Abstract

This paper investigates the multidimensional phenomenon of wisdom in organizations and management as an embodied and relational process from an advanced phenomenological perspective. In particular, the paper will show how the phenomenological approach of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964) can help to render an extended understanding of the “incorporated” dimensions of wisdom. From such phenomenological perspective, organizations and managerial practice will be understood as situated in an embodied life-world. Based on the understanding, an integral pheno-practice of wisdom will be proposed. With this, the interior and exterior dimension as well as individual and collective spheres of wisdom and its interconnected processes of intentional, behavioural, cultural and systemic domains can be assessed and integrated. For overcoming a dualistic orientation, a processual turn is suggested allowing a post-dualistic and decentred perspective of wisdom as an emerging and inter-relational event and accomplishment. By concluding, implications and perspectives of integral phenomenological and pheno-practical approaches of embodied and integral wisdom are discussed.
Introduction
The following article aims for retrieving wisdom as a relevant and proto-integrative mode of meaning and practice within organisation and leadership. With its multi-facetted modalities, it carries a tremendous potential for broadening and deepening integrative ways for current leadership and organisation processes. Therefore, wisdom becomes relevant not only for transforming today's personal, social, cultural, political and economic realities into a sustainable, equitable, peaceful and highly enjoyable existence and evolution (Macdonald 1993, 1995), but also for dealing with the current contexts of organisations and leadership in particular. At present realities of leadership are characterised by increasing complexity and uncertainty (Marion/Uhl-Bien 2001). Leaders are called upon to respond to macro-level societal dynamics as well as micro-level organizational dynamics, and to integrate a variety of distinct value systems and priorities. At the macro-level, specific issues include socio-cultural changes and value-shifts, globalization, increased competition and technological developments, exponential increase in innovation rates etc. At the micro-level, issues include the acceleration of discontinuous change processes (Prahalad 1998; Nadler et al. 1995) and transformation endeavours like downsizing, delayering, and outsourcing and many more challenges of modern corporations. Leaders and leadership in contemporary organizational contexts are facing contradictory performance imperatives (Margolis & Walsh, 2003); have to manage leadership paradoxes and deal with complex social and moral dilemmas (Dawes 1980) and to cope with “necessary evils” (Molinsky/Margolis 2005) in order to manage effectively. These issues bring about new exigencies, roles and tasks, and while some leaders are flexible enough to remain effective, others struggle and fail. Poor and abusive leadership practices such as inconsistent behaviour, hypocrisy and unethical conduct (Johnson 2004) lead to internal organizational conflict, triggering ‘oppositional practices’ (Collins, 1994), ‘organisational retaliatory’ or ‘anti-citizenship’ behaviours. These include those labelled ‘dysfunctional’, ‘antisocial’ (Folger/Cropanzano, 1998; Giacalone/Greenberg 1997); and ‘recalcitrant’ practices of employees demonstrated by sabotage, absenteeism, disobedience and decreased productivity (Ackroyd/Thompson, 1999; Robinson/Bennett, 1995) or further forms of misbehaviour (Vardi/Wiener 1996) and demotivation (Wunderer/Küpers 2003). Thus, inadequate leadership behaviours cause various internal and external problematic effects (Tepper 2001; Trevino et al. 2003, Trevino/Brown 2005), contributing to a heightened uneasiness with the current leadership practices. Moreover, as corporate scandals and crises of an unprecedented scale (e.g., Enron, Parmalat, ABB, etc.) have been widely reported, public perceptions have become sensitised to questioning dominating and calling the need for different leadership practice. This is also evidenced by the rising calls for corporate social responsibility, sustainable development, and corporate citizenship (Carroll 1999; Crowther/Rayman-Bacchus 2005; Grayson/Hodges 2004, Lockett et al. 2005; Matten/Moon 2004). Thus, the current state of practice calls on leaders to enable economic value creation while at the same time considering and organizing and leading ethically responsible practices throughout the organization and responding to various demands of stakeholders (Donaldson/Preston 1995; Phillips 2003).

Like contemporary life-worlds of leadership and organisation that are fragmented and in urgent need of some serious rethinking (Gosling and Mintzberg, 2004) also the state of leadership and organisation theory and discourse manifest various non-integrative approaches. In academic discourse, leadership has been conceptualized as the accepted process of influencing and developing people, teams and organizations for enhancing human potential (Bijur 2000, 167) and effectively attaining shared objectives (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2002; Yukl 2002). Traditionally, studies in leadership took either a “leader-centred, a follower-centred, or situational approach” (Yukl, 2002). However, there is a prevailing individualistic “heroic” stereotype (Meindl et al. 1985) that, in conjunction with objectivistic or functionalist methodological approaches, results in fragmented or mutually exclusive analyses. More problematically, even when researchers have taken dyadic relationships into account, this stereotype leads them to focus on only a partial, or limited representation of the practical phenomenon and the interplay of person and situation in leadership (Sternberg/Vroom 2002) and of macro- and micro-level dynamics (Osborn et al. 2002) are not sufficiently considered. ii
Thus similar like the leadership practice also the current state of leadership research signal an urgent need for an integrated framework. Facing these contexts and prevailing concepts, the following highlights an understanding of the multidimensional phenomenon of wisdom in organizations and management from an advanced phenomenological and integral perspective. In particular, the paper will show how the phenomenological approach of Merleau-Ponty (1962, 1964) can help to render an understanding of the constitutive role of “in-corporated” dimensions of wisdom. On this base an extended understanding of wisdom will be developed, interpreting it as a form of integral (pheno-)practice. This allows integrating subjective, inter-subjective and (inter-)objective processes in their interrelatedness. Based on this phenomenological and integral approach and following a processual turn, a post-dualistic understanding and decentred perspective of wisdom as an interrelational event and accomplishment will be outlined. By concluding some implications for practice and further research will be discussed.

**Understanding wisdom**

As a traditional, pragmatic or spiritual folk practice and distilled knowledge as well as profound sageness of countless generations, wisdom dates back over 3500 years. Having various spiritual, philosophical and secular facets, it has endured across time and across cultures. However, with the rise of positivism and empiricism from the Enlightenment and then in modernity, wisdom or rejected as religious or folk and be replaced by scientific knowledge (Marcel 1955) and has been increasingly equated with rational knowledge, expertise, competency. With the “modern eclipse of the study of wisdom” (Holliday and Chandler 1986), it has been assimilated and reduced to a psychological construct of cognitive or moral maturation or even as mere exaggerated technical expertise (pp. VII-VIII). Trying to find a “scientifically valid” measure and methodological operationalisation many approaches to wisdom follow a cognitive bias. With this it has been researched as “a form of advanced cognitive functioning” (Dittman-Kohli & Baltes 1990, 54), as “an expert knowledge system” (Baltes & Smith 1990, p 87) or “reasoning ability” (Sternberg 1985) and “fundamental cognitive process of reflection and judgement” (Arlin 1990, pp. 235-326). Accordingly, wisdom is often seen as a form of expert knowledge, a meta-cognitive capacity, for handling and solving complex problems, in which the actor applies factual and procedural knowledge in order to make judgments employed for the good of oneself and others in the fundamental pragmatics of life (Baltes & Staudinger, 2000; Staudinger & Baltes, 1996). With this wisdom not only allows subjects to be aware of the limits of reliability of their own knowledge (Meacham, 1983, 1990); Sternberg, 1990), but also represents an attention of the existence of ill-structured problems; and of the fluid, contradictory, and paradoxical nature of reality (Kramer, 1990). Furthermore, wisdom provides a comprehensive knowledge characterized by tolerance and depth and exceptional competency for formulating appropriate and feasible judgments in the face of uncertainty (Kitchener & Brenner 1990). However, the possession of high levels of knowledge does not in itself mean that a person is wise. Rather, wisdom is a rare combination of attributes, with cognitive development being only one feature of the array (Kitchener & Brenner, 1990). Accordingly, Baltes and Kubzmann (2003, p. 132) asserted that wisdom was not primarily a cognitive phenomenon, but that it involved cognitive, emotional, and motivational characteristics; and they argued that: “for wisdom-related knowledge and judgement to develop further requires a complex coalition of enhancing factors from a variety of domains: psychological, social, professional, and historical.” That is wisdom relies on and requires extensively experiential knowledge, e.g. in selecting courses of action involving a tight integration of cognition and affect (Kramer, 1990; Pascual-Leone, 1990). Being “an integrative aspect of human life” (Birren & Fisher 1990, p. 324 ff.), wisdom brings together affective, conative, and cognitive abilities in response to life tasks and problems and allowed good decisions to be made at an individual and societal level. Merely, cognitive or subject-based concepts or person-centred approaches are in threat of dislocating wisdom from multiple traditions and social and systemic contexts, and underestimate or abstract the embodied inter-actions and “inter-passions” inhabited as situated practices, co-constituting wisdom in organisations.
Organizations as embodied “Life- Worlds” and Phenomenology of embodied wisdom
From a phenomenological perspective, all those involved in their „life-world” (Husserl 1970; Schütz and Luckman 1989) are first and foremost embodied beings (Merleau-Ponty 1962). This implies that they can never perceive, experience and know about things or encounters independent of our lived experiences as bodily-engaged beings. We find the life-world meaningful primarily with respect to the ways in which we act within it and which acts upon us as engaged and perceiving “body-subject” (Crossley 1996: 101). Thus, “embodiment” does not simply refer to “physical manifestation.” Rather, it means being grounded in everyday, mundane experience and being inherently connected to the environment in an ongoing interrelation. With this the living body, as it is experienced and experiences, is the mediating link to the phenomenal world, that is between internal and external experience and between meaning and action. Being both transcendent and immanent embodiment is a “third term” between subject and object (Merleau-Ponty 1964). Our bodies are both physical structures and lived experiential structures, that is, both biological and phenomenological (Varela et al. 1991). Without the bodily perceived sense of the situation we would not know where we are or what we are knowing, learning nor to communicate about it. In this way, our bodies “are” our situation; they “do” our living (Gendlin 1992). This extended understanding of embodiment can be used for a deeper understanding of wisdom to capture a sense of “phenomenological presence”. This refers to the way that a variety of inter-active and “inter-passive” phenomena arise from a direct and engaged perception and participation, in which members of organisations are immersed as well as to consider emotional, social and systemic dimensions of their situated practice. The incarnate status of the “body-subject” opens the way to a phenomenological description of the “living present” in organizations and of wisdom. It is through their perceptual selves that the subjects of the organising processes are situated in their environment in a tactile, visual, olfactory or auditory way. Whatever they think, feel or do, they are exposed to a synchronised field of inter-related senses (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 207), in the midst of a world of touch, sight, smell, and sound. It is the sensual perception and experience that re-creates or re-constitutes the life-world and its living communication and meaning (Merleau-Ponty 1962: 207, 212).

A phenomenological understanding of wisdom takes these sense-related contacts and “embodied intention” systematically into consideration. In such an intentional and responsive space, organizations and its members are embodied in particular and correlated ways. It is through the body that organisational members process directly reach their perceived and handled „objects” of work. All those involved in the organization process – even in intermediated virtual networks and media – always encounter perceived realities through some bodily organs, from a specific point and horizon of seeing, hearing or touching. During these encounters, the body responds to meaningful questions, demands, problems or claims posed to it through a situational conditions and context in which the embodied agents of organisations take part it their everyday practices, with its different local patterns of possibilities and its specific habitus. Thus, the original intentionality of the “bodily consciousness” does not feel an „I think“, but an „I can or cannot“, respectively „I relate (not) to“ respectively „I do“ (not) (Macmurray, 1957, 84). Accordingly, in these embodied life-worlds of organisation, wisdom is not only influenced by what employees and managers think, but also by what they feel and live through with their „operative intentionality“ (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, xviii) and responsiveness, as being integral within their experiential interrelations in their embedded inter-relational situatedness. With this understanding of embodied based wisdom there is a close link between what is aimed and what is given, between intention, responsiveness and the situations of every practice; between knowing and acting.

Thus, “embodiment” manifests and processes an inter-relational enactment of practical wisdom. Such embodied practical wisdom can be seen as concrete form of decentred knowing and judging in the face of ambiguous or uncertain circumstances to guide meaningful actions. With this perspective wisdom is interpreted not (only as) an individual trait, quality or a behaviour born out of individuals' capabilities. More generatively, it can be interpreted as a relational accomplishment; that is a thread of a community und systemic network of processes and meanings. Therefore, instead of merely person-centred and static
notion, what is needed is developing an integral approach radicalised by a relational and 
processual understanding of the transformational dynamics of wisdom as an integral 
process.

**Integral Pheno-Practice of Wisdom**
As we have seen, understanding and enacting wisdom in organisations and management 
demands a comprehensive and integrative framework and more inclusive practice-oriented 
approach that is suited to investigating complex, inter-related processes involved. As any 
single perspective is likely to be partial, limited and, maybe distorted, and for avoiding 
reductionistic fallacies, a holonistic view and multi-level framework and analysis of wisdom is 
required. For this and based on the outlined phenomenological understanding, the following 
presents a corresponding integral “Pheno-Practice”. This “Pheno-Practice” is understood as 
a special employment and application of phenomenology. Like classical phenomenology, 
pheno-practice is basically driven by the intention to clarify and understand what is at issue; 
that is what appears as (live-worldly) phenomena, here with regard the complex inter-relating 
process of wisdom and its various meanings and inter-relations. In this sense, it strives for 
making accessible, describable, interpretable and practical the implicit and explicit settings 
and meanings of wisdom at hand of individuals groups and systems in organisations and its 
practices. Accordingly, pheno-practice is practicable as a style of "concrete thinking" and way 
to understand and deal with phenomenal reality! However, “pheno-practice” aims for 
"overcoming" classical phenomenology and its underlying, limited ontological and 
epistemological assumptions and methodologies, that is developing a post-Husserlian 
methological of understanding phenomena in organisations (Küpers/Jäger 2005). 
Furthermore, pheno-practice focuses on offering critical and practical perspectives for 
creative and transformative processes of wisdom. It aims for bridging the gap between theory 
and practice by providing a conceptual and practice-oriented approach to the complexities 
involved in knowing.

Following an over-arching integral framework (Wilber 1999, 2000a, 2000b) the subjective, 
inter-subjective and objective dimensions of wisdom can be accommodates equally. 
Accordingly, the interior and exterior dimension as well as individual and collective spheres 
of wisdom and its specific interconnected processes of intentional, behavioural, cultural and 
social domains are considered. With this, the inner spheres of wisdom and the external, 
behavioural aspects as well the collective embedment within an organizational community 
and culture and the external structural-functional realms of wisdom can be assessed 
together. The crossing of these dimensions gives four quadrants representing four different 
perspectives of interior-agency or self & consciousness (I), exterior agency or behaviour as 
enactment (Me; It), interior-communal or culture (We) and exterior-communal or system (Its). 
While the first quadrant involves the inra-personal or internal reality of a person -- 
particularly implicit knowing; the second domain treats the individual/external aspects of 
knowing, knowledge and performance. The third quadrant deals with group/internal issues 
(e.g. organization's culture, history, stories, unwritten beliefs and rules, values) and referring 
further collective domains. Finally, the last quadrant covers the group/external aspects. It is 
the quadrant of structural or functional order and systemic mechanisms and resources, 
technologies as well as organizational design, strategic plans and workflow procedures, 
external constraints and further manifestation of collective explicit knowledge.
Each of the four orientations would be incomplete without the others, and each depends on the others for its basic existence and sustenance. What is therefore needed is an approach, that considers All Quadrant, All Level, All Lines: (AQAL) (Wilber 2000ab, 2001). Within these four domains wisdom as an embodied practices and developments are played out. Furthermore, a series of different developmental stages and lines of knowing subjects and knowledge practices – related to wisdom - can be considered systematically. The stages or levels of development mark out new capacities and emergent qualities through life or situated in the context (e.g. acquiring, competing, conforming achieving, including, visioning). The developmental lines concern complex developments, like spatio-temporal, object-relations, cognitive, emotional, interpersonal, behavioural, knowledge and learning developments and ethical lines of leaders and the knowing processes. This explain why people who are advanced on one line, e.g. cognitive-intellectually, do not always use their intelligence and their understanding to act wisely.
Conventional reductionistic approaches of wisdom often follow cognitive lines, which explain the prevailing difficulties to integrate embodied tacit knowledge and emotional dimensions into research on wisdom. The levels and lines and the quadrants are energised by the dynamics of growth and integration within an “Integral Cycle” (Edwards 2004), which keeps all these elements hanging together in a coherent and dynamic system. Moreover, this cycle co-ordinates the interaction between the four-quadrants and the holonic developmental levels and lines. With its capacity to analyse, categorise and synthesise the concept of an integral cycle is a way representing the mutual interpenetration of the quadrants and their constituent structures and the dynamic relationship that exists between the quadrant domains.
Processual Turn towards Inter-Relational Wisdom

Like for the relation between emotion and ethics (ten Bos/Willmott 2001) it is necessary to problematise the very idea of a distinction between emotional receptivity or lived experience on the one hand, and wisdom as active reason or universalizable duty on the other, that is developing and fostering post-dualistic forms of wisdom. For this, the following describes a necessary processual turn towards an inter-relational understanding of wisdom. With this, the (advanced) phenomenology and integral model of wisdom is linked up with an (inter-)relational paradigm and a radicalised processual orientation for approaching wisdom as an emerging event. With this, the processual space in-between (Bradbury/Lichtenstein 2000) as intermediate field and inter-play is emphasised. In this relational realms all parties involved meet and influence mutually in an on-goingness’ within embedded con-Texts (Küpers, 2002). Wisdom is a quality that emerges in such con-Textual inter-relations in which wise people are able to reflect on a situation, evaluating, making choices. And even more relate this then to the sorts of practical actions that are right for the situation (Kekes 1995), being authentic (May et al. 2003, p. 253; Avolio et al. 2005) and serving the common good (Bryson & Crosby). That is individual and collective wisdom are relationally and mutually constituted in the course of being experienced and put into practice. With recognising the primacy of relational processes, these become media, in which wisdom continuously created and changed. Accordingly, wisdom is not something individuals “have” but relationships created by engaging in processes and dialogue that generates knowledge and ethically reflected judgement and corresponding action. “Wisdom in not a permanent trait but a dynamic process of subtle judging and knowing that must always be readjusted restructured and rebuilt.” (Srivastava/Cooperrider 1998, 5). Thus, it is the processes of relating in organizations that might be identified as emblems of wisdom, that is re-inscribing it within joint practices and actions as a relational achievement (McNamee 1998). Situating wisdom into a relational engagement directs focus to the particular modes of inter-relation, interpretation and inter-action as well as “inter-passion” by which members of organisations
create and experience their life-worlds realising their very existence. Accordingly, what is valued as ethical or “wise” emerge out of communal inter-change and inter-play in these relationally achieved realities with their multiple rationalities and indeterminacies. Thus, relationality provides a post-dualistic understanding and centred perspective on wisdom as the constituencies of wisdom are dispersed with dynamic sets of relations. These need to be investigated as qualified as powerful historical, embodied, emotional, cognitive, social as well as systemic-structural relationships.

The methodological advantages of such a relational constructionist perspective are that it avoids the problem of how to bridge individual, collective, and organisational levels of wisdom and that it bridges theoretical constructs and practical undertakings. With recognising the primacy of relational processes these become media, in which knowing, learning and identities as well as wisdom are continuously created and changed in the course of being practised.

Implications & Conclusion

Facing the outlined shortcoming of traditional discourses and concepts of leadership, organisation and conventional interpretation of wisdom this paper has tried to show the significance of a phenomenological and pheno-practical approach of wisdom in organisations. Based on advanced phenomenology the embodied practice-oriented, integrative and processual dimensions of wisdom have been discussed. By rendering the complexities of a more integrative comprehension this paper has certainly generated more openings than closings. However, what became evident is that wisdom is not only realised through experiential processes, but that embodied experiences are always already related to wisdom. Not only reconceiving the experiential “base”, the outlined integral model of pheno-practice and the processual understanding of wisdom tried to provide new ways of a more inclusive interpretation. This allows understanding how different relevant dimensions of wisdom co-evolve mutually within an embodied con-Textuality. This opens up generating corresponding practical implications. These refer to creating specific conditions for developments and targeted measurements for each of the outlined phenopractical spheres of wisdom, similar like for knowing and learning (Küpers 2004).

As wisdom in organisation is being constituted and processed in changing inter-related practices, all interventions are is necessarily provisional. As wisdom is more away of thinking and being in relation to motion and change, it cannot be learned, but is learning (Vail 1985: 37). Thus there cannot be a given, stable or manageable wisdom. What will be possible is enabling and facilitating practices and capabilities of wisdom to emerge. As an integral pheno-practice of wisdom is realised by a dynamic engagement emerging from situated practices, corresponding conditions, resources and competencies (Dreyfus & Dreyfus 1980) are required (e.g. human, social, socio-cultural, infra-structural, financial, technological), which are supportive for enacting competent processes of wisdom within “distributed organizing” operating effectively across various boundaries (Orlikowski, 2002). As a complex practice, wisdom develops only incrementally; as there are no quick fixes and simple panaceas. Cultivating wisdom is rather more a gradual and experimental process. Although due to wisdom’s complexity, it will not be easy to teach and infer, what can be done though is to teach the tools for wisdom (Kuhn & Udell 2001). Taking into account the extended understanding of embodiment, creating and facilitating a healthy environments in which body, mind and spirit can be nurtured will be imperative.

For further supporting organisational wisdom, practical forms of corresponding relational practice and engagements like expanding the domain of participation and conversational resources, honoring relational responsibility (McNamee & Gergen 1999) and engaging in reflexive critique can be developed or supported (McNamee 1998). Such creating conversational opportunities and responsibilities facilitate in turn getting on in the world of enormous and ever changing complexity in a more integral and wise way.

To promote wisdom in organisation specific environments are important that create a kind of ‘wisdom atmosphere’ (Meacham 1990). This comprise of ‘a framework of supportive interpersonal relations in which members of organisation may safely discover and reveal the
limitations of and doubts regarding what they know as well as be saved from extreme scepticism and paralysis of action through sharing the burden of one's doubts and receiving from others the confidence that comes with knowledge’ (Meacham 1990, p. 209). Part of such climates and cultures in organisations need to incorporate formal and informal systems to facilitating ethical and wise conduct (Treviño, 1990 Victor & Cullen, 1988). Moreover, such wisdom orientation could be expanded by integrating aesthetics and art into leadership, with in turn requires far-reaching consequences for leadership education, development and learning (Küpers 2004; 2005).

With regard to further research, the proposed advanced phenomenological approach and pheno-practical, integral and processual framework provides a „bedrock“ for more rigorous theory building, further analysis and empirical testing. As a researchable framework, it provides a theoretical platform for further refinement and from which numerous research questions and agendas can be generated. Methodologically, the model invites research designs representing both the quantitative and the qualitative paradigm. Mapping an integral topography can provide the foundation for an interdisciplinary program of research that can contribute to the emergence of new theories and research methods for investigating wisdom. It can help to determine the limitations and difficulties to realise the process-oriented practice of wisdom and ways of dealing with them.

With the outlined phenomenologically based embodied, integral and relational understanding the balance theory of wisdom (Sternberg, 1990, 1998), and synthesized WISC-model (Sternberg 2003; 2003a), - integrating wisdom, intelligence, and creativity – also applied to leadership (see Sternberg/Vroom 2002) can be re-interpreted and extended. The challenge will be to extend this rather person-centred conceptualisation and integration of creative; analytical and practical skills towards a more inclusive, interrelated and responsive practice related also to embodied wellness and well-be(com)ing in organizations (Küpers 2005a).

What this article tried to convey is that practical wisdom provides a capacity to integrate various levels, dimensions and apparent opposites, including to transcendent subject-object dichotomies. With this it is able to reach a sphere beyond the horns of dilemmas (Kitchener & Brenner 1990). Wisdom thus brings together previously separated processes of knowing with uncertainty and reflection while integrating them more comprehensively. With this, it contributes balancing through moving to higher level of mindfulness and transformation, and concern with choice and commitment (Cziksentmihalyi & Rathunde 1990) without being a retro-romantic move or regressive return to pre-modern pre-rational orientation or only to mythical consciousness or earlier stage of human psycho-cultural history. On the contrary, it can serve as a compelling guide to action and cultural evolution providing an alternative to dominant reductionistic orientations and extrinsic rewards based merely on hedonistic materialism. Integrating mythos (narrative, dialogue, plot) and logos (word, reason, concept) (Labouvie-Vief 1990), wisdom can contribute for an embodied, emotional and reflective practice towards ‘post-formal operational orientation (Kramer 1983; Kohlberg 1984). It is at once more practical and concrete, and more detached and abstract, than formal thought. As such, it knows about relativity and relationships among things and enacts an awareness of “wholeness” that does not lose sight of particularity or concreteness, or of the intricacies of interrelationships. In short: Wisdom is complexity understood and enacted, accepting and transforming the phenomenality and relationships as they appear as well a enacting a corresponding integrative and transformative practices, relevant for the well-be(com)ing in organisations (Küpers 2005a). Even as Sternberg (1990) suggests “we cannot quite comprehend the nature of wisdom because of our own lack of it” (p3), this paper has tried to clarify the elusive idea of wisdom. However, with Erik Erikson (1988) it might be helpful to consider that "while each generation owes to the next that strength by which it can come to face the ultimate concerns...each generation must find for itself the wisdom of the ages in the form of its own wisdom." In this sense, it is hoped that this article has contributed for finding a more integrative interpretations of the relevance and possibilities for revitalizing wisdom as an integrative and sustainable practice for the current and future leadership and organisation contexts and with this also for the society.
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i As expressed also in the “Budapest Declaration” on “Wisdom at the Tipping Point: Shifting to New Thinking and a New Civilization.” [http://www.cop.com/wwc-041220-budapest-declaration.pdf](http://www.cop.com/wwc-041220-budapest-declaration.pdf); see also [http://www.bestpractices.org/](http://www.bestpractices.org/) Best Practices Database a UN-based project containing proven solutions from more than 140 countries to the common social, economic, and environmental problems of an urbanizing world. It demonstrates the practical ways in which public, private and civil society sectors are working to improve governance, eradicate poverty, provide access to shelter, land and basic services, protect the environment and support economic development.”

ii The field of leadership research remains dominated by one-sided, often merely behavioral and cognitive orientations (Bryman, 1996;) and lacks a grounding in human development (Bennis & Thomas, 2002). In response to these inadequacies, new and alternative conceptualisations are emerging that address leadership as an empowering activity that can be shared or distributed among self-managing members of a group or organization (Bradford & Cohen 1998; Cox et al 2003; Manz & Sims, 1995, 2000; Pearce & Sims 2002; Pearce & Conger 2003; Sims & Lorenzi 1992). Following a service orientation, other researchers have conceptualized leadership as “stewardship” (Greenleaf 1977; Block 1993; Spears 1998) in an effort to replace the traditional management tools of control and consistency with partnership and responsible choice throughout the organization (Bratton et al, 2004). Promisingly, research has also begun to explore how leadership can be effective and simultaneously authentic (Bass & Steidlmeier 1999; Avolio 2005; Illes et al. 2005) and ethically responsible (e.g. Ciulla, 1995, 1998, 2004; Coles, 2000; Collins, 2001; House et al., 2004; Kanungo & Mendonca, 1996; Kouzes & Posner, 2002; Rook & Torbert, 1998; Sanders et al. 2003).

iii For Meacham (1990), the essence of wisdom is in the awareness that knowledge is fallible and limited - i.e., in knowing that we know but that, also, we do not know - and in the assumption of a critical attitude toward beliefs, values, knowledge, information, and abilities, which simultaneously lead the person to know and to doubt. Wisdom does not show itself in what a person knows, but in the manner in which the person sees and uses the knowledge he/she possesses.

iv In conceptions in which cognition and affect are integrated (Clayton & Birren, 1980; Kramer, 1990; Pascual-Leone, 1990, among others) wisdom requires that cognitive development be accompanied by development of the ego (Kramer, 1990) in a comprehensive whole in which cognition, affect and personality are interconnected (Clayton & Birren, 1980) and whose underlying common ground is the disposition-of-will (Pascual-Leone, 1990). In these conceptions, besides capacities for cognition and communication, as well as significant experience of life, aspects of personality must also be taken into consideration, for example, affect and sensitivity to certain emotional indicators—aspects that make it possible to perceive others’ intentions and that facilitate empathetic understanding (Birren & Fisher, 1990; Brent & Watson, 1980; Clayton & Birren, 1980; Kramer, 1990).

v As Staudinger and Baltes (1996, p. 746) argued, wisdom is inherently tied to collective systems of knowledge and would hardly ever be found in an individual operating in isolation, but is more likely to be observed when multiple minds were interacting. Related to various forms of knowledge,
essentialistic perspective of knowledge and its management (Stacey, 2000ab; 2001; Stacey et al., 1993). Rather a shifting cluster of variable elements throughout a decentred, configured mesh (Meyer et al., 1994). Accordingly, organisational structures and knowing processes are not substantively fixed, but organisations are dynamic constellations of relationships among forces (Hosking et al., 1995; Gergen, 1994) through a weaved network of individual and social inter-relations. From such a relational perspective, cognitions and meanings are continually created, re-created, put in question and re-negotiated through a weaved network of emotional inter-relations. Knowing develops out of a complex set of interactions and “inter-passion” by which meanings of events are continually created, re-created, put in question and re-negotiated through a woven network of emotional inter-relations. As an on-going “individual” and “social” accomplishment and dynamic process, knowing is not a static embodied capability or stable disposition of actors, but constituted and reconstituted in the dynamics of everyday practice, hence being a “knowing-in-practice” or „knowing-as-doing“ (Orlikowski, 2002, 252, 271). As capacity to act, knowing is the ability of actors to intervene (or to let go) in an ongoing flow of action, or to change the course of events in situated contexts. Such contexts consist of historical, social, and cultural material con-texts, in which knowing take place in a variety of forms, and by use of different media. Therefore, the meaning as an experience of everyday practices of knowing are related to local ways of knowing and that, which and how is to be known correspondingly. Meanings of knowing and a knowing of meanings are both “found in” the world and “created” by human (‘subject’s) active dealings with “objects”. Thus, ultimately we do not experience our practice as knowledge. Rather we experience our practice as experience, and “experience is knowing” (Levinas, 1969, 62; 1998).

A relational paradigm finds its theoretical underpinnings in social constructionism (Berger & Luckman, 1967; Gergen, 1994; Harré, 1986; Shotter, 1993) and advanced phenomenology (Merleau-Ponty, 1962, 1964, 1969). This combination allows, to consider not only that any understanding of reality is always mediated by historically and culturally situated, social inter-actions respectively interpretations (Gergen, 1994, 49), but to think about them also as embodied and emotional practices, which occur in immediate, spontaneous ways of experiential dimensions and mutual responding. With this understanding, leaders and leadership and processes are not only discursively constructed de-differentiated and signifying „beings” or abstract „object” of power and semiotics; but can be approached also with regard to their “material” and sensory, fleshly bodiliness and existential immediacy. “Relating” itself is a “reality-constituting practice” (Edwards & Potter, 1992, 27) in which shared understandings are developed, negotiated, thus “socially constructed” but always between participants with their embodied experiences. This relational reality is characterized by ongoing, local processes (Parker, 1992) that include non-linguistic (e.g. gestures, “objects”, documents etc.) as well as linguistic and cognitive processes (e.g. conversations, stories, rumours etc) and emotional dimensions (e.g. various feeling states and emotions). A relational approach criticises an entitative discourses with its subject-object relations, its reliance and emphasis on language as representation, and its centring of a singular, and in some degree knowable, real world (Hosking & Morley, 1991; Hosking et al., 1995). It is critical concerning a retained Cartesian duality of a separate inner and external nature, mind and world and tries to overcome a ‘possessive individualism’ (Sampson, 1993), by which knowledge and wisdom is seen as an identifiable entity sui generis based on the individual and made objectively measurable. Alternatively, with a relational intelligibility in place, we can shift our attention from what is “contained” within individuals or an “organisational knowledge base” to what transpires between people (Sampson, 1993). With this, knowing becomes factually based on embodied social-relational processes that is joint or dialogically structured activities; as a kind of responsive action (Shotter, 1984, 1995; Stacey, 2000b; 2001). As an ongoing event of relating, knowing develops out of a complex set of inter-actions and “inter-passion” by which feelings, cognitions and meanings are continually created, re-created, put in question and re-negotiated through a weaved network of individual and social inter-relations. From such a relational perspective, organisations are dynamic constellations of relationships among forces (Hosking et al., 1995; Gergen, 1994). Accordingly, organisational structures and knowing processes are not substantively fixed, but rather a shifting cluster of variable elements throughout a decentred, configured mesh (Meyer et al., 1993).

vi As Macmurray (1957) pointed out, the concept of ‘action’ is inclusive: “... most of our knowledge, and all our primary knowledge, arises as an aspect of activities that have practical, not theoretical objectives; and it is this knowledge, itself an aspect of action, to which all reflective theory must refer (p. 12) ... “In acting the body indeed is in action, but also the mind. Action is not blind... Action, then, is a full concrete activity of the self in which all our capacities are employed.” (p. 86).

vii This link to action and understanding of “praxis” corresponds to the “practice turn” in contemporary theory (Schatzki et al., 2001), and practice-based theorizing on knowing- and learning-in-organising (e.g, 1995; Gherardi, 1999; 2000). For such practice-oriented approaches of knowing (Nicolini et al., 2003; Gherardi, 2001), organizing, knowing, learning, action and practice are all mutually constitutive processes. They are all part of the micro dynamics of a “knowledge-in-use” embedded in human action and inter-action as well as “inter-passion” by which meanings of events are continually created, re-created, put in question and re-negotiated through a weaved network of emotional inter-relations. As an on-going “individual” and “social” accomplishment and dynamic process, knowing is not a static embodied capability or stable disposition of actors, but constituted and reconstituted in the dynamics of everyday practice, hence being a “knowing-in-practice” or „knowing-as-doing” (Orlikowski, 2002, 252, 271). As capacity to act, knowing is the ability of actors to intervene (or to let go) in an ongoing flow of action, or to change the course of events in situated contexts. Such contexts consist of historical, social, and cultural material con-texts, in which knowing take place in a variety of forms, and by use of different media. Therefore, the meaning as an experience of everyday practices of knowing are related to local ways of knowing and that, which and how is to be known correspondingly. Meanings of knowing and a knowing of meanings are both “found in” the world and “created” by human (‘subject’s) active dealings with “objects”. Thus, ultimately we do not experience our practice as knowledge. Rather we experience our practice as experience, and “experience is knowing” (Levinas, 1969, 62; 1998).

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2001). What the relationality paradigm encourages us to do instead is to describe inter-connections and processes through which the world of organising and knowing are experienced in a continual state of becoming (Ranson et al., 1980; Chia, 1996). Even more it is only becoming useful in a social, cont-textual and holistic setting. Thus, knowing is embedded and entangled in social practices, interactions, and is therefore distributed and disperse. This responds to various critiques that have been mounted of knowledge management approaches on the grounds that they ignore the social architecture of knowledge exchange within organizations (Hansen et al., 1999). Being lucid and emergent, knowledge originates and develops out of an in-between of embodied practices and systems of signification.

It is because of the high level of competencies involved that most theorists posit that wisdom constitutes an ideal which the subject or society can strive for, rather than necessarily reach (Baltes & Smith, 1990; Clayton & Birren, 1980; Cornelius & Caspi, 1987; Denney, 1984; Erikson, 1959; Holliday & Chandler, 1986).

Accordingly, questioning one-self the nature of knowledge or the value of acquiring success, power, or authority, and sharing these questions with others (especially young people) contributes to the development of wisdom.

Based on the ‘balance theory of wisdom’, also Sternberg (2001), holds that even already schools should explicitly adopt a curriculum for teaching wisdom. In his words, ‘we endorse teaching students not only to recall facts and to think critically (and even creatively) about the content of the subjects they learn, but to think wisely about it, too’ (op. cit., p. 237). ‘Infusing a middle-school curriculum with teaching for wisdom, we believe, can add richness, depth, and orientation to the formation of the higher order thinking skills that the present curriculum sometimes appears to lack.’ (op. cit., p. 240). According to Sternberg, teachers ought to be models of wisdom and assume ‘a more Socratic approach to teaching than teachers customarily do’ (op. cit., p. 238). On their part, students should be capable of constructing and reconstructing knowledge from their own point of view and from the point of view of others. See also Sternberg 2001a.

According to the balanced theory an individual (manager) is wise to the extent he or she uses successful intelligence, creativity, and experience as moderated by values to: (a) seek to reach a common good, (b) by balancing intrapersonal (one’s own), interpersonal (others’), and extrapersonal (organizational/institutional/spiritual) interests, (c) over the short and long terms, to (d) adapt to, shape, and select environments. Interestingly Sternberg’s balance theory of wisdom proposes already that wise decisions and behaviors result not only from a capacity to balance one’s own interests with those of others, but also using one’s experiential tacit knowledge to select appropriate courses of action (see Sternberg/Vroom 2002).