

Republicanism, Anarchism and the Pursuit of Non-Domination

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“Nothing can be sweeter than liberty. Yet if it isn’t equal throughout, it isn’t liberty at all”

-Cicero¹

“Man is truly free only among equally free men”

-Bakunin²

This dissertation seeks to determine whether either anarchism or republicanism can realise the ideal of non-domination³. Such work is of interest as adherents of these political ideologies, both increasingly prominent in recent years, have advanced their positions through the language of non-domination (e.g. Clark 2007; Gordon 2008; Pettit 1997; 2012). I will argue that the republican approach to pursuing non-domination is, ultimately, unsuccessful. In contrast, I will show that anarchism, both in its ideals and its practices, is compatible with a plausible account of non-domination.

Anarchism, largely dormant for decades, experienced a rebirth of sorts in the 1990’s at the nexus of radical feminist, ecological and anti-globalisation movements (Sylvan and Sparrow 2007; Gordon 2008). This revival only gained strength in the 21st century, seen for example in the 15-M and Occupy movements. While there are anarchists of many different stripes, they are united in seeking a stateless society absent of coercive institutions. Modern anarchism differs from its older instantiations in its explicit denunciation of all forms of domination, not just that enacted by the state (Marshall 2008, epilogue). In contrast with this, republicanism is a robustly statist theory, in which the state is conceived of as an active promoter and defender of the non-dominated status of citizens. Starting from the conception of ‘freedom as non-domination’ and how it differs from liberal ‘freedom as non-interference’, republican authors have spawned a great deal of theory in recent years (see Lovett and Pettit 2009). While this revival of republicanism has largely been confined to academia, it has had some impact upon concrete political platforms, most notably the Zapatero administration in Spain (Martí and Pettit 2010). Despite their simultaneous resurgence and shared affinity for ‘non-domination’, comparative investigation between anarchism and republicanism has not been forthcoming. One of the motivations behind undertaking this dissertation, then, is to contribute to filling this theoretical lacuna.⁴

The argument will proceed as follows. The first chapter, primarily descriptive, will outline how freedom as non-domination has been presented as validating republicanism. The second chapter will develop a critique the convincingness of this claim, arguing that the republican state cannot satisfy

¹ Quoted in Pettit (2012, 88)

² Quoted in Marshall (2008, 1)

³ For ease of expression, I will often discuss definitions in terms of domination. Non-domination, in this essay, will simply be considered as the absence of domination. Freedom will also be equated with non-domination unless otherwise specified

⁴ Both anarchism and republicanism will be considered in a primarily institutional sense

the ideal of non-domination. The third chapter will identify and remedy the problems with republican account of non-domination, and show that a more fully-developed, trackable non-domination aligns not with republicanism, but with anarchism. A brief conclusion will reflect on how the findings impact upon anarchism, republicanism and non-domination itself going forward.

As he is generally regarded as the pre-eminent figure in recent republican theory (e.g. Urbinati 2012; Thompson 2013; Rostbøll 2015), I will present Philip Pettit's account of how non-domination justifies republican institutions. Pettit has gone to great lengths to argue that his understanding of non-domination requires for its realisation a just republican state (Pettit 2012; 2014). Given his work's pertinence and pre-eminence, I hope that generalisations made regarding republicanism's and non-domination's connections may not be inappropriate. Unfortunately, there is no contemporary anarchist author who has the same academic prestige as Pettit. Perhaps more problematic, neither has any anarchist set out a theory of domination in the same analytically rigorous way that Pettit has.⁵ Rather, the term tends to be used largely to encompass the diffuse complaints that anarchists level against society as it is currently constituted (Gordon 2008). Through identifying the weaknesses of Pettit's account, though, I will formulate a conception of domination which I will show should be congenial to anarchists.

It is important the note that this dissertation is not concerned with endorsing either political ideology. Neither do I suggest that non-domination *should* be our sole criterion in political matters. This dissertation has the more modest goal of seeing what non-domination as a coherent ideal would look like, and whether anarchism or republicanism can fully realise it.

⁵ Indeed, the concept of domination is surprisingly undertheorised in analytical political philosophy. Though Pettit does give significant discussion over to it, Lovett (2010) is the only book-length treatment. This book is itself firmly in the republican tradition

Chapter 1: Pettit's Non-Domination and the Republican State

Philip Pettit (1997; 2012; 2014) identifies 'freedom as non-domination' as a republican ideal, informing both its traditional adherents and its institutional recommendations. In this section, I will summarize how Pettit argues for republicanism from the ideal of non-domination. I will, first, describe Pettit's understanding of non-domination and how it differs from 'freedom as non-interference'. Next, I will briefly describe the two types of domination which can occur. Then, I will outline how mitigating these types of domination should lead us to creating or supporting a state which, finally, is shown to be republican in character.

1.1 Freedom as non-domination

According to Pettit, domination occurs to the extent that A has the capacity to interfere arbitrarily in a certain range of B's choices (Pettit 1997, 52). Interference is arbitrary when it does not track the interests and wishes of the agent being interfered with (Pettit 1997, 55). Pettit thinks that absence of domination is a better measure of freedom than non-interference, the latter conception entailing a number of objectionable implications. For example, non-interference implies that a slave could be made freer either by aligning his interests with his masters' and behaving accordingly, or ingratiating himself to his master so that the master indulges the slave regardless of his actions. Pettit thinks such results are objectionable: freedom should neither be conditional upon subjective states nor the preferences of another. A slave cannot be freed through assenting to his own condition; the contented slave is still a slave. Allowing freedom to be attained like this is not only counter-intuitive, but it obscures the possibility that we could promote particular social forms as more or less conducive to freedom. Seeing as Pettit wants a descriptive conception of freedom which would yield determinate actions to be undertaken to lessen unfreedom in any given case, this will not do (Pettit 1997; 2006)⁶. Pettit believes that unlike freedom as non-interference, non-domination can be just such a conception. Furthermore, it is an ideal which "holds out hope of making the state, even perhaps a welfare state, friendly to freedom" (Pettit 2001, 143). This contrasts with non-interference, which appears to limit the extent to which we could consider ourselves free given the interference of the state in our lives. Recognising this possibility, however, leads to an important amendment as to our definition of domination.

1.2 Two types of domination

Pettit puts forward two kinds of domination; *dominium* and *imperium*. They differ with regards to the agents involved, as well as the interests that must be tracked for interference to be considered non-arbitrary. *Dominium* is held by private agents over others. For interference to be considered non-arbitrary, A's interference must be forced to track what B's interests or preferences are according to B's own judgements (Pettit 1997, 55). *Imperium* is concerned with how the state (the public agent) wields its power over citizens. According to Pettit, state action must be "forced to track

⁶ There may, however, be reasonable disagreement as to what those actions are

the common avowable interests of its citizens, and only the common avowable interests of its citizens” (Pettit2001, 156). Common avowable interests are those collective provisions and considerations which all citizens can advocate, without embarrassment, as relevant for the state to concern itself with. The importance of these interests may be differently weighed by different individuals, but all should recognize them as relevant. There is any number of common avowable interests which could be admissible in policy debate, from decent living standards, to security, to a right to a fair trial, to an education. We will return to the concept of *imperium* in section 2.3. For now, it is enough to note that while Pettit’s definition of domination can be formulated so as to encompass both types, the divergent understandings of what actions count as ‘non-arbitrary’ means that whether an act is dominating depends upon which agents are involved, as well as what interests are tracked.

There is no domination if there is neither *dominium* nor *imperium*. With regards to achieving non-domination, it is difficult to envisage how A could eliminate *dominium* held by B over C, without actually themselves dominating B. Unless B is an unwilling dominator, any interference would seem to conflict with B’s interests. Of course another agent could interfere so as to reduce A’s domination of B, but combatting *dominium* with more *dominium* seems to lead us into an infinite regress. One way of avoiding this is for a group of agents, following their own avowable interests, to collectively maintain a public power tasked with discouraging unsanctioned private *dominium*. Provided it had enough coercive power to make its threats credible, this public power could significantly reduce *dominium*. This is the approach Pettit favours. He puts forward a statist theory, whereby the state is tasked with minimizing *dominium*, thus promoting non-domination (Pettit 1997)⁷. While this gives us a tool with which to combat one form of domination, the challenge now moves to the next level (argumentatively, at least; see Pettit 2012; 2014) of ensuring that the state itself does not hold *imperium* over citizens.

1.3 The non-dominating state

Given the power that the creation of such an entity entails, that the state could itself dominate citizens is a grave concern. Pettit recognizes two sets of institutions which reduce the likelihood of *imperium*: constitutional constraints and democratic accountability. The constraints seek to limit the power the state would have to dominate its citizens. These include counter-majoritarian constraints, a separation of powers to ensure that no one site of authority can wield excess influence, and checks and balances. Particularly important is the rule of law which ensures that the capacity for arbitrary rule by those who hold positions of power is minimized. The rule of law also relates to specifying that range of choice within which citizens cannot interfere with one another, ensuring their security in freedom. These state laws are connected to the freedom of citizens in a constitutive way; there is not “any temporal or causal gulf between civic institutions and the freedom of citizens” (Pettit 1997, 81).

⁷ This is not to say Pettit thinks the state should not care about other ideals; he thinks that, since many other ideals will have to be met in order to reach the ideal of non-domination (e.g. ensure everyone has material comfort, access to education etc), it is enough to track this.

Constitutional constraints, no matter how effective they may be, will not secure *non-imperium* unless they are coupled with a way of tracking what the common avowable interests of the ruled are. Democratic institutions (including electoral politics) play a key role here; without reference to the interests of the ruled, interference can only be arbitrary. The citizens must, then, have access to channels through which they can control the direction of government legislation.⁸ Pettit sets forward a number of conditions which should be met for this contestatory scheme to effectively control the direction of government in a way that is individualized, unconditional and efficacious (Pettit 2012)⁹. Among the more significant, Pettit advocates a representative assembly that will be resistance-averse through being subject to the workings of the electoral system. In order for such an assembly to operate successfully, however, it also demands an active and resistance-prone citizenry (Pettit 2012, 173), to ensure any government will be sufficiently informed of the public's interests and punished if these interests are disregarded. Citizens should also have access to channels through which they can contest policy or law on an individual basis.

1.4 Republicanism as non-domination

The non-dominating state outlined above greatly resembles the ideal society envisaged by republicanism (Haakonssen 2007). Through the clause of common avowable interests, for example, the people being ruled have a decisive impact upon the decisions undertaken regarding affairs of the public. Separation of powers and checks and balances are classically republican ideals, intended to ensure that individual agents or groups cannot wield power to the detriment of other parts of society. Freedom under the rule of law secures the free citizen, or *liber*, and makes his non-dominated status a matter of common knowledge (Pettit 1997, 70-73).

It is clear from the above that Pettit is advocating republicanism as a political theory which takes non-domination as its lodestar. Indeed, Pettit makes this explicit time and again; he does a thorough job showing that republican thinkers of the past explicitly spoke in the language of non-domination (Pettit 1997; 2012). The reason I have presented the development in this way is, however, faithful to Pettit's attempts to show how republican institutions be justified through non-domination. In the next chapter, we will look in more detail at how coherent is the idea of the republican state as a promoter of non-domination.

⁸ Pettit opts for a representative system, which he considers more feasible than a plenary assembly, as well as more suited to achieving consistency through reflexive deliberation; see 2012, 188-205

⁹ "Control will be individualised if the people enjoy an equally accessible system of popular influence that imposes an equally acceptable direction on government. Control will be unconditioned if their directed influence materializes independently of any other party's goodwill...And control will be efficacious if their influence imposes that direction so unfailingly that when decisions go against particular citizens, they can take this to be just tough luck" (Pettit 2012, 302)

Chapter 2: Why the Republican State Cannot Realise Pettit's Non-Domination

In this chapter I will show that Pettit's non-domination cannot be achieved by republicanism and is unsuited to being tracked as an ideal. The critique of an ideal could take two forms. The first concerns desirability. Richardson (2006) and Krause (2013), for example, have critiqued Pettit's approach for not accounting for the wrongs occasioned by impersonal aggregated actions (e.g., systemic prejudice, or wealthy individuals whose uncoordinated activity nonetheless shapes outcomes). These critiques have tended to indicate possible amendments, leaving republicanism's claim to be a theory of non-domination unchallenged. This contrasts with the critique undertaken here, which is concerned with the ideal's coherence. I seek to show that Pettit's non-domination cannot be realised by the republican state. In the first section, I will show how the republican state's democratic institutions cannot ensure that common avowable interests are satisfactorily pursued. The second section argues that creating or maintaining a state leads to domination of groups outside of the currently constituted citizenry. The third section demonstrates that *non-imperium* cannot be secured, even in theory. These three criticisms, then, all point the impossibility of considering the state to be non-dominating on the account given.

2.1 The inequality of influence

There are two reasons why Pettit's account of electoral-contestatory democracy cannot ensure that citizens' interests are always tracked. The first pertains to representation being suitably controlled by the citizenry. The second is concerned with the counter-majoritarian constraints he advances. Taken together, these criticisms suggest that a republican state will have *imperium* over its citizens.

2.1.1 Representation and access to power

The republican depends upon the electoral cycle, as well as more intangible motivations such as esteem and respect, to ensure that representatives are sufficiently averse to citizen resistance. Unfortunately, favouring a representative system of government creates for republicanism a classic principle-agent problem. Representatives will often have a set of interests (whether financial, political or moral) which diverge from the interests of citizens. Especially when considering the totality of issues legislated upon within any electoral cycle, depending upon resistance seems inadequate. For any given decision, there will be sectional interests and disparate pressures factored into each representative's calculation as to how he shall act. Even if representatives seek out to determine the common avowable interests in every instance, they cannot be *forced* to do so; representative government neither can nor desires to remove the whim of the representative as a factor in decision-making.

Furthermore, there is no way to ensure that citizens themselves advance only common, as opposed to sectional interests. Representatives will have incentives to cater for popular sectional interests, perhaps even foment them. Even if legislation were somehow forced to be framed in the common interest, many malign, dominating policies could still be defended in the language of common

interest, whether they further economic competitiveness, internal security, or other legitimate avowable interests. There will be many cases, then, where some common avowable interest can plausibly be found on either side of an argument. Even when one seems more relevant or pressing than another, those who are more organised or present the most credible threat or promise to representatives will tend to prevail, if representatives are indeed resistance-averse. The problem here is not just the indeterminacy of republican policy, as McMahon (2005) suggests. Rather it is that republicanism's democratic procedures and its ideal of non-domination are often in direct tension: the citizenry will often be ruled by the whims and interests of representatives.

2.1.2 Preventing democratic dominance

Indeed, Pettit is, as are republicans generally, critical of unchecked majoritarianism; for him, it represents "the ultimate form of arbitrariness" (Pettit 1997, 8). Since majority voting allows one part of the citizenry to override the common avowable interests of the whole, Pettit argues that it should be supplemented with unelected agencies such as central banks, judicial bodies and electoral commissions; these would resolve issues ill-suited to the rigours of electoral contestation (Pettit 2012, 232-238). The problem is that these institutions themselves can and often will be dominating. In fact, the very goal which democratic procedures attempt to ensure, that each person has equal influence, is undermined by these counter-majoritarian institutions (Bellamy 2007). The very decision regarding which issues should not be electorally determined would itself have to be equally influenced by all citizens in order to realise *non-imperium*; it is hard to envisage how this could be achieved without depending upon electoral mechanisms. Another difficulty is that electoral commissions and judicial reviews will inevitably privilege the perspectives of a select few individuals as binding, and thus they will inevitably dominate citizens. The principle-agent problem which arises with representation reappears here, simply in a different location. Given that Pettit initially appeals to these constraints as ways through which minority groups can ensure their interests are tracked, he fails to recognize that this appeal simply changes the identities of those dominating and dominated. It does not necessarily reduce it.

If citizens feel that the state is systematically disregarding their common avowable interests, Pettit admits a right to secession might be necessary to secure non-domination (Pettit 1997, 199). This is a good bullet to bite. However, this solution only goes so far; for a start, it seems to depend upon the aggrieved group in question making territorially-based claims. This will only be valid for a subset of the potentially dominated agents within a polity. Furthermore, given the size and significance of some groups, the state will not be capable of granting such a secession or procedural objection, even if they do feel the state is not serving their interests. It is hardly implausible to envisage, for example, the working class in a particular society who felt that the state was systematically misrepresenting or disregarding their concerns and interests. Alternatively, the wealthy in society could feel like the tax burden being placed upon them was particularly onerous, that their interests were not being tracked. It is difficult to conceive of how such groups as these could secede. Even if they could somehow organise themselves into a territorial zone, the state would surely fail to realise common avowable interests of its citizens were it to allow the secession of much of the workforce, or the taxable wealth of the country. One man's secession is another man's domination. Thus, even Pettit's nuclear option is not sufficient to ensure common avowable interests are tracked.

From the above, it should be clear that republicanism cannot ensure that interference is non-arbitrary. Still, these objections arise at the level of practical application. Though serious, republicanism could still put itself forward as advancing the ideal of non-domination, provided recognition that it will never be fully attained in its implementation. A more serious challenge to this claim follows in section 2.2., where it will be shown that the republican state in and of itself precludes exclusively adhering to non-domination.

2.2 The state and the scope of non-domination

By linking the freedom of agents constitutively with the laws of the state, republicanism creates significant problems for the faithful adherence to non-domination. If domination can only be reduced through state activity, then the creation or maintenance of the state must precede reducing domination. If all desired reductions in *dominium* must be enacted through state powers, this doesn't just limit the ways in which we can pursue non-domination; it limits the realisation of the ideal itself. There are three problems with giving the state the role of the instrument through which to pursue non-domination. The first is that it endorses imposition of effective, coercively-backed state structures upon communities which don't have such institutions. The second is that the maintenance of the state allows domination of those outside its borders. Finally, the maintenance of states ensures the domination of future generations. Given these challenges, the state's role as a promoter of non-domination is seriously undermined by its own capacity for domination.

2.2.1 Non-(effective)state peoples

Patchen Markell (2008) argues that by defining domination primarily through *dominium*, and subsequently scaling it up to *imperium*, Pettit loses sight of the fact that the state presents a unique domination-related danger of its own, in the form of 'usurpation'. Usurpation occurs when a group should be the actors and architects of decisions which centrally concern them, but are not granted this right; instead, things are done for them, whether in their interests or otherwise¹⁰. This can seem a grave injustice. In the case of the foundation of the modern Australian state, for instance, the very enacting of a legal regime when there were already inhabitants with their own social system strikes us as a great wrong, and indeed an act of domination (Pateman and Mills 2007). This intuition would, I think, hold even if the legal regime enacted was perfectly just. Provided the social order replaced was not itself *deeply* unjust, I think we should reject the notion that communities living outside the power of effective states should always be *freed* through the imposition of state structures. Yet, by tying constitutively coercively-enforced state laws with freedom, this definition of non-domination *cannot* consider non-state peoples free. To see the absurdity here, picture an isolated community of two farmers. A grows oranges while B grows apples. They live peaceably, and, knowing that any serious intervention in the other person's farm will be traced to them, they live in relative material security. On Pettit's account, unless they live in a state, however, they still

¹⁰ It is not clear why Markell only mentions what this adds to our understanding of *imperium*; it could certainly be the case that there is a sphere of our lives which we would consider usurped if it were done for us in private also. An example here would be the lack of responsibility for their own care and maintenance which refugees in many refugee camps must bear

experience a great deal of *dominium* at one another's hands. These individuals will only be free if a state intervenes and imposes coercively enforced laws, which ensure that no theft occurs.

Assuming that the state is the best or only promoter of non-domination fails to take into account that many non-state societies are characterised by what we would consider to be non-dominating relations (Clark 2007; Graeber 2004). In defending his state-based approach, Pettit suggests that through meeting the discursive standards which allow us to speak of agency (Pettit 2001) the state can pursue an ideal such as non-domination in a wilful way that individuals following mere social norms and customs cannot. However, this doesn't take communities' self-regulating capacities and abilities to resolve collective problems seriously enough (Ostrom 2011).

Of course, Pettit makes explicit that he takes the state-system as a given, slightly affecting the cast of this objection. However, this in itself is not unproblematic. While the habitable earth falls within state borders, the map is not the territory. Where communities escape the reach of the state, or the state itself fails, the republican must justify state imposition. This is so regardless of whether the state's failure corresponds with society's failure, which it may not (e.g., Graeber 2007). There are, then, practical repercussions for advocating the state as a necessary agent of non-domination. Even if we do stay at ideal theory, however, charging the state with promoting non-domination creates significant difficulties.

2.2.2 Borders and dominated outsiders

Pettit gives little discussion over to individuals in other states who may be dominated. He opts instead to discuss the non-domination of peoples within a framework of sovereign states (Pettit 2010; 2014). State sovereignty is necessary for state's attempts to ensure their own citizens are non-dominated; were they easily invaded or attacked, domination would occur simply by that fact alone. Pettit acknowledges that a state cannot guarantee a practicable right of exit to its citizens, given that other states have the prerogative to maintain and organise themselves (Pettit 2009). However, Pettit fails to consider whether the republican state itself has a duty to accept dominated migrants. Of course, if an open border policy were followed, migrants would likely have less control over the state than current citizens, given language difficulties, lack of political connections and other factors. The state, then, would plausibly be further from realising *non-imperium*, even if the global sum of *dominium* has been lessened significantly by granting citizens in other states a practicable exit option. I think logic along these lines informs Pettit's lack of engagement with open borders; securing that the state does not dominate its citizens outweighs duties owed to those outside the state. If this is a fair interpretation, we see here that *non-imperium* is not in all cases aligned with *non-dominium*. Given that the existence of the state is justified by the role it can play in reducing *dominium*, as noted in section 1.2, there is an ambiguity regarding how to properly weigh the interests of reducing *dominium* and reducing *imperium*. If the danger of *imperium* outweighs significant reductions in *dominium*, could the very same logic not be used to argue against the

state's construction?¹¹ Rather than being mutually supportive, *non-dominium* and *non-imperium* can be seen here pulling in opposite directions.

Unfortunately, the difficulty of tracking non-domination while advocating the maintenance of the state does not end once the border is crossed. In the next section I demonstrate that, damningly, the nature of the state will ensure that all its future inhabitants will be dominated by the state's very existence.

2.2.3. Dominating future generations

If to be dominated is to depend upon another agent's will not to interfere with your choices, it would appear that future generations are dominated by any present republican state. If the state takes out a large loan in order to pay for hosting the Olympics, for example, future generations must ultimately pay the costs. To reject this claim, the republican could point out that the relationship between present and future generations is a brute fact; present generations cannot do otherwise but interfere, and the same could be said regarding the state's interference. However, the state is not a historical necessity but rather a recent and contingent development (Spruyt 1994). There need not be a political agent which can and does commit those not yet born to certain undertakings, as the state can. Even the capacity of the state to arbitrarily interfere with their choices, as sovereign debt entails, means that future generations are dominated by the state. This would suggest that the state is unavoidably an agent of domination. Such a conclusion should be unpalatable for the republican; it could only be solved by either dissolving the state¹² or by distinguishing between good and bad domination, which would leave tracking non-domination in great confusion.

Perhaps there is a solution, whereby the state was forced to track future generations' interests. However, as seen in section 2.1, a representative state cannot be forced to track the interests of its current citizens, let alone those not yet born.

2.3 The Imperium strikes back

The arguments of section 2.2 seem terminal for republicanism's claim to concern itself with promoting non-domination. However, a more modest claim could still be put forward. It could be argued that republicanism still realises non-domination so far as is practicable, provided we concern ourselves solely with the current citizens of a given state. Indeed, securing non-domination within these bounds is not a worthless enterprise (indeed, it is still quite an ambitious ideal). However, through exploring the coherence of *non-imperium*, I will show in this section that republicanism cannot satisfactorily meet even this modified aim.

¹¹ The target here, it should be specified, is not the construction of real states, but the leap from recognising domination as a danger to justifying the state as a combater of that danger in Pettit's account

¹² While it may seem like genuine citizen control of the state would demand its possibility, it is unclear whether Pettit thinks citizens could dissolve the state. The state's role as promoter of non-domination through its coercively-enforced laws would seem to rule this out. The state's existence, then, is a limit within which his theory operates

2.3.1 Why tracking non-imperium will not work

It is worth recalling that for Pettit, it is true by definition that the state cannot hold *dominium* over citizens. Given that the republican state is also the agent tasked with reducing *dominium*, and *non-imperium* demands equal influence of citizens, it appears that in ensuring *non-imperium* is met, we would have done much to approximate non-domination. Equally, falling far short of *non-imperium* will, given the power of the state, mean we will fall far short of non-domination. One problem with this is that fully eliminating *imperium* is inconceivable, as Pettit himself notes (Pettit 2001, 140). There are huge, possibly insurmountable difficulties with regards to ensuring that every single individual is given equal, unconditioned and individualised control over the state. Discrepancies of wealth, access to government representatives, standard of education and lobbying skills vary significantly across the population.

Even in ideal theory, however, we face a significant challenge; unfortunately for Pettit, *non-imperium* hinges upon the same weakness which he considers fatal to the plausibility of non-interference. Its realisation can depend simply upon subjective states in individuals. To see this, notice that, when we move from *dominium* to *non-dominium*, the capacity of A to interfere with B changes: there are less of B's choices with which A can interfere unless explicitly authorised by B's wishes. But when the state moves from *imperium* to *non-imperium*, the range of choices that the state can interfere with does not lessen, but only the *legitimacy* of the interference does. Seeing as the state cannot hold *dominium*, there is no limit to the choices which the state could interfere with, so long as some common avowable interest supported such interference. But this change of legitimacy, based on the adherence to common avowable interests, rests ultimately on citizen's personal opinions and, in the case of the avowability clause, the beliefs they attribute to one another. If either of these two belief-sets, about my interests and about what others can avow, changes, can the state's *imperium* suddenly become *non-imperium*, or vice versa? . Citizens may identify with the laws and policies of the state as the path of least resistance, or through inculcation, or through believing that others so identify. If citizen A rejects property law, but is ridiculed when he avows this stance in public, and reaches the conclusion that this interest is no longer avowable, has the state moved from *imperium* to *non-imperium*? It would seem it has. The problem with this is that it will also be possible at any given time for *non-imperium* to become *imperium*, without any institutional or political change. Hence we must recognize that the state cannot ensure *non-imperium* of citizens, as the subjective judgements upon which *non-imperium* depends will always be subject to change, as well as adaption to circumstances. Much as non-interference is plagued by the problem of the contented slave, *non-imperium* seems prey to what we could call the problem of the contented citizen; he could be freed by simply changing his mind about his dominator.

Based on the above conclusions, republicanism, cannot put itself forward as singularly tracking non-domination. At best it can advocate for some of its positions through the language of non-domination, but the ideal of *non-imperium* is grounded in a set of interests which are too indeterminate and unattainable to satisfy. In the next chapter, I will attempt to reformulate non-domination so as to make it more trackable, and explore what realising such a notion of non-domination would then look like.

Chapter 3: Non-Domination as an Anarchist Ideal

The previous chapter looked at problems related to the internal coherence of Pettit's account of republican non-domination. This chapter will begin from a different vantage point, indicating how a number of the failings highlighted in the previous chapter stem from the structural weaknesses in Pettit's definition of non-domination. By noting the problematic features of Pettit's conception, I will tease out what would make for a non-domination which could be successfully tracked. From this foundation, I will construct what is an intuitive and plausible conception of domination, one which could in some way be approximated with reasonable certainty. Following that, the question will be asked how republicanism or anarchism, both professedly concerned with the ideal, fare in faithfully pursuing this modified account of non-domination. I will argue that republicanism cannot be identified with this conception of non-domination, but at least some version of anarchism can.

3.1 Towards a trackable non-domination

Before examining whether we could track any conception of non-domination exclusively, we must understand why Pettit's account is unsuited to such a task. In this section, I will attempt to diagnose and subsequently rectify the errors which underlie his account.

3.1.1 Republicanism and the dualistic approach

While Pettit's attempt to build a complex institutional arrangement from a single ideal of non-domination is impressive in its scope, it relies ultimately upon distinct interpretations as to the meaning of the clauses 'arbitrary' and 'interest'. Hence we are left with a number of different types of domination. Pettit's definition is largely informed by the desire to try to present the state as potentially non-dominating of individuals, in an analogous way to how free citizens do not dominate one another. His attempt does not augur well for others of its kind; by identifying two distinct types of dominating (and non-dominating) agents, Pettit is begging the question with regards whether a state *can* be non-dominating. Pettit does not explain why the state's interference against individual interests should not be considered an act of *dominium*; his definition does all the work for him. It is difficult to imagine how republicanism could be justified through non-domination without some similar definitional dualism; the way republicanism conceives of the state's relationship with its citizens is of a very different nature to the way it thinks citizens should relate to one another, which is different again from how the state should relate to those outside its borders. At best, republicanism could define itself as tracking multiple differing non-dominations, one ideal relevant for each type of relationship. Unfortunately, creating two different types of domination will create the possibility that their imperatives will often pull in opposite directions. This was seen in the case of *non-dominium* and *non-imperium* in section 2.2.2. In order to talk of exclusively tracking non-domination, we would be better served by a wholly monistic account.

3.1.2 Pettit and subjective states

Pettit's reliance upon interests and preferences for legitimising policies and institutions as non-dominating is deeply problematic. *Non-imperium* can become *imperium* simply through subjective changes entirely independent of structural or political changes of how the state interferes with its citizens. Seeing as domination refers to the *capacity* to interfere arbitrarily, the state will always be dominating; even if a state successfully tracked common allowable interests, these interests are always capable of changing. Deriving concrete institutional proposals from subjective states of the citizenry, then, introduces the constant possibility of domination. If a conception of non-domination is to be faithfully tracked, the target must be in some way exterior to the minds of the dominated, tied to some objectively accessible element of the social relationships being described. Only when we identify some externally accessible ingredient, clearly identifiable, will it be possible to talk with assurance as to what organisational forms would best realise the removal or increase of the element in question. Otherwise, we will fall into the same difficulties which plagued Pettit's account.

3.1.3 Seeking a common denominator

A trackable conception of non-domination must, then, be a monistic account, having as its ultimate foundation some non-mental state. Republican theorists of non-domination all consider the capacity to interfere as a significant part of domination, and certainly this seems plausible. However, this is not enough; at all times, people in relationship with one another are capable of interference. We would not want to say all relationships are dominating. Rather, what marks the difference for Pettit is when that interference could be *arbitrary* (Pettit 1997). Arbitrariness occurs when the whim of an agent, a potential dominator's, dictates outcomes. There are two types of account of arbitrariness, which specify what should justify interference in the stead of the agent's whim. Pettit defines arbitrariness in a *substantive* sense, meaning that for non-arbitrariness, the interference must be justified on the terms of the agent being interfered with. Unfortunately, what could be justified on these terms is, much as was the case in Pettit's reliance upon interests, far too dependent upon mental states for our purposes. The substantive sense of arbitrariness is indeterminate with regards to the institutional arrangement it would recommend. Another starting point which could be adopted is favoured by another republican theorist, Frank Lovett (2010), who presents a *procedural* account of arbitrariness. This stipulates that so long as any interference undertaken is in accordance with rules or laws clearly defined, it is not arbitrary. Neither will this do. It is to stretch our intuitions too far to suggest that, for example, laws written and imposed to systematically exterminate a people would be non-dominating, even if it could be claimed as non-arbitrary. Appealing to rules already written will have an inherent status quo bias, meaning that *following* non-domination will be impotent; it will simply recommend whatever institutions are already in place, regardless of what they might be.

Arbitrariness as a common denominator, from the above, seems uncongenial to our task. Still, there must be good reason that republicans start with such a foundation. What is striking about these republican accounts is that it is never considered precisely *what* allows A's whim to dictate outcomes over and against B's. Why is A able to interfere with B, even with no good reason, or reason at all? Framing the issue as such, we should have a clearer picture of what is basic to domination; the presence of coercive capacity. Those who have credible and actionable access to coercive force are able to treat those without similar access with a far greater impunity than would

otherwise be the case. A does not need to give B reasons to carry out his will if he can instead coerce him. Domination, then, depends at its root *upon the coercive force which enables arbitrariness*. The more powerful agent can simply ride roughshod over the wishes of the weaker, and it is this, and not necessarily the interference itself, which characterises domination. The interference need not be arbitrary to be dominating; it is enough that the interference takes place or goes unchallenged due to the coercive force of the dominating agent.

Coercive force, or its capacity, is a plausible foundation for an understanding of domination. It is present in much of the paradigmatic instances of domination we tend to consider, and it is relatively straightforward matter of assessing whether or not it is present. Of course, it will still be possible that reasonable disagreement could occur regarding, for example, whether a given appeal to coercive force is credible. If someone comes up behind you in the street, something sticking out beneath his jumper and says “your money or your life”, it is possible for you to think he has a loaded gun. It is equally possible to think he has a water pistol. Your judgement as to the facts of the matter will determine how you react to the appeal to coercive force. Nonetheless, by eschewing the language of interests, we are on firmer ground; whether an agent does have credible coercive capacity is something which can be discovered or inferred with a degree of certainty which cannot be said of interest. In the final instance, though it may be unwise to do so, one can challenge the coercive appeal and see if it is indeed credible.

3.2 When is coercive force dominating?

Coercive force, as the capacity which underlies the possibility of arbitrary interference, presents an intuitive foundation for a monistic account of domination. There is no domination without (potentially latent) coercive force. However, this leaves domination underspecified. In this section I will establish what conditions determine whether, and to what extent, domination occurs. I will specify three, which could be called the imbalance condition, the constitutive condition, and the exit condition.

3.2.1 The imbalance condition

If a poorly-treated employee threatens to strike for better conditions, intuitively it does not seem that he is dominating his employer. This is so despite the fact that his coercive threat may be credible, and indeed successful. I think the intuition behind this stems from the fact that the employer has a greater appeal to coercive force than the employee, even if he in this instance fails to activate it. This, I think, aligns with an important feature of non-domination as an ideal in that, unlike non-interference, non-domination tends towards equalisation of relationships, or equalisation of relevant capacities (Bellamy 2007; Pettit 2012). We can consider this intuitively correct even without a completely specified conception of domination. To see this, picture a community of 3 individuals. If A and B each have coercive capacity x , and C has capacity $x+1$, C can dominate both A and B (taken individually, at least). To reduce A's domination, we can raise A to $x+1$, or we can reduce C to coercive capacity x . Notice that the first option decreases domination of A, but increases domination of B, who is now in an inferior position to both A and C. Equalising the positions of A, B

and C by reducing C to coercive capacity x is the best way of ensuring non-domination. Thus, we should recognise the dominant agent as only those who have greater capacity of the relevant kind than others. Lovett (2010) calls this the imbalance of power condition. In our case, the relevant capacity is access to coercive force.

3.2.2 The constitutive condition

Absence of asymmetrical coercive power is insufficient as a political ideal. If only for the differences in physical strength between individuals, we will not be able to track this. All children would be dominated not only by their parents but by older children, many boyfriends and girlfriends would be dominated by their stronger partner, Mike Tyson would dominate us all (at least in the late 80's). Why should we reject these outcomes? The plausible answer may be that the coercive force is not invoked in each of these cases, but this will not do either. In cases of grave asymmetries of power, the very existence of that power is often enough for the powerful to get what they want (Scott 1990). To even cross the more powerful party is irrational, seeing as the outcome of a conflict will only have one winner. Oftentimes, the actual lack of any conflict may be the most characteristic feature of a relationship based upon violence (Graeber 2015). Indeed, it seems that this observation may contain the kernel of domination; that the imbalance of coercive force is partly constitutive of the relationship between the agents. To see the plausibility of this, imagine a typical relationship between a husband and wife. Even if the husband is more physically imposing than the wife, and is the breadwinner in the relationship, these facts may be incidental to the way they interact with one another. Either could plausibly make demands of one another irrespective of any imbalance of force with which to ensure those demands were carried out. Now, notice that between a master and slave, oftentimes neither appeal nor activation of coercive capacity is necessary for the master to attain his desired result; the slave recognises the power asymmetry which *could* be activated, and thus adjusts his behaviour accordingly. The relationship here is constituted by the coercive imbalance to the extent that it determines the respective behaviour of the agents to one another. It is important to note that this may come in degrees. An imbalance of coercive capacity could structure every individual interaction between two parties, or it may only become salient in very specific, particular situations. This gives us an additional criterion for a definition of domination. The asymmetrical coercive capacity is constitutive of the relation.

3.2.3 The exit condition

An important variable which need not, but often may, be determined by coercive capacity is the availability of an exit option from the dominating relationship in question. If there are no exit costs, it is likely that we must say there is no domination; being in the weaker position in a coercively-constituted relationship is entirely voluntary. However, it is important to note that there will never be zero transaction costs involved when exiting a social relationship; this is only a theoretical possibility. Still, if exit costs are minimal, then the domination in question will, as a function of this, be minimal as well. The degree to which an exit option is practicable will in large part determine the intensity of the domination felt.

Indeed, exit is a particularly useful mechanism for the purposes of reducing or eliminating domination.¹³ While the two other mechanisms of influence which Albert Hirschman details in his seminal text *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (1970) increase probabilities of agents attaining desired results, the act of exit in and of itself causally brings about the result desired. Loyalty and voice may contribute to improving a relationship, but if these strategies are ineffective, exit directly extricates one from the relationship. Exit's efficacy makes its presence or absence of vital importance to the degree to which domination occurs.

3.2.4 Domination: a definition

With this specified, I think we are ready to put forward a plausible definition of domination, specified here:

A dominates B if and only if

- (i) A has a greater coercive capacity than B,*
- (ii) which is more or less constitutive of a relationship*
- (iii) from which B has little or no practicable exit options.*

It is worth noting briefly one particular way that this definition differs from Pettit's conception. For Pettit, consent is sufficient to ensure interference is non-arbitrary; so long as one's preferences are followed, interference is non-dominating. However, on our account, this is insufficient to ensure non-domination. If a slave consents to interference, he is still dominated; he is in a relationship from which he cannot exit and the position he is consenting to is constituted by an imbalance of coercive force. The same is true of the citizen. Whether he consents to this or not is beside the point. Non-dominating relationships are characterised not by consent, but by voluntariness, equality, or both.

In the next section we will examine to what tracking this revised conception of non-domination would look like. I will argue that while republicanism cannot realise this ideal, anarchism, both in its ideal and its practices, can be identified with this modified account of non-domination.

3.3 Realising non-domination

Seeking to fully realise this revised account of non-domination, two approaches could be taken. The first is to increase exit options of dominated agents. The second is to remove inequalities of coercive force. Perhaps a third approach could attempt to make any coercive inequalities less constitutive of relationships, but it is difficult to see how this task could be undertaken. Exit costs from social relationships will, however, never be 0, and there is a significant subjective element with regards to how feasible any exit option really is. Given this, it would seem the removal of coercive inequality is the variable which is most capable of being followed so as to realise non-domination. With this in

¹³ Interestingly, it is the failure of the state system to grant practicable exit options to individuals which demands of us to conceive of a way that the 'voice' of citizens can control the interference of the state (Pettit 2009). As noted earlier, however, he is unsuccessful in showing that this can be done with sufficient efficacy to compensate for the dominating aspects of the state.

mind, we will return now to republicanism and see to what extent it seeks to minimize or remove domination as above defined.

3.3.1 Why republicanism doesn't realise non-domination

Republicanism attaches a good deal of importance to coercion as something which ensures that citizens are secure in their freedom. While this would seem on the face of it to rule out republicanism as a non-dominating ideal, this conclusion is a little hasty. While it is correct that removal of coercive capacity would be sufficient to achieve non-domination, it is not necessary. What is necessary is rather the *equalisation* of coercive capacity; this could theoretically involve increasing the coercive force of certain agents. Thus coercive law does not necessarily violate non-domination. However, republicanism still does violate non-domination through its endorsement of the state, which must by its nature have a radically asymmetrical coercive capacity over and against its citizenry. Not only is equalisation of coercive capacity not sought, but the asymmetry created is seen as essential for the republican project; the coercive asymmetry that holds between state and citizen is very much constitutive of the relationship. Finally, as discussed earlier, the republican cannot grant practicable exit options to its citizenry, and does not seek to do so.

Republicanism, then, cannot be justified through the ideal of non-domination, even on this revised account. In the next section I will show that another political theory, anarchism, very much can be.

3.3.2 The ideal of anarchism

Anarchism, I submit, could not only endorse non-domination as an attractive ideal, but could consider the pursuit of non-domination as necessary and sufficient to determine anarchist ideals and practice. An anarchist society is defined as one wherein “no centralized body would exist to impose its will on the people. No political authority would be recognized as legitimate and there would be no coercive apparatus to enforce laws” (Marshall 2008, 625; see also e.g., Gordon 2008; Graeber 2004; 2013). All issues and affairs would be carried out by individuals or voluntary associations. Underpinning this ideal is the claim that centralised forms of power embed and perpetuate much of the social wrongs and inequalities which mark state-based society (Clark 2007). These inequalities and their institutional grounding are opposed. It seems plausible, from the above, to suggest that anarchism could claim to realise the ideal of non-domination, as both exit options and coercive inequalities are accounted for. Removing the coercive apparatus which underpins the law would go a long way to eliminating the vast coercive inequality that holds between state and citizen. Membership is voluntary, thus reducing exit costs, if not removing them entirely. In the next section, I will examine whether there are difficulties with equating anarchism with non-domination.

3.3.3 Anarchism as non-domination

One reason that equating non-domination with anarchism might be misleading is that anarchists themselves do not seem to present their position through such language. This is partly true, but only

because anarchism generally is a tradition which is very much practice-oriented; often directing attention against concrete institutions of domination (predominantly the state), the underpinning logic is not always foregrounded. Furthermore, in more self-reflective moments, anarchists have identified with the ideal of attaining the greatest realisation of liberty and equality, or 'egalibertarianism' (Newman 2011). This aligns with the notion of anarchism as the radicalised child of liberalism and socialism (Ward 1992). This goal, upon recalling non-domination's tendency towards equalisation, will be seen to be the very similar, if not the very same as 'freedom as non-domination'.

Another objection is that to equate anarchism with non-domination may leave anarchism underdetermined. Certainly, ideas supported by anarchists of different stripes such as common ownership, for example, cannot neatly be tied to our definition of non-domination. Yet, a world with non-domination and without this could still surely be considered anarchist. Thus, we could amend our statement by saying that a society which achieved full non-domination as a stand-alone principle would at least represent *one kind* of anarchism. This allows that anarchism denotes a broad constellation of social ideologies, while still recognising non-domination as their common denominator. Indeed, given its emphasis on voluntary association and non-coercion, perhaps anarchism *must* entail plurality of just this sort, as a political theory which *should be* underdetermined. Of course, even if one was not content to consider a society anarchist absent common ownership (or federalism, or mutual aid), non-domination may still be the only game in town. Regardless of the desirability of any of these ideals, lexical priority must be given to non-domination. It is the *sine qua non* of anarchist society. Other ideals could only be advanced and advocated by and among non-dominated individuals, and so long as they do not conflict with the non-domination imperative. To suggest otherwise would seem to demand creating the very coercive institutions which anarchists would categorically rejected.

3.3.4 Does non-domination guide anarchists?

That non-domination fairly characterises the anarchist ideal, then, should be clear. However, this ideal does not tell us enough about the actions undertaken. Communist society, in its idealised final end, may also be non-dominating, but the stages which precede this, at least in the Marxist version, certainly are not. Anarchism in its practices may not be concerned with non-domination. To refute this, I think we can note the emphasis put upon operating in ways that are prefigurative of what an anarchist society would look like. This can most easily be seen in the decision-making procedures of anarchists groups; consonant with their rejection of coercively-enforced democracy, consensus process is used. Such a process must, on pain of not reaching decision, take everyone's individual interests into account; seeing as everyone can block consensus, there is strong incentive to treat all views equally (Graeber 2013; Gordon 2008). Should this not always be possible, individuals who dissent from the direction others want to move the group can stand aside. Stand-asides minimize exit costs, thus making ensuring that the voluntary and equal capacities conditions of non-domination are sought, if not always fully attained.

Some would suggest that this is not solely anarchist, that many groups use similar processes. Anarchists would not only concede, but emphasize this point. Anarchists often argue that anarchist organisation can be seen within the current system, as seen in networks of friends, or amateur-

organised football leagues, any organisation which is not constituted by any imbalance of coercive capacity. This is precisely what characterises a great degree of anarchist revolutionary practice; the recognition that anarchist society is always in existence in various places, followed by an attempt to expand these interstices of non-domination. This can be seen, for example, in Hakim Bey's (1991) call to establish 'Temporary Autonomous Zones', as well as Ward's (1992) emphasis on organising as much of present society as is possible through free-associational control. Non-domination can be said then, to guide anarchists in their practice as well as their ideal.

Of course, joining the dots from practice to ideal may not be clear, and faithfully tracking non-domination may not lead straightforwardly to an anarchist society. There are huge collective action problems; reducing one agent's coercive capacity will make them more vulnerable to domination themselves, while increasing it may make others similarly vulnerable. Reasonable disagreement in individual instances regarding what non-domination entails is not only possible, but almost certain. On a broader level, however, I have shown that we do know what political theory endorsing non-domination as an ideal should commit us to; anarchism. Social organisation which is based upon the principles of voluntariness and coercive equality can secure non-domination in a robust way. Republicanism, entailing neither principle and positing a coercively constitutive relation between state and citizen, is not justified by non-domination.

Conclusion

For anarchists, the conclusions of this dissertation signify what adopting more widely the discourse of non-domination could contribute. Tactically, it may help orient decisions by making clear the types of actions that would and would not align with anarchism's ideals. Rhetorically, it improves upon the awkward formulation of anarchist ideals as the maximisation of both equality and liberty, which makes the position sound more prone to internal tensions than it is. In non-domination, we get a standalone ideal which allows anarchism to present itself not as a mongrel, but as a pure theory with a singular, consistent vision. This is particularly important for anarchists who seek to remove the perceived stigma of utopianism. On the account developed here, this characterisation of anarchism as utopian is not quite right: while there are difficulties (both epistemic and tactical) for achieving anarchism, the ideal sought is clear, as is the direction of the pursuit.

If anarchism, and not republicanism, is truly the political theory of non-domination, should avowed republicans convert *en masse* to anarchism? Not necessarily, for two different reasons. The first is that anarchism may still be considered too unrealistic or demanding in the collective action problems it must seek to resolve. One could hold that we would be better served focusing our energies on improving and utilising the political institutions we already have, rather than trying to dismantle or overcome them. This is tied with the second reason that republicans could coherently stay republicans, which is that they are committed to other ideals which can justify the institutional arrangement which they favour. They must probe and make explicit the other ideals to which they adhere, so as to more persuasively argue for their position. Indeed, this self-reflection may prove a blessing in disguise; the case for republicanism could be made more robust through an earnest engagement with the valuable contributions which (to give some tentative suggestions) security, political and institutional stability, large-scale organisational forms, even incrementalism as a political methodology make. Indeed, the republican can take solace in the very real possibility that republican non-domination appears as an attractive ideal through the very political arrangements which it has been claimed to underpin, as opposed to the other way around; were the forms themselves undesirable, neither they nor the ideal underpinning them would be endorsed.

With regards to non-domination itself, the definition herein developed improves upon previous efforts by making more concrete the way in which it could be tracked and realised. By no means is this to say that it is the only ideal worth pursuing; many others could be volunteered without even giving it much thought. It is, however, a valuable ideal, particularly with regards to how human relationships should be constituted. There is more work to be done, for sure. In particular, the interaction between types of coercive force which are relevant needs to be developed. How we could further our understanding of just when coercive imbalance is sufficiently constitutive of a relationship to be considered dominating must also be explored. But as is the case in so many philosophy dissertations, these issues are beyond the scope of this essay.

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