

Immanent teleologies versus historical regressions: Some political remarks on Honneth's Hegelianism

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journals.sagepub.com/home/psc**Marco Solinas** *Scuola Superiore Sant'Anna, Italy*

Abstract

The article is focused on Honneth's teleology of history, presented as a historical process of gradual realization of an immanent normative 'telos', and not only as a form of axiological evaluation of events and social institutions. The author aims to show that this teleology implies a series of problems both on the level of historical analysis and with respect to the theoretical-political and critical-social outcomes of the new Hegelian critical theory. Particularly, it seems to marginalize the contingent character of historical-political conflicts and the related possibility of regressive implications and consequences of such conflicts, leading to a de-politicization of the immanent theoretical framework at stake.

Keywords

Hegelianism, Honneth, immanent criticism, regression, teleology of history

Bridging the gap between the moral and normative dimension and historical and social analysis: this is one of the key constituents of the approach Honneth adopts to introduce the theme of struggles for recognition. Philosophical research has thus acquired greater currency with social reality: the normative principles being interrogated do not play out as something to identify, to justify and then to 'apply from above' to society, as happens in the Kant-inspired tradition. Rather, it's more to do with letting the intrinsic moral character in social struggles emerge, to reconstruct the immanent moral grammar of the dynamics that determine social progress. It is exactly in this direction that *Struggle for Recognition* was moving. It is not by chance that the subheading reads *The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts (Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte)*. The

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critical theory was thus understood as an undertaking to discover those instances, those energies and those motivational bases capable of leading to emancipation. The framework of reference now adopted, however, decisively rehearses the legacy of Hegel, defining itself as a methodological alternative to Kantian-inspired proceduralism: it was aiming to bind itself structurally to social struggles; and affix that bond to the basis, also Hegelian, of the model of the struggle for recognition.

Over time, Honneth has gradually radicalized the Hegelian slant that has impressed itself on new critical theory, as is clearly evident from one of his other great works *Freedom's Right* and from his other recent works devoted to normativity. The ever-increasing closeness to Hegel in fact goes well beyond the assumption of the model of the struggles for recognition set out in the early Jena writings; now actualized in the general immanentist vision of normativity outlined in *Elements of the Philosophy of Rights*: from the methodology described therein and reinterpreted in terms of 'normative reconstruction', to the notion of 'objective spirit', to the correlated conception of *Sittlichkeit*. A proximity such that it leads Honneth to confront a series of theoretical dangers attributable especially to the Hegelian circularity between history and normativity, reality and rationality; starting with the risk of falling into line with a mere description of the existing reality, and also to that 'historical dissolution of morality in ethical life' that Habermas in his *Remarks on Discourse Ethics* ascribes to Hegelian *Sittlichkeit*; or maybe even worse to offer a legitimization of it. Furthermore, the assumption of the Hegelian model could lead to the risk of also structurally inhibiting the emancipatory and revolutionary impulse of the undertakings originally attributed to critical theory, limiting it to terse reformist posturing.¹

The problematic element of the actualization of the Hegelian model which I would like to focus attention on here, however, concerns primarily the theoretical-political consequences of the particular teleology of the immanent methodology of normative reconstruction itself. Even if Honneth puts forward an attempt at the liberation of the Hegelian model from the metaphysical 'objective teleology' linked to the theory of the absolute spirit, as he himself recognizes it must (and wants to) maintain a certain degree (rather high) of teleology on the methodological level. The main theoretical problem is that this *teleology of history* seems to be understood in several respects as an *almost inevitable historical process of gradual realization of an immanent normative 'telos'*, and *not only* as a (in my view, legitimate) form of *axiological evaluation* of events and social institutions. More specifically, this teleology, after all clearly evident in the aspect of retrospective-type historical-social analysis, literally then *reconstructive*, implies a series of problems both on the *level of historical analysis* and with respect to the *theoretical-political and critical-social outcomes* of the new Hegelian critical theory. Since, in fact, normative reconstruction moves basically from positive results, from ethical conquests and achieved morals, it comes to delineate 'upward progresses', although also 'discontinuous', that seem to me to constitutively marginalize the *contingent* character of historical-political conflicts and the related possibility of *regressive* implications and consequences of such conflicts.

With regard to the task of critical theory and Honneth's previous use of the Hegelian model of struggles for recognition, the normative reconstruction strategy and the connected relaunch of *Sittlichkeit* seem to come to a halt just at the point where critical

theory would have the greatest need of theoretical assistance: where instead of declaring more or less discontinuous progress, the analysis has to deal with a stasis or directly a *regression* of the particular normative orders. In other words, in all those situations in which struggles for recognition come to an end, or still worse when there is a process of cultural and political *involution* on a wide scale (like, e.g. in the current situation). In this sense, the normative reconstructive model seems to function best in its aspect as a celebration of conquests obtained gradually, and thus of their legitimization; and on the other hand, it seems to abdicate from criticism and political analysis where it has to deal with the waywardness of the real, remaining entangled in a web of a rationality that can no longer be sustained by an objective immanent teleology. In this way, however, there seems to be a sort of fracture between the level of normative reconstruction, which aims to identify its own criteria in an immanent way, and the critical-political level, on which normative criteria are instead applied ‘from above’, or ‘from outside’, recalling simultaneously the contingent and conflicted dimension of socio-political dynamics. A fracture that would therefore undermine the objective of an immanent foundation of normativity, at the same time putting its teleological character in crisis on the methodological level; thus it would seem to demand the necessity to work out a critical strategy that goes beyond the level of the immanence of adoptable criteria, forcing them to the level of the political positioning of the critic: of their proximity to certain groups and social actors.

I. Immanent normative teleologies

Reinforcing the link with Hegel, here, means again ‘to follow the model of Hegel’s *Philosophy of Right* and develop the principles of social justice by means of an analysis of society’, as we read on the first page of *Freedom’s Right*.² Going in this direction means at the same time getting back to the notion that an ‘objective Spirit is realized in social institutions’, which Honneth now needs to provide with a *new ‘footing’*, different from dialectical metaphysics.³ In other words, it can certainly be said that Hegel

sought to derive the aims that subjects freely determine directly and immediately from the concept of an historically unfolding spirit. Nevertheless, we can use an independent descriptive language to show the validity of Hegel’s method even if we detach it from his spiritual metaphysics.⁴

More precisely, the normative immanentist conception actualized here moves from the premise for which, because Hegel ‘seeks to equate a just order with the sum of social institutions necessary for realizing intersubjective freedom, he must determine in advance the aims (*vorweg diejenigen Zwecke festlegen*) that individuals can achieve together solely through reciprocity’⁵; it follows that ‘Hegel employs a method that is meant to create an equilibrium between historical and social circumstances and rational considerations’⁶; and it is precisely for this reason that ‘we could label this search for a balance between a theoretical concept and the historical reality (*einem Ausgleich zwischen Begriff und historischer Wirklichkeit*) a “normative reconstruction”’.⁷

With regard to Kantian models, Honneth thus can observe that ‘Hegel’s conception is more historical’,⁸ and so reintroduce the historical objection to Kant’s moral conception: Hegel ‘sought to prove that the Kantian procedure of examining one’s maxims can take place only when certain rules of social life have already been accepted. Whenever we apply the categorical imperative, at some point we will run up against the constitutive norms (*konstitutive Normen*) of our form of society, which we cannot grasp as being authorized by ourselves, because we must in the first place accept them as institutional facts’⁹; actually what this means is institutional facts with normative substance of a determinate age.¹⁰ The reconstructive method would thus have the advantage of being anchored to history, unlike the Kantian orientation introduced in discourse theory¹¹; given that in this aspect Habermas since 1991 maintained however that ‘discourse ethics takes its orientation for an intersubjective interpretation of the categorical imperative from Hegel’s theory of recognition but without incurring the cost of a historical *dissolution* of morality in ethical life (*ohne dafür den Preis einer historischen Auflösung von Moralität in Sittlichkeit zu entrichten*)’.¹²

Beyond this risk of an historical dissolution of (Kantian) morality into (Hegelian) *Sittlichkeit*, or rather in the marked difficulty of identifying the *criteria* of normative validity operating exclusively on the immanent level of historical becoming, I believe that the same Hegelian conception of history outlined here, may pose a series of problems, beginning with *its teleological character*. Honneth is certainly well aware of the fact that ‘this methodological procedure is also marked by Hegel’s teleological notion that the present always stands on the forefront of an historical process in which rational freedom is gradually realized’,¹³ and that ‘he is convinced of such inevitable historical progress’.¹⁴ It is thus to be remarked that ‘even if we strip this historical confidence of its metaphysical foundations and objective teleology, enough of it will still remain’.¹⁵ Getting away from such metaphysics, Honneth thus reinterprets this immanent teleology in terms of degrees of historical-normative development:

we should follow Hegel in abstaining from presenting a free-standing, constructive justification of norms of justice prior to immanent analysis; such an additional justification becomes superfluous once we can prove that the prevailing values are normatively superior to historically antecedents ideals or ‘ultimate values’. Of course, such an immanent procedure ultimately entails an element of historical-teleological thinking (*Element geschichtsteleologischen Denkens*), but this type of teleology of history (*diese Art von Geschichtsteleologie*) is ultimately inevitable – just as it is for theories of justice that assume a congruence (*einer Kongruenz*) between practical reason and existing social relations.¹⁶

However, the type of teleology inherited from Hegel seems to me actually *different* from that peculiar ‘congruence’ between normativity and modernity put forth by Habermas,¹⁷ exactly because it recalls an immanent teleological historical process that does *not* need of a ‘constructive justification of norms of justice’. Assuming, furthermore, that the author of *Between Facts and Norms* in his masterpiece emphasized from the beginning that: ‘The philosophy of history can only glean from historical processes the reason it has already put into them with the help of teleological concepts’.¹⁸

2. Historical regressions

The reconstructive-teleological method is set up structurally, according to the Hegelian model, on the preliminary selection of outcomes and historical products of a positive type; it therefore has a retrospective propensity, as clearly emerges for example in the analysis of the public sphere:

To judge by the result (*von seinem Ergebnis aus betrachtet*) of this protracted and conflict-laden process leading to the establishment of the basic constitutional framework of the political public sphere in the nineteenth century, either by revolutionary struggle or by concessions from above, we could view this process as the institutional preparation (*als institutionelle Wegbereitung*) for a third sphere of social freedom.¹⁹

Operating on this retrospective-teleological level, the normative reconstruction thus constantly holds true to a theoretical model which goes in search of what ‘has not yet’ been achieved, or of what ‘is already present’, or of ‘what would have led’ to a certain objective, to an immanent *telos*. It is a configuration reinforced by the ample use of the intrinsically finalistic theoretical instruments of the Hegelian-Aristotelian type, such as the analysis of ‘normative promise’²⁰ immanent in the various social spheres that aspire to the achievement and the correlated concept of ‘normative potentials’ more or less unexpressed.²¹

The retrospective-reconstructive slant adopted thus constantly forces concentration of attention almost unilaterally on ‘conquests’ obtained, on objectives achieved; the ‘idealizing reconstruction’ adopted assumes an ‘upward progress’ (*aufsteigende Linie*).²² The literally teleological character of this configuration may emerge in even clearer form once compared with Foucault’s genealogical method, almost a perfect mirror image: genealogy ‘rejects the metahistorical deployment of ideal significations and indefinite teleologies [*indéfinies téléologies*]’,²³ concentrating instead on ‘details and accidents that accompany every beginning’, on ‘the events of history, its jolts, its surprise, its unsteady victories and unpalatable defeats’.²⁴ Conversely, in Honneth’s neo-Hegelian configuration the *contingent historical* dimension is deliberately marginalized, sometimes even thrown out, as happens when, given that the ‘fusion between conceptions of justice and the idea of autonomy represents an achievement of modernity that can only be reversed at the price of cognitive barbarism. And wherever such a regression (*eine derartige Regression*) actually occurs, it inevitably provokes moral outrage ‘in the hearts of all its spectators’ (who themselves are not involved in the show),²⁵ Honneth emphasizes: ‘This teleological perspective, an inevitable element of modernity’s self-understanding, strips the above-described fact of its contingent historical character (*verliert das bislang umrissene Faktum seinen historisch-kontingenten Charakter*)’.²⁶

With such an inclination towards conquests and progressive ascendant processes, the teleological-reconstructive framework adopted necessarily seems to encounter serious methodological difficulties in the treatment of *regressive* historical processes; when the path towards reaching the (almost predetermined) normative *telos* seems not only to come to a stop, but to turn back. This is clear in the stark recourse to moral outrage in the presence of serious regressions, and even better from the way in which Honneth, caught

up in ‘the decline of the consumer cooperative movement’,²⁷ after the Second World War, puts it:

This sobering situation – which almost forces us to capitulate in our attempt at a normative reconstruction of market-mediated forms of social freedom (*für den Versuch einer normativen Rekonstruktion von marktvermittelten Gestalten sozialer Freiheit nahezu der Punkt des Eingeständnisses eines endgültigen Scheiterns*) – would begin to change again over the course of the 1960s.²⁸

The normative reconstruction method seems therefore to find itself trapped at the moment at which it encounters and clashes with regressive dynamics. Moreover it could not but be so, considering the teleological-retrospective slant adopted: the framework becomes functional only with regard to the reading of progressive processes, to the celebration of conquests obtained over time. This sort of theoretical block, however, implies a series of problems at the level of the articulation of the relationship between the strategy of normative reconstruction and the analysis of the forms of social and political struggles that submit to this same reconstruction, representing its driving force.

3. Political struggles

At the moment at which normative reconstruction must come to terms with an analysis of regressive processes, as happens for example in the sphere of consumption, Honneth redefines his strategy of ‘normative reconstruction’ giving it a slant that in truth is no longer reconstructive, nor retrospective, nor even diagnostic, but rather *political-therapeutic*. Although mostly tacitly, it seems to me that the strategy basically is reoriented, transforming itself from immanent analysis to semi-transcendent criticism: rather than describing what happened, Honneth here seems even to attribute to reconstruction the duty to indicate those instances and social movements that in future *could* or *should* bring about the fulfilment of particular processes, that is, pursue the achievement of certain objectives and not of others.

It is a passage full of theoretical consequences, which begins to flourish when it is emphasized that, within the context of the analysis of regressive processes encountered in the sphere of consumption ‘as much as it would be desirable (*so wünschenswert es wäre*) and as much as it would accommodate the intention of a normative reconstruction, we cannot speak of a “moralization of the markets” from below’²⁹; where already a discussion of ‘normative reconstruction’ of a proactive nature (so no longer re-constructive) is taking shape, in the context of a sphere about which it is claimed that ‘even though it could have normative potential’ (*Auch wenn sie . . . das normative Potential hätte*), even it currently disregards it.³⁰

This passage is even more evident where Honneth writes that the ‘misdevelopment’ inherent in the interpretation of the market, ‘poses a problem for our normative reconstruction’: ‘we cannot rely on normative countermoves’.³¹ The transition from a diagnostic-retrospective vision to a proactive-therapeutic one of ‘our normative reconstruction’ is taken further in the detail: ‘It seems that an alternative to these regressive developments (*rückschrittlichen Entwicklungen*) can only be found wherever there are

organized struggles to impose constraints on the labour market at the transnational level', to then immediately clarify that 'only an internalization of oppositional movements can revive the original intentions',³² then disregarded and retracted.

Now, I believe that Honneth tends to interpret this strictly therapeutic-prescriptive dimension in his analysis in terms of a 'reconstructive criticism', for which 'the procedure of normative reconstruction always offers room for criticizing social reality':³³ the 'criteria' inferred from the normative reconstruction can be used 'to criticize insufficient, still imperfect embodiments of universally accepted values',³⁴ and therefore have force because they are fulfilled in an ever wider way. In this sense Honneth proceeds moreover not only in the preface to *Freedom's Right*, but also in his other writings dedicated in fact to immanent criticism, centring on the question of the type of criteria adopted and adoptable.³⁵

However, the focus of the discourse on the question of the immanent (or rather transcendent) level of the criteria of criticism seems to me to obfuscate the unavoidable question of the *political* positioning of the critic, a dimension which is central also to the original discussion of the internal or immanent criticism introduced in its time by Michael Walzer.³⁶ Aside from the immanent character of the criteria adopted, these same criteria are in fact plural, multiple and especially between themselves alternative and conflicting: social critics of different (political) orientation, in fact, have a propensity for divergent normative interpretations and readings, often mutually contradictory, even though of an immanent slant. This conflict reflects moreover the fundamentally open and plural dimension of political and social struggles. On this level, the normative teleology of the reconstructive set up seems to tend to make social struggles, recognized as the 'engine' of normative development, appear almost as if they had pre-arranged goals: deducible from a grid of predetermined moral principles, which have to rest on their 'appropriate understanding'.³⁷ In this sense, also the theoretical model of social 'misdevelopments' and 'pathologies' seems to rest on a teleological structure which indeed undermines the possibility of seizing the open and plural, as well as the historically contingent, character of the dynamics of social and political struggles.

The tendency to rely on a teleological propulsive force such as to marginalize regressive processes and the open and contingent character of the political seems moreover to have been a part of Honneth's research from the beginning of his original introduction of the theme for the struggles for recognition. In *Struggle for Recognition*, and later in the debate with Nancy Fraser, the determining role of emotive reactions to the experience of disrespect (*Missachtung*), was insisted on, being considered as 'the engine of social change'³⁸ this time from the 'social-ontological and social-anthropological',³⁹ perspective. Certainly in these cases too the necessary 'translation' of these experiences of disrespect into social and political terms was considered,⁴⁰ or, in other words, the fact that 'feelings of social injustice are always shaped by public discourses, and hence do not appear uninfluenced by the semantic space provided by a society',⁴¹; also in these cases however a certain propensity to be led by a teleological and progressive afflatus of Hegelian ancestry seems to prevail.⁴² The subsequent radicalization of the Hegelian moment, with the resumption of the reconstructive model of the *Philosophy of Right*, seems to me to have intensified this effect of *de-politicization and of marginalization of*

the contingency of historical processes in spite of the expected greater adherence to and assumption of the normative model at play in social-historical reality.

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Notes

1. See, for example, Jörg Schaub, "Misdevelopments, Pathologies, and Normative Revolutions," *Critical Horizons* 16, no. 2 (2015): 107–30.
2. Axel Honneth, *Das Recht der Freiheit. Grundriß einer demokratischen Sittlichkeit* (Berlin: Suhrkamp, 2011); English translation by Joseph Ganahl: *Freedom's Right. The Social Foundations of Democratic Life* (Cambridge: Polity, 2014), vii.
3. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 3.
4. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 56.
5. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 56.
6. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 56 (original version: 106).
7. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 56 (original version: 106).
8. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 59.
9. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 111; see G.W.F. Hegel, *Grundlinien der Philosophie des Rechts*, in G.W.F. Hegel, *Werke in zwanzig Bänden* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1970, Bd. 7); English translation by Hugh Barr Nisbet: *Elements of the Philosophy of Right* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), § 135.
10. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 111; see Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, § 135: 'all das sind zu einer bestimmten Zeit institutionelle Tatsachen mit normativen Gehalt'.
11. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 42.
12. Jürgen Habermas, "Vom pragmatischen, ethischen und moralischen Gebrauch der praktischen Vernunft" (conference held in 1988), in Jürgen Habermas, *Erläuterungen zur Diskursethik* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992, 2 Aufl.), 100, English translation by Ciaran Cronin: "On the Pragmatic, the Ethical, and the Moral Employments of Practical Reason, in Jünger Habermas, *Justification and Application. Remarks on Discourse Ethics* (Cambridge (MT): MIT, 1993), 1.
13. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 59.
14. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 59.
15. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 59.
16. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 59, translation modified (original version: 22: '[...] Sicherlich läuft ein derartiges, immanentes Verfahren am Ende darauf hinaus, erneut ein Element geschichtsteleologischen Denkens in Anspruch zu nehmen; aber diese Art von Geschichtsteleologie ist genau bis zu dem Maße unvermeidbar [...]').
17. See also, Axel Honneth, "Die Normativität der Sittlichkeit," *Deutsche Zeitschrift für Philosophie* 62, no. 5 (2014): 787–800, and his comments of Jürgen Habermas, "Treffen Hegel Einwände gegen Kant auch auf die Diskursethik zu?," in Jürgen Habermas, *Erläuterungen zur Diskursethik*, cit., 9–30, English translation by Christian Lenhardt and Shierry Weber Nicholson: "Morality and Ethical Life: Does Hegel's Critique of Kant Apply to Discourse Ethics?," in Jürgen Habermas, *Moral Consciousness and Communicative Action* (Cambridge (MT): MIT, 1990), 195–216.

18. Jürgen Habermas, *Faktizität und Geltung. Beiträge zur Diskurstheorie des Rechts und des demokratischen Rechtsstaats* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), English translation by William Rehg: *Between Facts and Norms. Contributions to a Discourse Theory of Law and Democracy* (Cambridge, MA: MIT, 1996), 2; Habermas explains: 'By the same token, norms of a reasonable conduct of life cannot be drawn from the natural constitution of the human species any more than they came from history [...]. Not much more convincing is the contextualist renunciation of all justification. Although this is an understandable response to the failures of the philosophy of history and philosophical anthropology, it never gets beyond the defiant appeal to the normative force of the factual. The development of constitutional democracy along the celebrated 'North Atlantic' path has certainly provided us with results worth preserving, but once those who do not have the good fortune to be heirs of the Founding Fathers turn to their own traditions, they cannot find criteria and reasons that would allow them to distinguish what is worth preserving from what should be rejected'. I have attempted to develop this distinction between Honneth's Hegelianism and Habermas in Marco Solinas, "Morale, etica, politica. Sulla svolta neo-hegeliana della teoria critica tedesca," *Teoria politica* VIII (2018): 364–83.
19. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 260 [483].
20. See, for example, Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 164 (original version: 295: 'normative Versprechen').
21. See for example Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 177 (original version: 320: 'normative Potential').
22. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 249 (original version: 463).
23. Michel Foucault, "Nietzsche, la généalogie, l'histoire," in *Hommage à Jean Hyppolite* (Paris: P.U.F., 1971), 145–72, English translation by Donald F. Bouchard: "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," in *Language, Counter-Memory, Practice*, ed. Donald F. Bouchard (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1977), 140; see also 154: 'An entire historical tradition (theological or rationalistic) aims at dissolving the singular event into an ideal continuity – as a teleological movement or a natural process. [...]. The forces operating in history are not controlled by destiny or regulative mechanisms, but respond to haphazard conflicts'.
24. Foucault, "Nietzsche, Genealogy, History," 144.
25. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 17 (original version: 40).
26. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 18 (original version: 40).
27. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 211: 'The first signs that the prospects for this "general good" had dimmed after the end of the World War II can be seen in the decline of the consumer cooperative movement', 386: 'Die ersten Anzeichen, die zu erkennen geben, daß sich nach dem Ende des Zweiten Weltkrieges die Chancen dieses "allgemein Besten" in der Konsumsphäre noch wesentlich zu verschlechtern beginnen, sind schon im Niedergang der Konsumgenossenschaftsbewegung auszumachen'.
28. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 213 (original version: 390: 'Diese im ganzen äußerst ernüchternde Lage – für den Versuch einer normativen Rekonstruktion von marktvermittelten Gestalten sozialer Freiheit nahezu der Punkt des Eingeständnisses eines endgültigen Scheiterns – beginnt sich erst im Laufe der 1960er Jahre noch einmal zu ändern').
29. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 220 translation modified (original version: 404: 'So wünschenswert es wäre, so sehr es der Absicht einer normativen Rekonstruktion auch entgegenkommen würde [...]').

30. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 220 (original version: 405).
31. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 252 (original version: 468: 'bringt unsere normative Rekonstruktion in die Verlegenheit [...] auf normative Gegenbewegungen im Augenblick nicht mehr setzen zu können').
32. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 253 (original version: 469).
33. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 9.
34. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 9.
35. See above all Axel Honneth, "Rekonstruktive Gesellschaftskritik unter Genealogischen Vorbehalt. Zur Idee der 'Kritik' in der Frankfurter Schule" (2006) and "Idiosynkrasie als Erkenntnismittel. Gesellschaftskritik im Zeitalter der normalisierten Intellektuellen" (2002), both in Axel Honneth (ed), *Pathologien der Vernunft. Geschichte und Gegenwart der Kritischen Theorie* (Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2007); English translation by James Ingram: *Pathologies of Reason. On the Legacy of Critical Theory* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2009).
36. See above all Michael Walzer, *Interpretation and Social Criticism* (Cambridge (MT): Harvard University Press, 1987); Michael Walzer (ed), *The Company of Critics: Social Criticism and Political Commitment in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Basis Books, 1988–2002).
37. Honneth, *Freedom's Right*, 329: 'The motor and the medium of the historical process of realizing institutionalized principles of freedom is not the law, at least not in the first instance, but social struggle over the appropriate understanding of these principles and the resulting change of behaviour' (original version: 613f: 'Der Motor und das Medium von geschichtlichen Prozessen der Realisierung institutionalisierten Freiheitsprinzipien ist nicht in erster Linie das Recht, sondern sind soziale Kämpfe um deren angemessenes Verständnis [...]').
38. Honneth, "The Point of Recognition": A Rejoinder to the Rejoinder," in *Redistribution or Recognition? A Political-Philosophical Exchange*, eds. Nancy Fraser and Axel Honneth (New York: Verso, 2003), 245 [*Umverteilung oder Anerkennung? Eine politisch-philosophische Kontroverse*, Frankfurt/Main: Suhrkamp, 2003, 282: 'als Antriebsquelle gesellschaftlicher Veränderungen'].
39. Honneth, "The Point of Recognition," 245.
40. See Axel Honneth, *Kampf um Anerkennung. Zur moralischen Grammatik sozialer Konflikte* (Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992), 265; English translation by Joel Anderson: *The Struggle for Recognition. The Moral Grammar of Social Conflicts* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995), 259 ff.
41. Honneth, "The Point of Recognition," 250.
42. I have attempted to develop this point in Marco Solinas, "Emotionen als Motivationsbasis der Sozialkämpfe. Über Axel Honneth und Barrington Moore Jr.," *Zeitschrift für philosophische Forschung* 72, no. 2 (2018): 232–45.