Social Work in a Pluralistic Society: Realising the Universal Claim of Phronesis

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1. Introduction

Social workers practicing in a pluralistic society face an infinite variety of conflict situations. Based on general abstract ethical principles, social workers have to do a lot of translation work to cope with this enormous diversity of contingent conflict situations. Practical wisdom or phronesis seems very apt to do this translation work. The tension, however, between the general and the individual, the concrete, lies in the very concept of phronêsis: "Phronêsis [concerns] not only the general, but it must also know the individual" (EN VI. 1141b15). According to Gadamer, the practical knowledge of phronêsis must be, if it wants to be directed at the concrete situation, to "capture ´circumstances` in their infinite variety" (own translation, the authors). In this respect, it represents a "concrete generality" (Gadamer 1986, 18.). Understanding and morally coping with the concrete situation that phronêsis has to achieve, "requires a [...] subsumption of the given under the general; i.e. the purpose, which one pursues, that the right emerges from it" (own translation, the authors) (Gadamer 1986, 19).

At first phronêsis appears here as mediator between ethical principles, or fundamental ethical purposes and a concrete particular, not generalizable because contingent ethical conflict situation (in which ethical principles come into conflict with one another) in search of the appropriate, the good in this contingent ethical conflict situation (cf. Duvenage 2015, 80). Phronêsis acts here as a translator of ethical principles (such autonomy, justice, care, etc.) in a concrete contingent conflict situation.

One can now ask how phronêsis is able to perform this translation work in concrete situations. First of all the assumption suggests itself that corresponding ethical principles, normative traditions are habitualized in the course of life practice and as corresponding attitudes / virtues are part of phronêsis[1], for instance in the form of our sense of justice. But if one asks further how corresponding habitualized generalized ethical principles are applied by phronêsis to concrete, contingent conflict situations, here, as we try to show, one encounters yet another relationship between universality and particularity. This refers to phronêsis itself, to its application and genesis in the concrete individual situation on the one hand and to the universal claim, namely to be able to "capture ´circumstances` in their infinite variety" on the other hand. In this other relationship, universality and particularity are not only in tension with each other. Rather, they are interdependent. In order to show this, we want to make the following interconnected theses plausible: The universal meaning of phronêsis consists in the fact that in concrete, contingent conflict situations, "in their infinite variety", it can always perform this translation work of general ethical principles into concrete contingent conflict situations. But it can only do it in concreteness, contingency, particularity. Because it can only develop itself further in the course of this

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[1] „And it is not possible to possess excellence in the primary sense without phronêsis, nor to be wise without excellence of character" (EN VI. 1144b31-33).

translation service. So phronêsis represents a dynamis, but not only. It is self-reflexive. We learn to act well through good actions, in which we find in a contingent situation what is appropriate in relation to the whole of life (cf. EN VI. 1140b1-8). And phronêsis is oriented towards the good, eudaimonia. This dynamis unfolds precisely in the course of this translation work of ethical principles in contingent conflict situations. I.e. genesis and application of phronêsis coincide (cf. EN VI. 1142a12-16). Consequently, its universality lies in something procedural, namely that it can always perform this translation work because it can develop itself and the underlying hexis in it itself. During this translation work, in which phronêsis and its underlying hexis develop, the good (eudaimonia), which is inscribed in the hexis, takes on concrete form. It does this in the form of what is appropriate for a concrete, contingent situation, against the background of life as a whole. We call this the "urgent now". But in order for phronêsis to contain the potency to be applicable in all other contingent situations and to find the appropriate, phronêsis or its hexis must contain a "permanently important"[2] that preserves its developmental ability.

In order to prove these theses, we want to investigate the question of how phronêsis can accomplish this translation work. We assume two premises: 1. Phronêsis performs its translation work in dialogue or by enabling such a dialogue.[3] Phronêsis makes such a dialogue possible because it opens a learning process in which the alterity of the other is recognised.

 a) That's why we first turn to Gadamer. He suggests that dialogue as a praxis[4] is the central place where phronêsis is performed (see Gadamer 1986, see also Gadamer 2001, 24).[5] For dialogue is also the genuine place where ethical problems are dealt with. At the same time, phronêsis only enables a dialogue (cf. Dottori 2012, 189).

According to Gadamer, a central condition for a dialogue is the recognition of the alterity of the other (cf. Gadamer 1986, 343; Lee 2008 and Cesare 2009, 271f.). If now the recognition of the alterity of the other is a central enabling condition of dialogue and if dialogue is the place where phronêsis becomes effective, then it is obvious to examine to what extent phronêsis itself does contain this capacity. To make this plausible, in a first step we want to show that the three aspects of understanding "empathy", "recognition" and "authenticity"[6] enable a dialogue. For to the extent that these aspects of

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[2] The theologian Dietrich Ritschl has introduced the distinction between the now urgent and the permanently important in the context of the reflection of the possibilities of ecumenism, see Ritschl 1988, 120-123.

[3] According to Kristjansson (2014), dialogue is not only a Socratic method in moral education, but also plays a key role for Aristotle. Eikeland has added "internal, theoretical and methodological evidence from the "Topica" to the more "external", indirect arguments of Kristjansson, who relies on the role of friendship in the IXth book of the EN to highlight the importance of dialogue for moral education, in order to underline the central role of dialogue in ethics and politics (2008, 399f. and 2016, 46).

[4] In this paper we assume, for reasons of simplicity, a dialogue between two persons or in one person, probably knowing that the use of the term dialogue is much broader in Plato and Aristotle, cf. Eikeland 2008, 231f. A dialogue always represents a practice in which the dialogue partners themselves are at stake and are transformed (cf. Eikeland 2008, 234f.).

[5] This is logical if, like Gallagher, one considers that phronêsis represents primarily an intersubjective, more precisely intercorporeal knowledge in the sense of *knowing how* (Gallagher 2007, 201, 210 and the same 2015, 142).

[6] The three terms will be explained in more detail in the course of the presentation. They can be regarded as "subexcellences" of phronêsis, especially that enable a dialogue in which phronêsis is performed as procedural moral knowledge and social ethical conflicts can be dealt with precisely because they enable the recognition of the alterity of the other. If we then concentrate on those sub-capabilities, we do so in the knowledge that other subvirtues also play a central role in phronêsis.

understanding are not realized, the basis for recognising the alterity of the other is missing. This will first be shown using a case study.

b) Following the case study, one can express the assumption that we have always silently assumed mutual readiness and ability for empathy, recognition and authenticity when entering into a dialogue. This corresponds to the formal pragmatic argument of Habermas.

c) In addition, empathy, recognition and authenticity themselves can lie in the meaning of phronêsis and related concepts in the Nicomachean Ethics.

d) The capacity for empathy, recognition and authenticity can be traced back to implicit relational knowing, a concept postulated by Stern as a consequence of his very finely analysed observations of the interaction of primary caregiver and child (cf. Stern 1995). It is a kind of procedural knowledge that is performed in social situations, especially in a dialogue. Here it works like a self-fulfilling prophecy, as we want to show. The central proposal is now that this implicit relational knowing can be interpreted as hexis as an attitude underlying phronêsis, which is decisive for our capacity for empathy, recognition and authenticity and thus a decisive prerequisite for our capacity for dialogue and the ability to recognise the other in her alterity.

e) To the extent that implicit relational knowing is performed in concrete, contingent conflict situations and enables a dialogue and a change of perspective – so the further proposal – phronêsis develops further. The developmental path of phronêsis and the implicit relational knowing on which it is based as hexis can itself proceed via the detour of the failure of a dialogue and the reflection of this failure, insofar as it enables a new dialogue. How this development process of phronêsis and implicit relational knowing can be imagined en détail is illustrated once again using the case study. We then hope to be able to show how phronêsis can fulfil its universal claim precisely in the course of its application in each concrete contingent situation.

2. Empathy, recognition and authenticity as conditions for a dialogue

First of all, we want to point out the central conditions for understanding in a dialogue, which make this dialogue and the recognition of the alterity of another possible, on the basis of a case study from social work. Subsequently, it will be considered to what extent we can make plausible by means of a formal pragmatic argument that we do always tacitly presuppose empathy, recognition and authenticity as prerequisites for understanding. Finally, it is to be shown that the meaning of the term phronêsis and its related terms contain the communication aspects of empathy, recognition and authenticity, at least to some extent.

Time and again, the tenants of a residential complex for the elderly complain to its manager, a social worker, about Mrs B., an approximately 55-year-old woman. "She drinks, throws beer bottles at us. At night she screams". Some claim she assaulted them. "But the peak was when a few days ago Mrs. B. was putting feces all over our doors." The social worker's attempt to get into conversation with Mrs B. failed again and again. Finally, she can motivate Mrs B. to talk to her, promising that this will give her the opportunity to pour out her heart to her. In an interview, Mrs B. complains about her neighbours. "They won't leave me alone. They want to poison me and my cat. They secretly mix poison into my food. Plus, toxic gases come out of my light bulbs as soon as I turn on the light. I live here in constant fear," says Mrs. B. and sees around her as if she fears that someone is standing beside and behind her. "Don't you

want to see a doctor because of your fears?" asks the social worker carefully. "You can't get me back there, you can't get me back there. They want to poison me there too, they all want to poison me." "But it can't go on like this, we've already been through all this," replies the social worker. "They have me tied up, pumped full of Hallifax (with Hallifax she calls the very potent psychopharmacon Haloperidol). They do that to everyone who gets there. But not with me. Not with me. After that, I got a lot worse. I couldn't breathe through my nose. My skin turned red. I can't walk in the sun anymore. And I got fat. As you can see." "But now you're not well either - without any medication. You must also understand the other inhabitants." "They're evil, they want to poison me. But I'll show them. I won't get out of here." "Don't you have any family to stand by you or any other person to help you?" "You mean, do I have a guardian? I don't need someone like that to steal my money in the end," Mrs. B replies.

The conflict of interest that emerges here can very well be reconstructed as a conflict of understanding. The solution to the conflict will depend to a large extent on how well the parties to the conflict are able to communicate with each other, how well they are able to communicate their interests and whether they feel understood by the other side. In order to be able to answer these questions about the success of understanding as a basis for enabling dialogue and for conflict resolution within a dialogue, following aspects can be distinguished in the process of understanding.

The aspect of *empathy*: We consider empathy in the sense of social cognition, which encompasses such diverse, heterogeneous abilities as spontaneous unconscious empathy mediated by mirror neurons as perspective taking as phenomena of mentalization (TOM), which are based on different neuronal structures. With regard to the phenomenon of empathy, we distinguish between a spontaneous, pre-reflective-procedural and a reflexive-declarative, i.e. language-bound form, cf. Frith & Frith 2013 and Vogeley et al. 2013. Empathy, whether pre-reflexive or reflexive, includes an affective and a cognitive aspect. It includes the ability to put oneself in another's perspective while at the same time distinguishing between the other and ourselves, cf. Rogers 1959, 210f. On the basis of this understanding of empathy one can ask: How well do the interaction partners succeed in empathizing with each other pre-reflexively, spontaneously, intuitively-affectively, but also reflexively and cognitively in taking each other's perspective?

The aspect of *recognition*: The experience of feeling understood by the other also depends on how much we feel recognised by the other. If one follows the recognition-theoretical approach of Honneth 2010, one can distinguish three forms of recognition: Love in the sense of pre-reflexive, spontaneous affective participation, through which the other experiences himself as fundamentally recognised in his existence as a human counterpart; right in the sense of the respect of rights and duties deriving from legitimate needs without regard for the person, whereby we experience ourselves as a member of a community of law; solidarity in the sense of appreciation of the individual qualities and abilities of a person, who thereby experiences herself as a valuable member of a community of values based on solidarity. In addition, the English "to recognise" or the French "reconnaître" contains a further aspect of recognition in the sense of identifying recognition (cf. Ricoeur 2006), which has both a descriptive and a normative content. The latter is based on the fact that the identifying recognition related to an individual is confronted with the individual's claim to self-description. In short: Every identifying recognition must not make an individual the mere object of a description (with the danger of reification).

As with empathy, the pre-reflexive form of recognition, spontaneous affective participation, plays a key role. For without this form of recognition, the willingness to respect the rights of others and to value their individual qualities and abilities and to recognise his right to self-description drastically decreases.

The third aspect of communication that we propose here is that of authenticity. The concept of authenticity and its meaning are highly controversial (cf. Kristinsson 2007). This reflects the struggle for the concept of identity and what it should mean. But without a concept of authenticity, at least in the sense of the experience of a selfhood that can no longer be deceived, of a self-given existence in the flesh, we could not make the experience of authorship in decisions and actions. We would then not be prepared in principle to let ourselves be held accountable for our actions. On the whole, it would be difficult to justify freedom of will without reference to something like authenticity (cf. the term "wholeheartedness" in Harry G. Frankfurt). Moreover, the talk of recognition of the alterity of another would make no sense if we could not presume the other of something like authenticity. It would be difficult to argue that another was misjudged or not recognised by us or ourselves by another. Finally, the assumption of authenticity of an interaction partner is fundamental for the success of communication. If we do not appear authentic to our counterpart, if our counterpart rather has the impression that we are play a role for her she can get the feeling that she is not taken seriously, that she is not recognised as a serious interlocutor or even manipulated. Either way, she becomes suspicious and distrustful of her dialogue partner. As already mentioned above, the experience of pre-reflexive, spontaneous affective empathy plays a key role here. It is an indicator of our truthfulness, of authenticity. In contrast to the reflexive affective and cognitive adoption of perspectives, we can hardly fool the other with regard to our pre-reflexive, spontaneous affective empathy.

The following analysis of the case study under the aspects of understanding empathy, recognition and authenticity can only be very sketchy and selective.

The social worker was able to motivate Mrs. B. to the conversation with the promise that she could pour out her heart some day. The social worker conceals her motive for taking the complaints of the other residents seriously. When Mrs B. "pours out her heart" to the social worker, the social worker does not really respond to her. To the situation described by Mrs. B., in which she feels threatened existentially, she answers "Don't you want to see a doctor because of your fears?" She does this cautiously. But she doesn't respond to Mrs. B. as one might expect if she were to acknowledge the threat described by Mrs. B. as "real". Even when Mrs. B. repeats her fears about a possible inpatient placement in a psychiatric ward, the social worker again does not really respond to these fears when she answers: "But things cannot go on like this, we have already done it all". There are manifold, easily understandable, real clues for these fears of Mrs. B.: The drug with haloperidol with all its physiological side effects – not to mention the disturbing psychological effects that one subjectively experiences – can be perceived as a form of "poisoning". And who would be willing to switch places with Mrs. B. when it comes to admission to "psychiatry"?

Only when Mrs. B. refuses to give in to the pressure of the social worker does the social worker express the interests of the other residents of the old people's home. Once again Mrs. B. articulates that she feels threatened by the residents. The other residents of the home really want Mrs. B. to leave her

apartment. Also this time the social worker doesn't directly respond to Mrs. B.'s, even if she seems to take Mrs. B.'s worries and fears seriously, as she asks: "Don't you have any family to stand by you or any other person to help you?" At the same time, the social worker presumably confronts a dilemma. If Mrs. B. had someone who could "really" help her in her sense, she probably wouldn't be in a precarious position.

In all the reactions of the social worker to Mrs. B.'s remarks it can be seen that she is not really willing (or able) to empathize with Mrs. B.'s psychological condition, her experience. And to the same extent, she does not really recognize the fears expressed by Mrs. B. about both her current living situation in an old people's home and psychiatric accommodation. This may be due to a lack of knowledge about mental illness, the experience of the mentally ill and their psychiatric accommodation. But there may also have been fears and prejudices against mentally ill people. After all, she does not prove to be honest and "open" towards Mrs. B. when she motivates Mrs. B. to talk about the fact that she may pour out her heart, but having in mind the interests of the other residents of the home.

Conversely, Mrs. B. does not seem to respond to the well-intentioned advice, hints and questions of the social worker and acknowledges that the social worker is also worried about her, even if she is showing the interests of the other residents to advantage. Due to her mental illness, Mrs. B. was also hardly able to put herself in the perspective of the residents of the old people's home, presented by the social worker. Her described perceptions and fears suggest that she can be counted among persons of the schizophrenia spectrum. On the one hand, imaging methods and psychological tests suggest that in persons with a mental illness from the schizophrenia field, the empathy capacity is limited in various distinguishable domains (e.g. affective empathy, perspective taking) (cf. Bonfils et al. 2017). On the other hand, the spontaneous ability of empathy mediated by mirror neurons is very limited by states of anxiety (cf. Rizzolatti & Sinigaglia 2008). Also, Mrs. B.'s willingness to acknowledge the interests of her flatmates in the old people's home is not discernible. One may assume that this is due to the sickness-related threat situation but also the non-recognition of her needs by the flatmates. In addition, there is a certain moment of truth in Mrs. B.'s delusions that they express the experience of the deep dislike of the flatmates towards her and that they want to get rid of her. It is unclear to what extent Mrs. B. can be sincere and authentic in view of her mental illness (and possibly through alcohol consumption). In addition, self-reports from schizophrenia patients suggest that they did not experience themselves as themselves in acute phases, accompanied by disturbances of the body image and the experience of external control (cf. Fuchs 2012).

At the end of the conversation there is no sign of a solution to the conflict. On the contrary, it may have intensified. As much as the opposing interests and perspectives became clear, there was little real understanding between the social worker, who on the one hand presented the interests of the neighbours and, on the other, acted as a mediator, and Mrs. B. The concepts of empathy, recognition and authenticity as central elements of understanding can function as important factors for the success of a dialogue such as an ethical conflict with the help of a dialogue. For they serve the recognition of the alterity of the other and the perspective, needs and beliefs of the other included with it. This should have become clear just by the case study.

Empathy, recognition and authenticity can – in a formal-pragmatic approach in a Habermasian sense (cf. Krüger, Demmerling & Habermas 2016, 807f.) – be regarded as claims for understanding which we tacitly raise when entering into a dialogue. To the extent that these claims for understanding cannot be fulfilled, the dialogue threatens to break off or even fail, as we have seen in the case study. In accordance with the formal-pragmatic approach, we do not claim the ultimate justification. Moreover, these implicit claims to understanding can be fallible and do not have to be complete.

Habermas recently used joint attention to illustrate his formal pragmatic approach (cf. Krüger, Demmerling & Habermas 2016, 807f.), which we also want to make fruitful for our purposes. For one can interpret the joint attention as a model of dialogue in which phronêsis is performed.[7] Habermas sees the phenomenon discovered by Tomasello in the course of his research on language acquisition in infancy (cf. Tomasello 2002) as a master model of a shared world reference in discourse, by means of which it can be illustrated which claims to rationality we tacitly assert when entering into a rational discourse. While Habermas, however, focuses his attention on corresponding claims to rationality, rather on content-related presuppositions that interacting partners share in a discourse, we would like to focus more on claims to understanding. While Habermas seeks to explicate knowledge in the sense of knowing that, a propositional knowledge, which we always assume when entering a discourse, our main interest is in knowing how, knowledge such as understanding, and thus a dialogue becomes possible, which we must tacitly presuppose. The search for such a form of knowledge corresponds entirely to the form of knowledge of phronêsis as a knowledge not-in-advance.

The joint attention as an original model of dialogue represents a pre-linguistic[8] capacity of thinking that takes place in an intersubjective and intercorporeal context, a triadic interaction. It develops from the 9th month of life on. In it, the primary caregiver and an infant share the attention for an object or event. Joint attention requires a pre-reflexive form of empathy. According to Moll & Meltzoff 2011, it is the ability to take on perspectives as a central aspect of empathy that first emerges in joint attention. It is therefore also regarded as a preliminary stage of the theory of mind (cf. Charman et al. 2000). At the same time, joint attention can be seen as an elementary form of mutual recognition and it contains a certain degree of self-experience / self-feeling in the sense of authenticity.

So when the child draws the primary caregiver's attention to something he or she sees in a pointing action, the primary caregiver must not only acknowledge the child's need to share with him or her the attention for what is shown. It must also be authentic to a certain extent, sincerely share the affective state with the child and reflect it in such a way that it offers the child a linguistic expression for what is shown. If, in the course of sharing attention, the primary caregiver may reflect the affective state of the child as in the effect mirroring in the as-if mode (cf. Fonagy et al. 2002) – this may already be evident in the gestures, facial expressions, intonation and prosody of the primary caregiver – this does not exclude the authenticity of the primary caregiver. So we can say: In each encounter with another person, we

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[7] In this context, we refer to Gallagher's reflections. He cited joint attention as a paradigm to illustrate the thought process, as it is peculiar to phronêsis (Gallagher 2015, 142). Like the joint attention, phronêsis can contain an unconscious reflection, a "thinking *without-thinking-about-it"*. Both take place as an intersubjective intercorporeal event in which we mutually adopt the perspective of the other.

[8] At the same time, according to Tomasello 2002 and Rakoczy et al. 2008, it marks the place of acquisition of language and normative rules, which is no coincidence.

assume silently that the other is honest and tells us the truth, the same way as our response is serious. We recognise each other as a dialogue partner and we try to understand each other in terms of affective and cognitive empathy.

The prerequisites for understanding empathy, recognition and authenticity for a dialogue shown in the case study can also be derived in a first approximation from the meaning of the term phronêsis and the related terms sunesis, gnômê, sungnômê (cf. EN VI. 11-12). Gadamer translated the concept of sunesis as "knowing about oneself". It means "understanding the other [...] so that one understands the situation of the other from his knowledge of himself" (own translation, the authors) (Gadamer 1998, 14f.; cf. 1986, 328f.).[9] According to Dottori, phronêsis is "connected with sunesis, with the understanding of the other as himself, as well as with sungnômê: the understanding insight that tends to forgive", (own translation, the authors) (Dottori 2012, 189). Simon also points out the connection between the concepts of sunesis and „gnômê (of understanding or even lenient thinking) and sungnômê (of compassion, compassionate understanding or forbearance, forgiveness) are closely connected (they are almost to be understood as synonyms)", own translation, the authors) (Simon 2009; cf. also (EN VI. 11-12. 1143a19-23). Thus, the ability to understand the other and, with regard to the relationship to the concept of sungnômê, the ability of empathy and compassion prove to be central assets of phronêsis. The concept of gnômê as an understanding or even considerate way of thinking includes not only the moment of empathy but also a moment of recognition. If Gadamer also understands sunesis as "knowledge of himself", then it sounds like a prerequisite of authenticity. The moment of authenticity as part of phronêsis also resonates with phronêsis, when one keeps in mind that according to Aristotle friendship is the place where virtues are formed and helps individuals to come to an ethical self-understanding and thus also to phronêsis.[10] In the "structure of all true friendship", however, the "friendship with oneself"/self-love and thus the unity of the soul, i.e. the coherence of the soul parts, and thus the coherence with oneself, is thus a moment of authenticity (cf. Gadamer 1991, 401; cf. EN IX. 1166a1ff.; 1168b4).

3. Implicit relational knowing as the basis of empathy, recognition and authenticity as hexis of phronêsis

In the following we do not only want to attribute the ability to be empathic, to recognise others and to be authentic to implicit relational knowing[11], as Stern postulated as a result of his analysis of mother-child interaction. At the same time, we want to make plausible why such implicit relational knowing as prerequisite for our self- and social relation suggests itself as an attitude / hexis on which phronêsis is based. Finally, we want to show that implicit relational knowing has an inherent self-reflexiveness that is necessary for a capacity of phronêsis, postulated by us, to evolve in social interactions in which it is performed.

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[9] Cf. Silva 2018, 120, who sees in the sunesis something of the ability of empathy contained in it. According to Hursthouse, sunesis "involves judging what other people say, particularly about their own, or someone else's, actions and/or feelings" Hursthouse 2006, 293.

[10] „[The] friendship of decent people is decent; and grows in proportion to their interaction; and they even seem to become better by being active and correcting each other, for they take each other´s imprint in those respects in which they please one another—hence the saying ´For from good men good things come`." (EN IX. 1172a10-14).

[11] In particular, Fuchs has referred our assets of empathy and the assumption of perspectives back to implicit relational knowing, Fuchs 2016, 196.

Implicit relational knowing is procedural in nature (cf. Boston Change Process Study Group 2010). It is an incorporated knowledge and is formed in our primary relationships, in interaction with the significant other, the primary caregiver. The way it develops depends on how empathetic the primary caregiver is, how well she can spontaneously and immediately recognise and satisfy the child's needs and that she is authentic in doing so. In short, how "sensitive" she is in the sense of attachment theory. Implicit relational knowing can be interpreted as an internal working model in the sense of Bowlby. Accordingly, it is composed of two complementary, interdependent elements: On the one hand, it says something about our elementary self-relationship: do we think we are likeable or not? On the other hand, our social relationship is suspended in her: does the other person regard us as lovable, is she kind to us and therefore trustworthy? (cf. Bartholomew & Horowitz 1991). In a positive sense, our self-confidence and basic trust is stored in our implicit relational knowing, from which we draw in social interactions, especially in coping with conflicts or when we explore new things. It is the model for all further social relationships and structures our self-feeling (self-experience) in social interactions. Fuchs interpreted it neurophysiologically as a readiness potential of corresponding neuron groups (cf. Fuchs 2008, 277).

The implicit relational knowing goes without saying and is communicated spontaneously. This means that social interactions automatically lead to reenactment. Thereby it is continued, reinterpreted and rewritten. The implicit relational knowing is self-referential according to its logic of development. It works – in both a positive and negative sense – like a self-fulfilling prophecy. If we are "fixed" on a certain implicit relational knowing due to a lack of recognition, we also define others. We are closed, we are not ourselves, so we are not authentic. We are not ready and able to empathize with the other's perspective and to recognise him in his situation. This is expressed in clichés, rigid prejudices that lead to rigid relationship patterns, stereotypical role attributions, projections, transmissions, and counter-transferences. I.e. it reproduces and confirms itself, whereby corresponding attitudes harden. If, on the other hand, we have a "positive" implicit relational knowing due to positive recognition experience and social self-efficacy, we are open, we do not define others, we feel authentic. We don't need to play a role for the other, because we know ourselves as we are, recognised and lovable. We are basically ready to get involved with others, to put ourselves in their situation and to acknowledge them in their needs or in their person, but also to learn new things about ourselves, to discover completely different sides of ourselves.

But since our implicit relational knowing is constantly reinterpreted, continued and rewritten in every social interaction (but also in self-reflection – presumably also through meditation), it is not only the core of an autopoietic system that only "compulsively" reproduces itself. Rather, it points beyond itself – caused by every new encounter. Because only in an encounter it is present. This developmental logic of implicit relational knowing, corresponds entirely to the character of phronêsis as a knowledge not-in-advance.

We can state that implicit relational knowing forms the basis for our capacity for empathy, recognition and authenticity as fundamental aspects of the understanding that we must presuppose in every dialogue. This is not least because implicit relational knowing is formed precisely through the experience of empathy, recognition and authenticity, originally as paradigmatic in the interaction between the primary reference person and infant. Moreover, implicit relational knowing contains a certain self-reference, as is also inherent in phronêsis. This self-reference consists in the fact that implicit relational

knowing, like phronêsis, can only behave critically towards itself and develop further in a dialogical scene in the encounter with another. It should be borne in mind that 1. implicit relational knowing, like phronêsis, is performed in a dialogue, and 2. both of them make such a dialogue possible in the first place. What exactly such a critical self-reference of phronêsis and its underlying hexis, for which we propose implicit relational knowing as a candidate for the aforementioned reasons, looks like, which role explicit reflection plays, is what we want to explore in the next chapter.

After all, it is no coincidence that implicit relational knowing shares the same attributes with phronêsis, namely to be a practical-procedural, intercorporeal knowledge (cf. Gadamer 1986, 303; Gallagher 2007, 201, 210 and the same 2015, 142). It is not a knowledge acquired in-advance (Gadamer 2004, 318). Nor is it a coincidence that Fuchs interprets implicit relational knowing as sensus communis (Fuchs 2012, 895) and that Gadamer interprets phronêsis right at the beginning in Truth and Method, which plays a key role for his universal hermeneutics, as sensus communis (cf. Gadamer 1986, 18f.).

4. The development process of phronêsis

To the extent that implicit relational knowing is performed in concrete, contingent social situations and that it enables a dialogue and a change of perspective, phronêsis develops further. This development process of phronêsis and the implicit relational knowing underlying it as hexis is to be illustrated in connection with the case study.

The failure of a dialogue as in the concrete case of the dialogue between the social worker and Mrs. B. does not have to be alone or necessarily synonymous with the non-clarification of the ethical conflict or even its intensification. It can also become an occasion for the further development of phronêsis and its underlying hexis, implicit relational knowing. We were able to analyse the failure of the dialogue on the basis of the limitations in the understanding aspects empathy, recognition and authenticity, which in turn could be traced back to the implicit relational knowing of the social worker as well as of Mrs. B. In order to illustrate the further development of phronêsis and its underlying hexis on the basis of the case study, we want to introduce an important distinction with regard to forms of knowledge: knowing how and knowing that.[12] While knowing how functions as a pre-conscious, pre-reflexive, non-propositional procedural intercorporeal knowledge in dialogue, knowing that represents a conscious, reflexive, propositional and declarative knowledge. If knowing how represents a self-evident knowledge for which no explanation is required, it is characteristic of knowing that that we want to and can state causes for facts or reasons for actions. If the knowing how of phronêsis is present as prereflexive, procedural knowledge in the 2nd person perspective, the reflective, declarative knowledge of knowing that marks the exit from the dialogue and appears in two complementary perspectives: the 3rd person perspective and the 1st person perspective. The knowing that contains an answer to each of the questions: a) What was the case? How and as whom did I perceive the other? How can his communication behaviour be interpreted? b) How and as whom did I experience myself? How did I behave towards the other? These questions are linked to the questions: Who do I want to be? Who do I want to be recognized as?

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[12] Cf. Gallagher 2007, 2015 and the Dreyfus-McDowell debate; see Schear 2013 and Wild 2014 and further literature there.

In the mode of knowing how, empathy, recognition and authenticity are each effective in pre-reflective forms and can hardly be distinguished from one another. All three can only be reflected upon retrospectively. In the reflexive form of knowledge knowing that, empathy, recognition and authenticity show themselves to be more differentiated and stand out clearly from each other, even if they still remain related to each other. With regard to empathy, we then have not only an affective empathy but also a cognitive empathy or the ability to put oneself affectively and cognitively into the perspective of the other (cf. the abilities of theory of mind). With regard to recognition, we can distinguish different forms of reflexive declarative propositional recognition. We can ask as to whom we have identified and interpreted our counterpart and his behaviour and to what extent we have done justice to him in his self-description and self-interpretation. But we can also consider the extent to which we have recognised him in his legitimate needs and respected his rights and duties. Finally, we can clarify to ourselves to what extent we valued him in his individual qualities and abilities. With regard to authenticity, we can ask whether we were or could be honest with the other and thereby recognise and reveal something of ourselves, or whether we hid behind a role. These questions, which we have posed to ourselves in the reflective and declarative form of knowing that knowledge, can also be addressed theoretically to our counterpart, if we try to understand his communication behaviour.

As long as the dialogue succeeds, i.e. the dialogue partners are able to mutually recognise each other in their alterity, they can make the experience of recognising each other anew through the other. Here the implicit relational knowing and the abilities of empathy, recognition and authenticity made possible by it work like a positive self-fulfilling prophecy. I.e. our trust in ourselves and in the other intensifies. As a result, we are more open, empathetic and authentic in relation to another and more willing to recognise him in his alterity. Because the encounter, the dialogue with him promises rather a confirmation of one's own person and an intensification of one's own self-relationship. But where the dialogue encounters difficulties and our capacity for empathy, recognition and authenticity – our implicit relational knowing – reaches its limits, the dialogue breaks off easily. We then step out of it or we take one step back. In view of the failure of the dialogue, we feel compelled to translate the knowing how into a knowing that, i.e. our non-propositional knowledge into a propositional one. Because we involuntarily ask why. Why did the other one behave so and so, react so and so? Or we question ourselves. Why did I react as I did in the conversation? Did I do something wrong? By trying to give answers to these questions, we are translating our knowing how into knowing that.

Now phronêsis is often equated with knowing how (cf. Dreyfus 2007, McDowell 2007, Zahavi 2013). We would like to go one step further here. We not only equate phronêsis with the knowing how as procedural, prereflexive intercorporeal knowledge. We also want to show that knowing that is embedded in the knowing how of phronêsis. In which way this is the case, this will be the subject of further considerations. At this point it should be remembered that phronêsis and its underlying hexis must remain imperfect (cf. EN VI. 1140b22). This imperfection could be interpreted as a deficiency if one were to assume that phronêsis is a form of knowledge that already exists in-advance, such as the knowledge of techné. If, however, one regards phronêsis as a procedural knowledge that is only realized in every contingent, concrete social situation, the attribute of perfection for the characterization of phronêsis is completely inappropriate. One thus ignores the processual character of phronêsis and must thus negate its significance in terms of enabling good life practice in the unpredictable contingent life situations. In this respect, the "perfection" of phronêsis does not consist in a closed knowledge, but

precisely in its unclosedness. For it is only this that makes possible its ability to learn and develop, and thus its ability to find what is appropriate for concrete, contingent conflict situations.

In the concrete case, the knowing how consisted in the respective ability of the communication aspects of empathy, recognition and authenticity and the underlying implicit relational knowing of the two dialogue partners. A first step towards the further development of phronêsis and its underlying implicit relational knowing is the attempt to overcome the failure of dialogue and its disappointed expectations. This attempt leads to the search for and analysis of the causes / reasons for the failure. As a rule, the causes are first sought from the other person before one questions or justifies oneself. This, however, translates the knowing how of the interaction partners from the perspective of the respective dialogue partner into knowing that.

In the following, we would like to limit ourselves to a closer look at the side of the social worker, bearing in mind the one-sidedness we are committing. The reason for this is that, by virtue of her role, she has a mandate and, by virtue of her profession, an appropriate theoretical, technical and practical knowledge of how to resolve the conflict. At the same time, this asymmetry between the dialogue partners is much less at stake for her than for Mrs B. This asymmetry between the dialogue partners is also underlined by the fact that the social worker is not only backed by the interests of the majority of the residents, for whom less is at stake than for Mrs B. Rather, Mrs B. sees herself confronted with socio-culturally – probably more unconsciously than consciously – conditional standards of normality as anchored in our sensus communis.[13] The residents, like the social worker and ultimately even Mrs. B., have internalized this sensus communis. The reflexively unattainable suffering of Mrs. B. of not being able to comply with these standards of normality due to her own deviating ways of experiencing, thinking and behaving may only be suspected.[14] At the same time, we can anticipate that the conflict that arises due to Mrs. B.'s failure to meet the standards of normality will itself call these standards of normality into question. But if, as shown above, phronêsis and the implicit relational knowing on which it is based is itself a component of the sensus communis[15], then in a certain sense phronêsis in its concrete form is at stake with this conflict. At the same time, however, such a conflict can become an occasion for the further development of phronêsis and the underlying hexis of implicit relational knowing.

In this specific case, it seems obvious that the social worker attributes her incomprehension to Mrs. B.'s behaviour. And because her behaviour is phenomenally incomprehensible to the social worker, it is understandable if the social worker looks for explanations as for instance from the medicine and interprets Mrs. B.'s statements, beliefs and behaviour as symptoms of a mental illness. This translation of the procedural ability to communicate in the sense of a knowing how into a knowing that first of Mrs. B. and then of herself as social worker is quite ambivalent.

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[13] Cf. Thoma & Fuchs 2018, who, following Blankenburg 2012, seek to understand mental illness, especially schizophrenia, in the context of a psychopathology of sensus communis.

[14] The interpersonal ethical conflict is therefore likely to be reflected in Mrs B.'s inner psychology.

[15] In an effort to achieve a hermeneutic approach to the extremely complex clinical picture of schizophrenia, Fuchs has interpreted implicit relational knowing itself as the basis of sensus communis, cf. Fuchs 2012, 895; cf. also Thoma & Fuchs, 2018, 22.

On the one hand, this translation can help the social worker to explain the limits of the capacity of empathy, recognition and authenticity both on the part of Mrs B. and on her part. This explanation can make at least one dialogue partner more empathetic and authentic (in the case study, the social worker) and increase her ability to recognise the other in her alterity. This may be possible because we can better explain the interactive behaviour of our counterpart and therefore understand and accept the limits of her capacity for empathy, recognition and authenticity on the basis of theoretical knowledge. The theoretical explanations e.g. can relate to the communication behaviour of our counterpart (3rd person perspective). Theoretical explanations and self-reflexive considerations can also help us to question our own perception, empathy and behaviour (1st person perspective) – for example with the help of the theory of recognition, communication theories, psychodynamic theories of transmission and countertransmission in unresolved conflicts, etc. We then do not blame our counterparts for something that they cannot readily influence. At the same time, it opens up the possibility of reflecting and seeing through the limits of our own communication behaviour, our own fears, prejudices, projections such as transmissions and countertransferences in relation to the other. The hope is that this translation of our previous knowing how into knowing that paves the way back into the particular dialogue.

In the concrete case it is conceivable that the social worker attributes her non-acceptance to Mrs. B.'s perceptions and experiences, to her own unacknowledged insecurity and fears of relating to the mentally ill. For example, she can recognise through appropriate considerations and theoretical explanations that these fears and insecurities not only cloud her compassion but also her view of the extent to which Ms. B. is to be taken seriously with her fears and to what extent she is to be recognised as responsible. And she may see through that and why she was not honest with Mrs. B. when she persuaded Mrs. B. to a conversation with the promise that Mrs. B. could say what is on her mind.

On the other hand, the perspective of knowing that, formulated in the 3rd person perspective, can also hold the danger of reifying the other. We can make the other alone the object of a theoretical explanation, in which we leave the other no more space to explain himself and his behaviour. There are thus narrow limits to the recognition of the alterity of the other. This is accompanied by the possibility of falling into the trap of self-righteousness. We then protect ourselves from being questioned and thereby prevent a change of perspectives, away from a self-righteous to a critical perspective on ourselves.

The first alternative opens us to a new dialogue. The second makes further dialogue rather unlikely. One can now ask what decides which of the two paths of knowing that opens up. Central here is whether there has been an experience of a new knowing how in which our implicit relational knowing has expanded, i.e. our trust in ourselves and in the other has increased. Only against this background do we become capable, in the two reflexive attitudes of knowing that, of questioning our image of the other as well as our own behaviour in dialogue with him, in order to open ourselves to the alterity of the other. This can form in another dialogue commenting on the first dialogue, for example in the form of supervision.

5. Universal claim and local application and genesis of phronêsis: a relationship of mutual conditionality

In view of the claim to the universal validity of phronêsis, we can state this: As a knowledge we have not-in-advance, it can only express itself in the respective life practice of social interaction, in dialogue and not in something abstract. From the preceding analysis of the communication process in the context of a dialogue, illustrated on the basis of a case study, the following suggests itself: the universal claim to validity of phronêsis and its underlying hexis, defined by us as implicit relational knowing, lies in its capacity for development. In particular, the ability to develop has its cause in the self-reflexive character of implicit relational knowing. We described this as a self-fulfilling prophecy. Our implicit relational knowing is indeed imperfect. The reason for this lies in its contingent socio-cultural and biographical conditionality. And because of this imperfection it happens again and again that dialogues break off and social conflicts are not solved. However, this does not alter its basic capacity for development. This is based on a second characteristic, namely that our implicit relational knowing is present in form of a knowing how. As such it is ambiguous and open to new interpretations in a dialogue where the performance takes place. A dialogue with certain dialogue partners may fail. However, this does not mean that a dialogue is not possible with other dialogue partners in which implicit relational knowing can develop further. This can be possible because in other dialogue situations the interaction partners can experience that previously unfulfilled recognition needs have been satisfied and that both have got to know each other in a new way, which is reflected accordingly in their implicit relational knowing. In the process, existing prejudices, reservations towards others and fears can be reduced. Particularly suitable places for the extension of our implicit relational knowing are e.g. collegial case consultation or supervision.

Only with the help of such an extended implicit relational knowing, which exists as knowing how, can we reinterpret the knowing that in its two existing forms in such a way that the two described dangers are averted. As a consequence a new dialogue becomes possible, phronêsis can do its work in the sense of Aristotle. It can help to find what is appropriate for the concrete situation.[16] This is what we call the "urgent now". In this extended implicit relational knowing, according to its potency, the "permanently important" is contained. This potency of implicit relational knowing consists precisely in developing itself further in the course of its re-staging in dialogue because of its self-referential character. Since it can only develop in dialogue, however, the direction in which it can develop further is namely in the direction of enabling further dialogues with ever new occasions for recognising the alterity of the other. And this includes the recognition of the other by ourselves, for instance by those we have repressed. Ultimately, however, the "permanently important" consists in nothing other than the mutual recognition of the alterity of the other in all his indeterminacy. This is obvious for two reasons: 1. For only in the recognition of the alterity of the other can phronesis follow the realization of eudaimonia in each concrete individual case. Eudaimonia can be approximated to the realization of the individual self in the polis. The individuality to be considered here finds its equivalent in the recognition of alterity. 2. This is precisely the condition for a dialogue. But dialogue is not only the excellent place where ethical conflicts are dealt with. In it, phronêsis and its underlying hexis are performed, in it they can develop further. Yet it is precisely the failure of dialogue situations that can become the occasion for the further development of phronêsis and its underlying hexis, implicit relational knowing. Therefore, this is a critical self-reference of phronêsis – it must go through the crisis and overcoming a failing dialogue. In

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[16] In this specific case, this could possibly mean that Mrs. B. goes to a day clinic, where she tries to take medication and psychotherapeutically accompany her, so that she learns to deal with stress better in her everyday life. At the same time, however, she can keep her apartment in the old people's housing complex as well as her cat.

other words: Phronêsis and its underlying hexis retain their capacity for development only through their constant application in concrete dialogue situations or as required by conflict situations.

We are thus dealing with a complementarity relationship, i.e. a relationship of mutual conditionality, between the universal claim of phronêsis on the one hand and its local application and genesis on the other. On the one hand, it is precisely the universal character of the developmental capacity of phronêsis, with its orientation towards the mutual recognition of the alterity of the other (the permanently important), that enables us to formulate the appropriate in a concrete situation = the urgent now. On the other hand, only the ever concrete, contingent conflict situation can become an occasion for the further development of phronêsis, where phronêsis can show her ability for further development and assert her specific claim to universalization – "capture ´circumstances` in their infinite variety".

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