight leads to formulations that accord surprisingly with the hermeneutic insights of psychoanalysis. The fleeing ego, which can no longer remove itself from an external reality, must hide from itself (Habermas, 1968/1972: 240).

As Prado Jr. argues, this comment demonstrates a certain misunderstanding of Freud, insofar as Habermas seems to disregard the fact that the relationship Freud establishes between internal and external danger is a relationship of analogy. Habermas would therefore be interpreting the passage at stake from a standpoint of the Ego as an identity: 'the self's identity with this defended-against part of the psyche is denied; the latter is reified, for the ego, into a neuter, an *Id*' (*ibidem*). In other words, the part denied during this defence process, according to Habermas' conception, would be precisely the psychic identity that has been censored with the Ego, thus bringing to light the constitution of the *Id*, which is understood by Habermas as the result of this very censorship. According to Prado Jr., this flawed way in which Habermas understands the meaning of defence presented by Freud would ultimately distort Freud's theory that, in fact, it is the Ego that develops from the *Id,* and not the other way around:

> I insist on the vocabulary, which is never innocent. Identity, *Selbst*, Ego, a whole series of notions, which psychoanalysis describes as a result, are here reduced to the ether of German

> idealism and its language, burying the Freudian revolution (Prado Jr., 1985/2000: 62).

From the Habermasian distance from the concept of drives, at least two consequences would arise in which the author is accused of incurring when writing about Freud without using the concept of drive: subordinating psychoanalysis to philosophy and causing a polysemy of the term 'self-reflection'; neglecting the fact that Freud attributes a drive origin to judgement[7].

2. On neglecting the concept of drive

Just as Prado Jr. brings up the Habermasian distancing from drives and, henceforth, the consequences imposed on Habermas' arguments, Amy Allen, a prominent representative of current Critical Theory, also accuses Habermas of a rationalist and cognitivist interpretation of Freudian psychoanalysis, concealing the affective dimension impregnated in the blockages to subjective experience. For this reason, in *Critique on the couch...* (2020), Allen draws on Freudian and Kleinian theories in order to develop what she understands to be a more realistic line of psychoanalytic thought, capable of effectively embracing the importance of drive theory—as well as the concept of transference—, countering the excessively rationalist and progressive interpretations of psychoanalysis found in the theoretical projects developed by important names in contemporary Critical Theory, such as Jürgen Habermas, which would have later influenced figures as Axel Honneth. Although Habermas develops the idea of modelling Critical Theory on the psychoanalytic method more explicitly and systematically in his work, Allen argues that he transforms the psychoanalytic conception

[7] A third consequence is identified by Silveira (2018) in comments on Prado Jr.'s essay: the negligence of the fact that Freud roots the origin of judgment in the drives.

by focusing on the intelligibility of symbolic contents and the recomposition of distorted communicative relations. This transformation would place psychoanalysis within a rationalist perspective, prioritising the motivational power of rational insight over aspects of affective experience. Allen suggests that in doing so, Habermas neglects the affective dimension present in the blockages to subjective experience, as well as its relevance in releasing creative potential both in re-elaborations of individual self-understanding and in re-articulating the institutional structure of society. The author's interpretation problematises the rationalist conception of psychoanalysis, highlighting that, according to her reading of Freud and Klein, the process of analysis for emancipation is not merely about analytical insight. She argues that the key to emancipation lies in a process that allows the analysand to experience the unconscious emerging in the here-and-now, until it is possible to incorporate into a practical understanding.

As mentioned above, before the publication of *Critique on the Couch...,* in which Allen deeply explores these issues, it is already possible to perceive the significant intersection between psychoanalysis and Critical Theory. This is evidenced in her 2015 paper, in which the author engages in dialogue with Axel Honneth about the importance of reaffirming the role of psychoanalysis in Critical Theory, incorporating the theory of drives for a more accurate interpretation of psychoanalysis. On the other hand, although Allen agrees with Honneth's assertion that Critical Theory does need psychoanalysis, especially due to meta-normative and explanatory roles, a crucial point remains to be clarified: which psychoanalytic approach should be incorporated by Critical Theory? In this context, the philosopher proposes a distinct perspective from the intersubjective interpretation of Winnicott's Object Relations theory defended by Honneth. Instead, she argues that the version that best fulfils the aims of Critical Theory,

especially by providing a more realistic conception of personhood and a more comprehensive explanatory approach to human aggression and destructiveness, could be found in Melanie Klein's theoretical work on drives.

In order to justify the need for psychoanalysis for Critical Theory, Honneth offers two main reasons. The first concerns meta-normative role. He argues that for Critical Theory to be truly capable of avoiding abstractions interfering with its method, it is necessary to have a realistic conception of personhood that takes into account the non-rational and unconscious forces – such as motivational and affective aspects – acting on subjects, creating obstacles to their self-reflection. Otherwise, Critical Theory would face the risk of falling into what Honneth (2007: 129) calls 'moral idealism', assuming that social actors possess a high level of rational discernment. Thus, psychoanalysis, according to his interpretation, emerges as a discipline that identifies and criticises the 'constitutive bonds of human rationality' (*Ib*.), aiming to prevent a moral idealism that could lead critical theorists to act as normative theorists.

The second reason presented by Honneth is of an explanatory nature. Together with the meta-normative role, we understand that by assuming that subjects can be affected by unconscious forces that are resistant to reflective practice, then, in an attempt to explain social events, it becomes necessary to understand them as crystallised results of actions affected by their attachment needs. The central idea here, therefore, would be to argue that these attachment actions, when performed by subjects, are governed by unconscious reasons. Thus, in order to properly fulfil an explanatory role regarding these reasons, it would be necessary for the investigative method to have tools that provide a language compatible with the phenomena one tries to analyse. According to Honneth's argument, it was precisely this kind of explanatory interest that led the first exponents of the Frankfurt School

to turn to psychoanalysis, attempting to examine how psychic forces of attachment influenced labourers, keeping them chained to oppressive situations while obscuring their ability to critically identify the oppression to which they were subjected.

Likewise, Allen believes that contemporary critical theorists could turn to psychoanalysis for structurally similar reasons – namely, to gain a deeper understanding of the psychic forces that subordinate and harm subjects, binding them to modes of identity, whether racial, gender or sexual. Therefore, psychoanalysis presents itself as the most sophisticated and systematic means of studying human irrationality, as it would provide critical theorists with a justification capable of better characterising and understanding how this set of motives and forces acts on subjects.

However, none of the reasons presented clarify which specific version of psychoanalysis should be adopted to fulfil these meta-normative and explanatory roles. Since Honneth defends the intersubjective approach of Object Relations theory as the most compatible branch of psychoanalytic theory with Critical Theory, it is crucial to evaluate his claim, considering the benefits and limitations of Critical Theory relying on this interpretation in comparison with the one proposed by Allen, which is based on a version of psychoanalytic theory that maintains the concept of drive. Allen argues that Klein's work fills in important gaps neglected in the theories from Marx to Habermas, such as why individuals would be drawn into systems of domination and what would occur in the process of subjects' psychic formation that would make them susceptible to perpetuating and submitting to domination. In light of these important concerns, she maintains (2015: 315) that

> there are important insights into human personhood and sociality – in particular, concerning aggression and the

> pervasive and persistent role of negativity in human interactions – that are best articulated in the language of drives. This hypothesis leads me to consider the insights that can be gleaned via a reconstruction of the account of drives found in the work of Melanie Klein.

This argument arises because, according to the author, when conceived from relational terms, the concept of drive is better able to meet the criteria imposed by the meta-normative and explanatory roles attributed to psychoanalysis in its relationship with Critical Theory.

The problem here seems to us to be that there is an impediment to Allen's attempt to request such a task from Kleinian psychoanalysis. While Klein indeed thinks of drives as relational from the very beginning – that is, for the psychoanalyst, contrary to what happens in Freud, the object is inherent to the drive – on the other hand, this characterisation carries with it, at least tacitly, the notion of predisposition (Silveira 2023). This idea is evident in one of the crucial points that Allen (2015: 313) invokes in her argument, when she writes: 'Kleinian drive theory [...] conceives of drives not as inherently asocial or anti-social forces that well up within individuals, but rather in relational terms, as predispositions to relate to others in certain ways – either lovingly or destructively'.

Therefore, Kleinian theory does not exempt psychoanalytic thought from influences that operate externally to intersubjectivity, i. e., influences that the subject carries with them when entering into intersubjective relationships. This is compounded, especially from a perspective such as that defended by Allen, by the assumption that objects are already deeply embedded in these relationships. In fact, only the heuristic consideration of such influences allows for the argumentative step between, on one hand, the absence of the breast, and on the other, hatred, bad breast, and persecutory fantasies. This

step is crucial for Kleinian proposals on the need to expel aspects of the death drive from the Ego.

Klein is well aware of the fact that her theorisation involves the notion of predisposition recognition. This becomes evident, for instance, when she refers to the incidence of the constitutional factor in love and hate: 'In speaking of an innate conflict between love and hate, I am implying that the capacity both for love and for destructive impulses is, to some extent, constitutional, though varying individually in strength and interacting from the beginning with external conditions' (Klein 1984a: 176–235). Furthermore, it is the constitutional, innate aggression that the child needs to deflect away from themselves in order to avoid self-destruction, and this is precisely the meaning that Klein attributes to the death drive. It is from the death drive itself, understood as aggressiveness, that the Ego must defend itself primarily through projection. Thus, 'part of the death instinct is projected into the object, the object thereby becoming a persecutor; while that part of the death instinct which is retained in the ego causes aggression to be turned against that persecutory object' (Klein: 1984b: 236–246). Importantly, for Klein, aggression, being primal, targets the Ego before being directed towards others. Thus, if the reason – both in Allen and Honneth – for refusing to draw upon Freudian drive theory in the possibilities of interlocution between Critical Theory and psychoanalysis is tied to avoiding reference, as Allen argues (2015: 313), to 'inherently asocial or anti-social forces that well up within individuals' it will be inevitable to revisit the problem throughout Klein's thought.

There are several questions that arise with the identification of this point. Are drives, in Freudian theory, 'inherently asocial or antisocial'? Isn't it through them—sexual and aggressive drives—that cultural bonds become possible, established, and maintained? Isn't this the central argument of *Civilization and Its Discontents* (Freud 1930/2000)?

Is the notion of drive—with or without the weight of predisposition—truly an obstacle to reflecting on emancipation? Wouldn't it be the case to mobilize, with Freudian psychoanalysis, a conception of possible and situated emancipation, rather than an excessively idealized conception and hostage to the refusal of aggression as something constitutive of the human? Is the model of self-reflection, proposed by Habermas in his reading of Freudian theory, or the reference to a 'strong intersubjectivist paradigm,' to use Whitebook's expression in his critique of Honneth, necessary to think about the field of action of unconscious elements in the phenomena to be referred to by a critical social theory? We believe, therefore, that addressing such questions would be important for the advancement of future discussions regarding the interest of psychoanalysis for Critical Theory.

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