“Just Power”
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Essay Review 2011

Just Power
The Leaders’ of Tomorrow Perspective

Introduction
This article summarises the perspectives of a select group of promising young people from all over the world, so-called Leaders of Tomorrow, on the topic of the 41st St. Gallen Symposium: “Just Power”. Based on an analysis of the top 50 contributions to the 2011 St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award of this year’s St. Gallen Symposium, the article organises the focal topics of the essays and identifies interesting ideas and thoughts of the Leaders of Tomorrow. The objective is twofold. First, to report those ideas that the Leaders of Tomorrow most frequently address in their essays. Second, to highlight the most promising ideas of this cohort. This summary considers the top 50 contributions to this year’s St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award. This choice was made in order to focus on those contributions with the highest quality. It is important to note, however, that this summary does not assess the quality of the essays, but solely focuses on the content of the contributions.

The review proceeds with some general information on the Leaders’ of Tomorrow favourite topics. Since the participants had to relate their essays to one of three subtopics, this summary presents the content foci, contextual aspects, and methodological approaches accordingly. The article concludes with a summary of the overall implications and concluding remarks.

The Leaders’ of Tomorrow Perspective
The participants in this year’s St. Gallen Wings of Excellence Award had to select one of three subtopics for their essays:

Subtopic 1: Justice and Power
Subtopic 2: Rethinking Leadership
Subtopic 3: Public Goods and Values

Since all essays submitted to a specific subtopic had corresponding topic foci, this review is organised accordingly. Of the top 50 contributions, 15 essays related to Subtopic 1,
24 essays to Subtopic 2, and 11 essays to Subtopic 3. As illustrated in the table, the distribution of the top 50 essays to the three subtopics is largely representative for all essay entrants. A notable exception is that particularly essays focusing on Subtopic 2 appear of high quality as they account for 48% of the top 50 essays, compared to only 39% of all award entrants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subtopic</th>
<th>All Award Entrants</th>
<th>Top 50 Contributions</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subtopic 1: Justice and Power</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subtopic 2: Rethinking Leadership</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>48%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Subtopic 3: Public Goods and Values</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>22%</td>
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**Subtopic 1: Justice and Power**

Many essays focus on Subtopic 1. Here, the Leaders of Tomorrow were asked to define what they consider a just, productive and sustainable power distribution in politics, economics, and society. The contributions of the Leaders of Tomorrow offer some stimulating ideas and address the topic from distinctive perspectives. Broadly speaking, the essays can be summarised into three categories: Legitimate power distribution in politics, society and economics, the influence of culture on legitimate power distribution, and the power of voices in society.

**Legitimate Power Distribution, Politics, Society and Economics**

Several essays address the legitimate power distribution in a political, social or economic context. Thereby the Leaders of Tomorrow identify and illustrate different perceptions of just power distribution.

First, several essays focus on the political context to critically assess legitimate power distribution. For example, one essay draws upon own experience and argues that power becomes unjust when non-state actors, without legitimacy and morality, instrument power and challenge security. Contributing to the same debate, another Leader of Tomorrow argues that there is a fundamental shift in violent conflicts, namely the shift from interstate to intrastate conflicts, which constitutes a source of unjust distribution of power. According to the author, the international community needs to develop a new paradigm that provides an international platform where non-state actors can be heard and that mitigates violent conflicts between state and non-state actors. Another contribution takes a broader view, questioning the liberal internationalist paradigm where democracy and markets are “essential tools for the just distribution of power”, suggesting that from a post-structuralist strand both state and non-state actors need to be empowered equally. Interestingly, another contribution questions whether “power itself can be distributed and branded as just or unjust”.

Second, the Leaders of Tomorrow assess legitimate power distribution in a social context. One contribution, for example, analyses the power distribution between society, politics and economy and concludes that society no longer has the sole power of legitimisation. The author suggests several actions to reestablish society’s legitimisation power. These include the proposal that society should use its purchasing power to legitimate companies. Another noteworthy contribution argues that “a continuous flow of power in society constitutes a better conception of justice”, illustrating power circulation using water as a metaphor. Comparing water circulation with power, the author concludes that “power should never be held nor controlled by one person or one group, it must be dispersed and it must continuously flow. [...] Stale water is only a breeding ground for disease”. Further, the Leaders of Tomorrow suggest a paradigm of just power with human dignity as the foundation for any act of power and an intellectual exercise to reconstruct the reality, building a “new reality” where “power would be conceived as a human and naturally non-violent value”.

24 essays to Subtopic 2, and 11 essays to Subtopic 3. As illustrated in the table, the distribution of the top 50 essays to the three subtopics is largely representative for all essay entrants. A notable exception is that particularly essays focusing on Subtopic 2 appear of high quality as they account for 48% of the top 50 essays, compared to only 39% of all award entrants.
Third, the Leaders of Tomorrow analyse the role of the economy in the context of legitimate power distribution. For example, one essay investigates in detail the relationship between the economy and power, arguing that “wealth and power are intimately related” and thus, the economy constitutes the main power structure. The author argues that to redistribute power, governments would have to change the economic system and this is unlikely to happen since the “power depends on the popularity of the products political organisations offer. In order to remain in power, they need to keep their customers happy. But all these customers wish for is to be able to produce and consume”.

The Influence of Culture on legitimate Power Distribution
Some Leaders of Tomorrow elaborate legitimate power distribution with a specific focus on the role of culture as an influencing factor. In particular, one contribution argues that multicultural ideologies influence power distribution and illustrates legitimate power distribution with the example of Canada, showing that “positive multicultural ideologies, and a greater emphasis on economic rather than cultural integration, facilitate a fairer distribution of power”. A further noteworthy essay emphasises that culture is an important feature to promote just power distribution and proposes that building “cultural bridges” can help to balance power. However, another Leader of Tomorrow discusses the dynamics of cultural power more critically, arguing that “this seemingly positive celebration of multiculturalism may in fact, paradoxically, be inhibiting the equal power distribution of the global”. A further contribution assesses the relationship between migration and power, arguing that opening borders for immigrants would lead to a redistribution of power within society.

The Power of Voices in Society
Finally, some Leaders of Tomorrow recognise that legitimate distribution of power can be largely influenced by each individual. For example, one contribution states that “the power of one’s voice is undoubtedly the power which a democracy provides its citizens with”. The author introduces the “communication market” as a strong medium to shift power. Drawing on several examples, the essay highlights the power of voices that publish their opinion on a particular topic in various media, such as blogs. However, the author cautions that “this is one power which needs to be used responsibly”. One author shares personal experience with the power system in India. As a lawyer, the author has insights into how power is distributed in the legal system and concludes that “power belonged to those with the right connections”. However, the author decided to address these problems within the legal system and started a platform working on “issues related to legal and political systems” in India. Drawing upon personal experience, the author concludes that “a democratic society facilitates for every citizen to make a difference and it is the duty of each individual to create a just society. Systems and institutions are ultimately built on the collective power of citizens and to govern them rightfully is a collective responsibility”.

Subtopic 2: Rethinking Leadership
Nearly every second of the top 50 contributions relates to Subtopic 2. The Leaders of Tomorrow were asked to analyse the current situation and to “rethink existing approaches to leadership, and provide new direction in shaping public and private sector institutions”. The essays can be categorised in the following five areas: types of leaders, leadership styles, leaders’ actions and behaviour, the foundations of leadership, and generation-specific leadership.

Types of Leaders
Several Leaders of Tomorrow develop frameworks that include specific recommendations regarding which types of leaders are needed. One author, for example, finds more generally that “in an agent-centric world”, only managers and “aggregators” can be motivated by financial incentives and regulations.

Other Leaders of Tomorrow propose more specifically a certain type of leader that may be suitable for the current challenges. One author argues that “servant-leadership and sustained engagement with the citizens” is necessary in order for leadership to become most effective. The author suggests that these “leaders of tomorrow” may be able to shape public and private sector institutions, however, that not only national leaders are important, but particularly local and regional community leaders are needed. In a similar vein, another author defines leadership broadly, including “inward leaders” (people who are leaders of themselves), “outward leaders” (leaders of others by exerting control), and “super leaders” (leaders of others by inspiring people to self-lead). The author concludes that a leader’s demonstration of inward-leadership and super-leadership may serve as a role model for others. Finally, one Leader of Tomorrow states that “when people get the power of knowledge, power of money, power of authority and influence, they forget the
power of values and they indulge in all activities to satisfy their self interest”. Following this analysis, the author suggests the need for a “world thinker”, called “Corporate Prophet”.

Leadership Styles
The types of leaders discussed earlier become even more explicit in those contributions that focus on certain leadership styles potentially suitable (or not) for the current situation. Particularly notable here are the creative ideas of what modern leadership should look like. Drawing upon personal experience from non-profit enterprises and using the example of Orpheus, an orchestra without a conductor, one Leader of Tomorrow argues that it does not need charismatic leadership but “networked leadership”, in which individuals must be able “to collaborate openly under a strong common vision, without clear leadership and relying on the networked nature of their mutual relationships”. The author concludes that “in these teams, everybody leads, and everybody follows”. Another contribution focuses on the relationship between leadership and social capital accumulation and proposes that “in order to build social capital the Western definition of leadership needs to be extended with principles originated in Asia and Africa that place more emphasis on the relational aspect of leadership”. The author finds that this form of leadership should take the form of servant leadership in order “to capitalise on opportunities and to strive for equitable representation for a common purpose with participation from the “followers””. Related to this idea, another Leader of Tomorrow develops the idea “leading from behind”, a concept of leadership that tries to unfold the creative potential of the employees but granting them decision autonomy.

Leaders’ Actions and Behaviour
Several essays focus on the actions and behaviour that is needed in the light of recent developments. Interestingly, several Leaders of Tomorrow acknowledge that some aspects are rather difficult to change. For example, one Leader of Tomorrow argues that “while it is convenient to scapegoat individuals in leadership positions, historic trends illustrate the critical importance of acknowledging systematic weaknesses that create opportunities for leaders to manipulate the system”.

Most Leaders of Tomorrow, however, provide detailed recommendations of what leaders' actions and behaviour should look like. Addressing ethical challenges, their root causes, and the complications posed to the flattening of hierarchies into so-called “pancakes”, one Leader of Tomorrow presents guidelines of how leaders can eradicate unethical behaviour, facilitate the growth of fair organisational systems, and approach public scrutiny and customer involvement. Another author offers advice by developing three principles for post-crisis leadership to reinvent motivation among people: to emphasise pedagogy; to understand inventiveness; and “choice”, which sustains inventiveness. In a somewhat alternative direction, another Leader of Tomorrow proposes that leaders should demonstrate discipline, denounce division, and deepen devotion. The author concludes that “each of these steps is essential to resuming the public’s confidence and changing the way our institutions are run towards a direction that is more resistant to crisis”. Further, by means of a multimedia presentation, one author creatively illustrates a leadership model with leaders of private and public institutions who are transparent, willing to listen and change, and thus to inspire their organisations. Finally, one Leader of Tomorrow argues that neuroscience will help us to understand the anatomy of leadership. Specifically, the author suggests that there is positive correlation between the understanding of neuroscience of leaders and management quality.

Foundations of Leadership
A substantial number of essays address the foundations leadership should have in order to be most effective. One Leader of Tomorrow uses the example of the most polluted river in Argentina (and of a politician) and proposes three “fundamental dimensions of leadership”: the dimension of power, the dimension of management, and the axiological dimension. The author finds that the axiological dimension, referring to the moral values/beliefs of a leader, has become the “forgotten” dimension, however, needs to be considered. More specifically, another author suggests that not a specific leadership style is decisive, but rather the principles (here: accountability and ethical conduct) on which leadership is based. Another contribution draws lessons from diverse examples such as the “Bulgarian reality and mafia values, from Aikido and the peaceful mind of the samurai, from basketball and redefinition of success, and from army leadership and values of trust and skills of conflict transformation”. Based on this, the author proposes “sensible and dedicated leadership” of a tribe, “based on belief and inspiration” as a suitable leadership concept.
Another strand of essays focuses on how suitable foundations of leadership can be developed and on the sources of leadership. For example, one Leader of Tomorrow finds that the educational system “plays a central role in cultivating a wide pool of people willing and able to lead us in building bridges that withhold the challenges ahead”. Another author develops a framework that helps decision-makers to rethink their existing approaches towards leadership. It includes “recognising the interconnected and interdisciplinary nature of the 21st century”, “understanding the modern technologies that are changing our societal norms”, and “emphasising sustainability with a focus on youth as part of the solution”. In this area, particularly the role of entrepreneurship in educating leaders is highlighted. Considering the challenges of the recent financial crisis and the role of government and private institutions during that crisis, one Leader of Tomorrow argues that “both the Keynesian and Neoclassical approaches have failed” and proposes a different approach based on Schumpeterian principles – a new leadership paradigm based on entrepreneurialism to create and sustain value. Similarly, drawing upon personal experience in supporting young social entrepreneurs across South America, another Leader of Tomorrow finds that “most of the acclaimed social entrepreneurs of the present started a social initiative as teenagers”, “people with the experience of leading a social initiative during their lives are more likely to create other ethically driven organisations”, and “young social entrepreneurs bring their positive leadership to whatever organisation they end up working for”.

**Generation-specific Leadership**

Several essays centre on the current situation and its impact on leadership, specifically on leading the present generations. One Leader of Tomorrow draws upon the historical case of the British reform movements of the 19th century and claims that “emerging from the aftermath of the global financial crisis, a generational transition in leadership has begun, and the Millennial generation’s New Leadership are being called to influence society in a new way, namely through collaboration, audacious authenticity, and the humble ambition of servant capitalism.” Another author identifies a “generation unemployed” that must be addressed by policy and business leaders “in order to reengineer mutual trust and respect in the free-market system”. Further, based on a literature analysis, another author aims at capturing “the state of the modern society’s attitude to a leadership notion”. Finally, one author argues that the positive outcome of the crisis is the opportunity for the Leaders of Tomorrow’s generation to rethink leadership, when considering the three following aspects: the importance of followers in the leadership process; the endorsement of lateral modes of organising that allow knowledge to easily diffuse between individuals, and the embrace of diversity.

**Subtopic 3: Public Goods and Values**

Several contributions focus on Subtopic 3 and the Leaders of Tomorrow offer some interesting ideas about the future of public goods given the recent economic crisis and the need to cut public expenditure. The essays mainly deal with one of the following subtopics: The future financing of public goods, the responsibility of private organisations, local communities and individuals for the continued existence of public goods, and the values of public goods for society.

**Public Goods’ Financing**

In the course of the global economic crisis, governments were forced to reduce national debt and slash budgets dramatically. In this context, the question of how to finance public goods and how to ensure their continued existence quickly arose. According to the Leaders of Tomorrow, there are several different ways to ensure the financing of public goods. One Leader of Tomorrow, for example, analyses the tensions between public goods and national debt with regard to one mega trend, namely demographic change. The author argues that the largest item of social benefits – pension insurance – is hardly addressed by governments when cutting social benefits and suggests a framework providing guidelines for the private sector, society and government to counteract the consequences of demographic change. A further noteworthy example assesses scarce natural resources as public goods. The author emphasises that the government as an “allocator, regulator, and distributor” of natural resources needs to collaborate across political parties, societies, and industries to manage the scarcity of this public good. Another Leader of Tomorrow addresses this issue from a distinct perspective. How can developing countries be supported to adopt renewable energy? The author suggests an innovative finance scheme where developing countries finance green technology projects through loans and sell green technology-backed bonds to investors in developed countries. This financing scheme may help to protect the environment, an important public good. A further essay addresses the financing of one specific public good, namely public education. The author suggests generating new revenue streams to finance public goods. More specifically, the author proposes financing public higher education through a
“state-sponsored investment fund” that invests in profitable innovation from universities like a venture capitalist and then reinvests these revenues in public higher education. In sum, most Leaders of Tomorrow emphasise the need to reconsider the financing of public goods and provide stimulating ideas of what future financing of public goods could look like.

Everyone’s Responsibility for Public Goods
There is consensus among several Leaders of Tomorrow that private organisations and individuals need to get more involved and take more responsibility for public goods. This is generally considered as a crucial factor of successful public goods policies. For example, one essay analyses housing provision policies in developing countries as a public good, criticising the rise of slums and thus the failure of current policies. The essay proposes involving multiple organisations and citizens in public goods provision, concluding that “without active engagement of the citizens in public goods delivery one cannot expect to achieve socially efficient outcomes”. A further noteworthy example contributes to the same debate, suggesting a citizen service that assumes “civic or social duties by private citizens on a voluntary or minimally-remunerated basis”. Reforming the welfare state by establishing a citizen service intensifies the relationship between the government and citizens and does not burden the public budget. Two further contributions assess country-specific cases and how these countries handled the increased national debt. Whereas the government in the UK decentralised public goods to local communities to enhance their value to society and to increase social capital development, the Japanese government reduced its funding of public goods, leaving it to the community and private organisations to maintain these public goods. In sum, both authors emphasise that “people will have to make contributions to ensure the continued existence of [public] services and goods in the future”.

Public Goods’ Value for Individuals and Society
The announcement of austerity programmes in many countries during recent years raised a discussion about the core values of society and about which public goods are indispensable and the government needs to provide in order to achieve values and goals in society. The Leaders of Tomorrow approach this question from distinctive perspectives. One contribution, for example, emphasises the need to rediscover moral values in a capitalistic society and argues that value rationality may help to “maintain a moral balance in market activities”. The essay concludes that “despite the uncertainty of outcome, rational application and communication of moral values enable economic individualism to proceed with a touch of humanity, generosity and care for the general public”. Another Leader of Tomorrow questions the value of current public goods policies and suggests measuring success based on the happiness of individuals rather than with economic indicators. The author emphasises that public goods policies should, for example, focus on “family and community cohesion” to truly increase the well-being of society. Drawing upon Amartya Sen’s capability approach, a further contribution assesses the role of public goods for social cohabitation, arguing that the value of public goods depends on their ability to help individuals to realise their goals. Given this definition, there is no one-best solution for the whole society and society needs “impartial observers” to critically discuss which public goods are most relevant in order to inhibit social inequality.

Implications and Conclusions
As this review shows, there is substantial variety in the themes, ideas, case examples and methodological approaches which address the topic “Just Power” of the 41st St. Gallen Symposium. Indeed, the contributions allow a much differentiated picture of this year’s topic. Among the general observations is that half of all Leaders of Tomorrow focus on rethinking leadership concepts as a consequence of the severe economic crisis and the loss of trust in many institutions and companies. Though it is hardly possible to derive comprehensive solutions to the pressing questions addressed by the Leaders of Tomorrow here, some aspects are particularly notable and appear to represent many of them:

Subtopic 1: Justice and Power: There is no one-best concept to justly distribute power in politics, economics and societies. Balancing power between state and non-state actors, reestablishing society’s power of legitimisation, and the influence of culture are among the most frequently discussed concepts of just power distribution.

Subtopic 2: Rethinking Leadership: The overall concept of leadership is currently changing, not just because of the recent crisis, but also because of generation-specific changes. Specifically, certain types of “bottom-up leadership” appear to become more suitable – and potentially “the standard”. These styles largely reflect the required foundations of leadership (e.g. values, beliefs, culture etc.) and should direct leaders’ actions and behaviour.
Subtopic 3: Public Goods and Values: In light of the recent economic crisis and governments' austerity programmes, public goods need to be reconsidered. In particular, innovative financing schemes for public goods and greater involvement of private organisations, local communities and individuals seem necessary to ensure the continued existence of public goods.

Because of the vast amount of highly interesting ideas offered by the Leaders of Tomorrow, many aspects had to be neglected and this summary may sometimes appear reductionist. Being aware of this limitation, however, it may stimulate discussions during the 41st St. Gallen Symposium, both among the Leaders of Tomorrow and with the Leaders of Today. In addition, it may encourage the participants to reflect on the Symposium’s topic “Just Power” and to critically discuss the ambiguity within the notion of power.