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ABSTRACT

Some argue that republican freedom is impossible because since it is always possible that a person or a group of persons possesses arbitrary power to interfere with individuals, no one is free to do anything. To avoid this challenge, in their recent article, Sean Ingham and Frank Lovett invoke the notion of ignorability in terms of which they offer a moderate interpretation of republican freedom. On their view, B is free from A to φ if A's possible types who prefer to intervene with B's φ-ing are ignorable. They also try to show that freedom is not determined by the probability of an intervention. However, we argue that they fail to do this and that freedom as non-domination is not entailed by ignorability.

The revived republican conception of freedom as non-domination has become a major rival of the pure negative conception of freedom as non-interference for the last three decades. According to the pure negative conception, B is unfree with respect to some φ-ing iff her performance of that φ becomes physically impossible due to A's interference or the latter's disposition to interfere with her (Steiner 1994; Kramer 2003, Carter 1999). Republicans, however, understand freedom as *non-domination*, according to which, if B *can* be exposed to an arbitrary exercise of A's power, she becomes unfree. For them, freedom requires robust non-interference, that is, the absence of interference not only in the actual world in which A does not prefer to intervene with B, but also in possible worlds in which there are changes in the preference or will of A as to what B should do (cf. Pettit 2012, p. 67). This is called *the robustness requirement*. To explain it simply, republicans hold that a person might be dominated, and thereby be unfree, while not actually suffering from any interference. Although a slave of a benevolent master, they hold, might not suffer any actual interference and it is improbable that he will be intervened, the slave remains unfree because the master can interfere with the slave at will (in any possible world in which the master prefers to intervene). Thus, the robustness requirement says that we must take into account not only interferences that occur in the actual world, but also interferences that may occur in possible worlds (Skinner 1994, Pettit 1997, 2012, pp. 67–69).[1]

It is interesting that proponents of the pure negative view, or liberal philosophers, are also concerned about possible interferences. Nevertheless, instead of using *possible worlds* jargon, they prefer to talk on *the probability* of interference. On the liberal view,

although all possibilities of interference should be considered, it should still be weighed in terms of the probability of its occurrence (Carter 1999, pp. 239–245, Kramer 2003, pp. 135–143). And, of course, the probability of the interference's occurrence can be different, depending on the distinct features of the situation (say, the agent's attempt or inclination to perform the relevant action). To put it otherwise, under the pure negative conception of freedom, an individual is free with respect to φ in proportion to the probability that he will not be interfered with. Liberals think that there is no significant distinction between the theoretical role of the notion of probability and that of the notion of possibility, and that the republican conception of freedom with its robustness requirement can be fully accommodated within the liberal account with probabilistic terms (cf. Carter 2008).

Republicans, however, hold that probability of interference is irrelevant to the determination of freedom. On their view, regardless of how improbable an interference is, its sheer possibility is sufficient to regard an agent unfree. For example, the slave of the benevolent master is unfree, regardless of how improbable the master's interference is. As Skinner emphasizes, 'even if there is almost no probability that . . . slaves will be subjected to interference in the exercise of [masters'] powers, their fundamental condition of servitude remains wholly unaffected. It is the mere fact that their master or ruler has arbitrary powers to intervene that takes away their liberty, not any particular degree of probability that these powers will ever be exercised' (Skinner 2008, p. 97). In other words, for republicans, the robustness requirement cannot be explained with probabilistic terms.

However, the robustness requirement in terms of possibility raises a serious problem for republican freedom. Given that the sheer possibility of an interference is sufficient to make an agent unfree, and that there is always a possibility that a person or a group of persons, including public officials, will have powers to interfere with people's lives, the question arises whether the republican freedom is possible at all. More specifically, although the robustness requirement in interference might seem to be a theoretical advantage for the republican liberty, it generates *the impossibility problem*, which says that we all are either subject to *dominium* (domination by other individuals or groups) or *imperium* (domination by the state) at any given time (cf. Simpson 2017, 2019, Carter and Shnayderman 2019). Considering that an agent, let it be an individual or a collectivity, becomes unfree if it can be interfered at will by any actual or possible collection of individuals, or by a single powerful (in the relevant sense) person, the agent is dominated at any time. On the other hand, if a republican state is required to protect the freedom of individuals from the *dominium* by enforcing the rule of law, then the question arises who will protect the citizens from *imperium*. Due to the unbridgeable imbalance of power between an individual and the state, the latter can interfere with the choices of the former at will, hence subject the former to *imperium*. Thus, the impossibility problem holds that freedom as non-domination is impossible to achieve because, since there is always possibility that some agents interfere with others, everybody is dominated either by others or by the state, hence unfree at any given time.

Yet notice that any theory of freedom that leads to the conclusion that everybody is unfree is neither attractive, nor useful for the purposes of social and political philosophy. If there are agents that have preferences to interfere with others in any possible world, then the republican conception of freedom needs somehow to narrow down possible worlds.

In order to achieve this goal, in a recent paper, the republican authors Ingham and Lovett (2019) distinguish between strong republicanism and moderate republicanism. They invoke the notions of *the type of an agent* and *ignorability* to distinguish between them. Drawing on game theory, Ingham and Lovett use the word *type* to refer to A's preference, whether possible or actual. That is to say, besides his actual type, an agent A has possible types, that is, different preferences with regard to intervening with B's choice; and each of these possible types corresponds to different possible worlds. On their view, B is free from A to φ if A's possible types who prefer to intervene with B (or possible worlds where this intervention occurs) are ignorable. According to strong republicanism, 'no logically possible type [of A] is ignorable' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 778). However, on moderate republicanism, which Ingham and Lovett are committed to, the possible types of A who prefer to intervene are ignorable if A's ability to frustrate B's choice to φ is sufficiently constrained by the rule of law. Thus, for them, it is strong republicanism that really faces the impossibility problem, but moderate republicanism avoids it.

Moderate republicanism suggests that freedom as non-domination is entailed by the ignorability of A's relevant possible types. What is more, in virtue of the notion of ignorability, which we are going to discuss in detail below, Ingham and Lovett try to show, *pace* liberals, that (un)freedom is not determined by the probability of an intervention's occurrence.

In what follows, we will first explicate the notion of ignorability. Then, we will argue that Ingham and Lovett fail in showing that freedom is not determined by the probability of an intervention's occurrence. Furthermore, we will show that freedom as non-domination is not entailed by the ignorability of the possible types of an agent. Ingham and Lovett include the notion of ignorability into the very definition of republican freedom, which as we will argue, fails to capture some clear-cut cases of domination, hence (republican) unfreedom. Note that, in this paper, we do not commit ourselves to the view that the republican freedom corresponding to Ingham and Lovett's conception is impossible. Rather, what we aim to show is that the notion of ignorability is problematic in abovementioned important respects.

1. What is ignorability?

Ingham and Lovett define *ignorability* in the following way

> A subset of an agent's possible types is ignorable if its becoming common knowledge that the agent's type does *not* belong to that subset would have no significant practical consequences (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 779).[2]

The definition might seem quite complicated, hence let us try to explain it in a detailed way.

By *agent* here, they mean an allegedly dominating agent. As mentioned above, the word *type* in the definition of ignorability refers to the agent A's preference with regard to intervening with B's choice. Although A might actually have no preference to intervene with B, he has possible types who would prefer to do it. In other words, although in some cases A is not actually disposed to interfere with B, he might have a preference to interfere in some possible worlds. Now, Ingham and Lovett say that some, or subset, of these possible types, hence possible worlds containing these types, are ignorable if its becoming common knowledge that A's (actual) type does *not* belong to that subset of possible types would have no significant practical consequences.

Let us continue by using Ingham and Lovett's examples. Suppose that A and B are roommates. A is a normal person who would never hold B captive at home against B's will, at least because A knows that the cost of such an intervention is a lengthy prison sentence. According to moderate republicanism, in this case, A does not dominate B with regard to the latter's leaving home because A's ability to frustrate B's choice to leave home is sufficiently constrained by the rule of law (for Ingham and Lovett, 'A dominates B if A has an insufficiently constrained ability to deliberately frustrate B's choice of whether to φ' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 777)). Nevertheless, there are logically possible types of A who would prefer to intervene with B's choice to leave home, even if the price these deranged types were to pay for this deed is very high, that is, a lengthy prison sentence. Ingham and Lovett hold that such possible types of A are ignorable because if everybody in the society knew that A is not deranged to hold B captive at home (i.e. A's actual type does not belong to the set of such possible deranged types), this would have no significant practical consequences. Since A is known as a person with typical normal character in the society, everybody already assumes that A is not a deranged person who would do such things. Hence, its becoming common knowledge that A's type does not belong to the set of possible deranged types would have no significant effect on anybody's behavior in the society, including B. Therefore, Ingham and Lovett hold that such possible types are 'justifiably "ignored"' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 778).

Notice how the notion of ignorability aims to restrict the domain of possible worlds (or types). As mentioned above, republicans invoke the notion of possible worlds to explain freedom as non-domination. However, since one can suppose indefinite number of possible worlds where an interference occurs, it soon turns out that there is a good reason to hold that a possible interference is everywhere at any given time, and that freedom is impossible. But, by making use of the notion of ignorability, Ingham and Lovett say that most of these possible worlds (types) are ignorable. And this suggests that there is no reason to think that unfreedom is everywhere. Thus, it seems that one important function of the notion of ignorability is to narrow down possible worlds invoked by the robustness requirement, and thereby to make room for the existence of republican freedom. Below we will see that there is a problem with this notion in that respect. But now let us focus on Ingham and Lovett's explanation of non-ignorable types.

To provide an example for non-ignorable types, they invite us to suppose, in this case, that A, the owner of the slave B, can intervene with B's choice to φ in exchange to trivial costs, such as walking across the lawn in the blistering sun and simply issuing instructions to his foreman, but not in exchange to severe legal repercussions as in the previous example. Suppose also that A actually has no preference to intervene with B's φ-ing;

because, though trivially, an intervention is still costly for A. Now, according to Ingham and Lovett, although A actually does not prefer to intervene, his possible type who would prefer to intervene with B's φ-ing is non-ignorable. This is because if B (and others) knew that A's (actual) type does not belong to the set of such (intervening) types, this would have significant practical consequences. For example, if B knew that A is not that type, 'she would no longer have the same incentives to ingratiate herself with A' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 779). This new information could also change the behavior of others, slaves and masters alike, with respect to A and one another.

The notion of ignorability also applies to group cases where the number of alleged dominating agents is more than one. Ingham and Lovett use Simpson's (2017) example to illustrate this point. Suppose, they say, that in rural India where caste norms are believed to be important, a Dalit (*Untouchable*) breaks them by taking water from a well, which is used by the members of upper castes. Usually Dalits, on the instigation of Brahmins, who are members of the highest caste, were lynched for this. But suppose that our Dalit is a physically strong man who can defend himself against a lone attacker. Thus, a collective intervention of the villagers would be needed to prevent the Dalit's action of taking water from the well. Simpson claims that, according to freedom as non-domination, the Dalit is dominated regardless of whether the villagers repudiate the caste norm and prefer not to intervene with the Dalit – that is, regardless of whether the villagers change their preference or will as to what the Dalit should do in this case (Simpson 2017, p. 34). Ingham and Lovett, however, argue that whether the Dalit is dominated depends on whether the (possible) profiles of the villagers' action that constitute a joint intervention are ignorable (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 784). To explicate the point, they consider two variations of the Dalit's case.

According to the first reconstructed version of the Dalit example, although everyone believes that everyone repudiates the caste norm, each villager somehow privately changes his mind with respect to the caste norms and prefers the norms to be enforced. Under such circumstances, individual villagers would not expect the others to join them to intervene with the Dalit because every villager (wrongly) believes that everybody repudiates the caste norms. Hence, every villager assumes that if he intervenes with the Dalit, the others would not join him and his costly intervention would fail. In this case, the Dalit is not dominated because the (possible) profiles of the villagers' action which constitute a joint intervention are ignorable. The reason is that if it became common knowledge that the combination of the villagers' type does not belong to the set of the (possible) profiles of the villagers' action that constitute a joint intervention, this would have no significant practical consequences. To put it simply, everybody, including the Dalit, already assumes that the villagers would not interfere jointly. Therefore, the possible interfering types of the villagers are ignorable and the Dalit is not dominated.

In the second reconstructed version of the Dalit example, everybody in the society *knows* that everybody endorses the caste norms and is willing to enforce them. Here, a group of the *typical* villagers would prefer to interfere with the Dalit because they believe that everybody will join the intervention. Hence, the Dalit is dominated. What is more interesting, according to the notion of ignorability, the Dalit would be dominated, even if it turned out that the villagers who are present around the well (next to the Dalit) repudiated cast norms, that is, they are *atypical* villagers who do not prefer to interfere with the Dalit. For 'such combinations of types would be non-ignorable' – that is, its

becoming common knowledge that the (actual) types of the villagers who are present around the well do not belong to the set of possible interfering types of these villagers would have significant practical consequences; if the Dalit knew that the villagers currently present in front of the well are atypical, he would take water from the well (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 784). Thus, Ingham and Lovett hold that even though the present villagers are not ready to interfere with the Dalit, they still have dominating power because their possible jointly interfering types are non-ignorable.

Let us now summarize the main points of Ingham and Lovett's republican freedom in terms of ignorability. Against the challenge that republican freedom is impossible, they argue that we must ignore some possible (intervening) types of an agent on the grounds that the common knowledge that the agent's type does not belong to those possible types would have no significant practical consequences. In this vein, to make republican freedom possible, they try to restrict the domain of possible worlds (types). Moreover, as will be discussed below, to show the specific theoretical role of the notion of (non-)ignorability, Ingham and Lovett argue that freedom is not determined by the probability of intervention. However, in what follows, we will see that the notion of ignorability is defective enough to do these jobs.

2. (Non-)ignorability and probability

To show the irrelevancy of the probability of intervention, Ingham and Lovett hold that there might be non-ignorable (possible) types of those who actually have *no* probability to intervene with other's choice, and that, since their relevant types are non-ignorable, we must say of them that they dominate. In other words, the point here is to demonstrate that there might be domination (hence unfreedom), even if there is no probability of interference.

Let us use another example from Ingham and Lovett (2019) to elucidate this point. Suppose that, in a traditional society, a husband has legal power of interference in his wife's choice to work. Also suppose that this husband is very gentle, and he will not intervene in the wife's such choices. Nevertheless, according to the notion of ignorability, although the husband is gentle, the possible types of the husband who would use his legal power to intervene are non-ignorable. This is because, in such a traditional society, almost every employer shares a common presupposition that husbands do not let their wives work. Therefore, employers have typically very diminished incentives to recruit women; they are not willing to waste their time by recruiting women, who are not seen as independent persons, and they do not want to deal with possible quarrels with the husbands of their employees. Given these conditions, if the employers knew that that husband is gentle in the sense that he would not intervene in his wife's choice to work, they would act differently; they would recruit her providing that her other skills were eligible for the job. So, the relevant knowledge about the husband's (actual) type would have significant practical consequences; the (possible) intervening types of such a husband are therefore non-ignorable. Hence, Ingham and Lovett conclude, the gentle husband dominates his wife.

Indeed, Ingham and Lovett provide this example to show that their analysis is based on a common knowledge condition, satisfaction of which does *not* depend merely on the subjective assessment of the agent subject to power. Although the wife is confident that

her husband will not intervene in her choice to work, the common knowledge condition in the example is not satisfied, because the employers (or other people who might relevantly be involved in the situation) do not know that the husband is not going to intervene. The satisfaction of the common knowledge condition does not only depend on the beliefs of the interfered person, the wife, about the dispositions of her husband. Ingham and Lovett hold that '[o]n the moderate republican view we have defined, such types of husbands are [...] non-ignorable *even though the wife may assign them zero probability*' (2019, p. 779; original emphasis). In other words, this example is meant to illustrate that the wife's subjective assessment of the preferences of the husband is irrelevant in the ascription of (un)freedom to her; the employers (or the others) must also know that the husband is not going to intervene, in order for the wife to be free to work.

Nevertheless, immediately after the quote above, Ingham and Lovett make a stronger claim. They write: '[a]s this example should make clear, *it would be false to say that what determines, on our account, whether A dominates B is the probability that A will wish to intervene*' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, p. 779; our emphasis). Note that in this sentence their claim is *not* that the wife's subjective ascription of the probability to the husband's interference is irrelevant (as it is in the previous quote), but that the probability of the husband's interference *per se* does *not* determine the wife's freedom. Thus, for Ingham and Lovett, this example is also designed to illustrate another function of *ignorability*: that freedom is not determined by the probability of interference *per se*, which comes down to the view that their republican freedom cannot be accommodated within the liberal account with probabilistic terms. Below we will see why their view is wrong. But now let us focus on an interesting feature of republican freedom determined by the notion of ignorability. This will help us to understand why Ingham and Lovett are wrong in this issue.

As Gerald MacCallum (1967) pointed out, notwithstanding the different conceptions, there is one core concept of freedom upon which philosophers agree: Freedom is always a triadic relation between an agent, a preventing condition (which might be a certain interference, a constraint or a restriction),[3] and a particular φ-ing (which may include one or all of the followings: *doings, becomings, remainings, undergoings*) which can be either impeded or unimpeded. Nevertheless, according to moderate republicanism's conception of freedom in terms of ignorability, this picture becomes more complicated. On this republican view, to show that B is free from A to φ, it is not sufficient that A's actual type, as a possible preventing condition, prefers not to interfere with B's φ-ing. It is also required that its becoming common knowledge that A (more exactly, his actual type) is distinct from his possible intervening types would have no significant practical consequences. Thus, to show that whether B is free from A to φ, Ingham and Lovett invoke the additional components – other members of the society, including B, with their possible knowledge about A's type and practical consequences of such possible knowledge. (A good example to see this was *the gentle husband* case in which the non-ignorability of the husband's type is shown by invoking the practical consequences of the possible common knowledge that the husband is not the type who uses his power to prevent the wife from working.) Thus, it turns out that, for Ingham and Lovett, these additional components are also parts of the preventing condition.

With such an understanding of a preventing condition in mind, let us again turn to the republican view that freedom is not determined by the probability of interference. Our claim is that Ingham and Lovett are not successful to show this in terms of ignorability, and that while measuring the probability of the interference, they conflate two similar but distinct (un)freedom situations with the different preventing conditions, which should be kept apart at least in the context of estimation of probability.

To see this, let us first briefly explain what an (un)freedom situation is. By *an (un) freedom situation*, we mean the truth conditions of a sentence, which contains the predicate __*is free* or __*is unfree*. The truth conditions of a sentence with the predicate __*is (un)free* is sufficiently specified if three aspects (an agent, a preventing condition, and a particular φ-ing) are identified in the specification. Often, sentences with the predicate __*is (un)free* are ambiguous because a preventing condition is not identified clearly. For example, the sentence 'The wife is free to work' is ambiguous in the sense that it is not clear whose intervention she is free from. Is the wife free because her husband is not disposed to interfere in her working, or because the employers are ready to recruit her? Here, the (un)freedom situation will differ depending on how we identify the preventing condition. If the preventing condition is *the husband*, then the triadic relation in the freedom situation is constituted by the wife (an agent), the husband (a preventing condition), and working (a particular φ-ing). But if the preventing condition is *the employers*, then the triadic relation is constituted by the wife (an agent), the employers (a preventing condition), and working (a particular φ-ing). Obviously, these are different freedom situations because their second variables, that is, the preventing conditions, are not the same.

Notice that the same goes for the Dalit case as well. In this example, to show that the Dalit is under domination, and thereby is unfree to take water for the well, Ingham and Lovett hold that the villagers are ready to the joint intervention. So, the triadic relation in the example is constituted by the Dalit (an agent), the villagers (a preventing condition), and taking water from the well (an action). However, when Ingham and Lovett argue that 'the Dalit is dominated, even if, as it happens, he is in the presence only of atypical villagers who have repudiated caste norms and are not the types to contribute to joint interventions to enforce them' (Ingham and Lovett 2019, pp. 784–785), they change the second variable in the example, and thereby invoke another (un)freedom situation. For, in this case, the second variable is not the typical villagers, but the *atypical* villagers who are present near the well. Interestingly enough, when Ingham and Lovett say that the freedom of the wife, or of the Dalit, is under question, they do not clearly specify the preventing conditions (in these specific examples, preventing agents). But this is of course a central issue in the context of political philosophy, where getting clear about the preventing condition makes, as MacCallum puts it, 'discussions of freedom (…) intelligible' (1967, p. 316).

Now, let us focus on the main issue. Does Ingham and Lovett succeed in their claim that the (non-)ignorability of A's relevant possible types shows that (un)freedom is not determined by the probability of interference? The above argument shows that, we argue, here they come to their conclusion as a result of conflating the preventing conditions. Although, in the (un)freedom situation constituted by *the wife (an agent)-the husband (a preventing condition)-working (an action)*, the probability of the husband's interference with the wife's choice to work might be zero, in the (un)freedom situation constituted by

the wife (an agent)-the employers or others with the relevant possible knowledge with practical consequences (a preventing condition)-working (an action), it is highly probable that the employers (or others) will frustrate the wife's choice. Obviously, the probabilities here are distinct because the preventing conditions are distinct; if the preventing condition is changed, then the probability of interference also changes. Thus, it seems that, here, there is a pun on the interpretation of the preventing condition. To show that the probability of the interference is irrelevant, Ingham and Lovett first take only the husband as the preventing condition. But when they want to show that the husband still dominates, they invoke the employers (and others) with their relevant possible knowledge about the husband's type – that is, the preventing condition becomes a more complex entity. And they neglect the fact that, by changing the preventing condition, they also change the probability of the interference, which to show its unnecessity, should have been kept unvaried.

Here, a republican might reply that these freedom situations are not relevantly distinct. B might find herself in situations where her intention to work is not fulfilled because of the presence of different preventing conditions (be it her husband, the employers, or others). However, the freedom situations can be regarded as the same in terms of considering the preventing conditions (the husband, the employers, etc.) to be one and the same conjunct of various conditions working together. Put it otherwise, our republican might object that although the freedom situations are distinct in terms of the concrete preventing conditions, depending on the context of a political theory, they can be considered to be the relevantly same, because after all what lies at the heart of both situations is the husband's possible interference acknowledged by the law.

We agree that these freedom situations might be considered to be the same, depending on the context of the theory. That is, the preventing condition in this example might also be identified more vaguely, by construing it as consisting of the husband, the employers, and maybe of other relevant members of the society, taken together. But if one considers the preventing conditions, hence the freedom situations in this specific example, to be the same, or a unified conjunct of various conditions, this must also be taken into account while assessing the probability of the interference. In other words, if, to show that the gentle husband dominates, there is a need to invoke the employers or other possible constraints, then the probability of interference must also be estimated by taking the other constraints into account from the start. The problem in Ingham and Lovett's estimation is that they do not do this. However, given that the employers (and others) with the relevant possible knowledge and its practical consequences are to be regarded as aspects of the husband's domination, the probability that the wife's working will be frustrated will not be zero (even if the husband himself is not going to interfere), but a significantly higher number of percentage.[4] Thus, Ingham and Lovett's use of the notion of ignorability does not demonstrate that the view that domination is determined by the probability of interference is false. Of course, A's domination has its effects on B's freedom, but these seem to be strongly dependent either on the probability of A's interference or, if one wants to build others possible interference into A's domination, on the probability of others' interference as aspects of A's domination.

This is an important point because it also suggests that Ingham and Lovett's analysis can be reduced to a more complex probabilistic analysis, which can be regarded as a shortcoming, rather than an advantage, of moderate republicanism. For given their

view that the probability of interference does not determine domination, Ingham and Lovett cannot claim that the probability of interference of different agents (the husband, the employers, etc.) is a necessary factor in the ascription of (un)freedom to the wife. Once they put forward this claim, their conception of freedom as non-domination would cease to be a significantly different from the liberal conception of freedom. For liberals are also much concerned with possible interferences and also take into account domination of persons with no actual preferences to intervene.[5] As Carter and Shnayderman put it, '[o]n a liberal conception of freedom, no less than on a republican one, a dominated person who does not suffer any actual interferences ... is less free than she would otherwise be, for the number of her sets of conjunctively exercisable liberties is smaller than it would otherwise be' (Carter and Shnayderman 2019, p. 138). Yet, as mentioned above, according to republicans, what differentiates republican conception of freedom from the liberal one is the robustness requirement – the claim that domination, in the absence of intervention, is *sufficient* to make the agent unfree. Thus, republicans' view, including Ingham and Lovett's, suggest that this conception of freedom cannot be analyzed in probabilistic terms. Therefore, if there is a possibility of analyzing their republican conception of freedom in probabilistic terms (and, as has been shown above, we think there is), then their conception of freedom is not distinct, or at least is not as distinct as they claim, from the liberal one.

3. Ignorability and domination

As already mentioned, the central role of the notion of ignorability is to determine whether A dominates B. Nevertheless, the determination relation between these concepts is not directly explicated. Strictly speaking, Ingham and Lovett hold that the ignorability of A's possible types determines whether A has *a sufficiently constrained ability* to frustrate B's choice of whether to φ: If A's relevant (possible) types are ignorable, then A's ability to frustrate B's choice is *sufficiently constrained* by the rule of law; but if non-ignorable, then A's ability is not sufficiently constrained. Furthermore, since A's having insufficiently constrained ability to frustrate B's choice determines whether A dominates B, and since A's insufficiently constrained ability is determined by non-ignorability of A's relevant (possible) types, it follows that domination here is determined by non-ignorability.[6] And this in turn implies that B's choice of whether to φ is free if A's (possible intervening) types are ignorable; that is, freedom as non-domination is determined by ignorability. The determination relation among the concepts *ignorability, domination*, and *freedom* can be succinctly expressed as follows. The non-ignorability of A's type entails A's domination over B; and the domination of A entails that B is unfree. Thus, the notion of ignorability is included in the definition of republican freedom as non-domination. Therefore, if non-ignorability entails domination, then ignorability must entail non-domination.

But the latter, we argue, is not true. Although ignorability is supposed to determine, via non-domination, whether B is free from A, it does not entail non-domination. For some *possible* intervening types of dominating agents might also turn out to be ignorable.

To see this, let us again imagine a small traditional society where each husband has legal power to hold his wife captive at home. Suppose that there is a gentle husband A in this society, who does not want to exercise power to hold his wife B captive. Also, suppose

that B is terminally sick and in a deep depression so that it makes no difference for her whether A will hold her captive or not. Everybody in the society is informed that B is terminally sick and in a deep depression; and nobody, including B herself, cares whether she is at home or outside. Now, according to the notion of ignorability, a possible type of A (call it A_p) who would want to hold B captive at home is ignorable because its becoming common knowledge that A's actual type does not prefer to hold B captive at home (that is, A is not A_p) would have no significant practical consequences. This is because A's preference to hold B captive is insignificant or does not matter for both B and the rest of the society. On the other hand, according to the notion of domination, A dominates B because A has an insufficiently constrained ability to hold B captive at home; although A has no actual preferences to do this, he would rationally choose to intervene if he preferred for B not to leave home and cared enough about B's leaving home; though, again, with no significant practical consequences.

Similar thought experiments can be designed for dominating groups as well. Imagine a prisoner B who is a strong young man and whom one prison guard could not hold if he preferred to escape. Therefore, two prison guards constantly monitor the prisoner's activity. B previously never preferred to escape because he thought that he is not strong enough to cope with two prison guards. But suppose that the current group of prison guards (call this group G) consists of atypical ones who would not prefer to join in intervention, if B tried to escape. Suppose also that, suddenly, the society, including the other prison guards and the administration of the prison, faces a distracting catastrophic situation so that nobody cares about how B's activity is being monitored. But now B is not willing to escape; he says to himself depressively: 'It makes no difference for me whether I am in prison or not.' Now, according to the notion of ignorability, a possible combination of the types of the current prison guards who would prefer to jointly intervene (call this combination G_p) is ignorable because its becoming common knowledge that G's actual type would not intervene, if B tried to escape, (i.e. that G is not G_p) would have no significant practical consequences. Again, the reason is that G's possible preference to hold B captive is insignificant or does not matter for both B and the others. Yet, according to the notion of domination, G dominates B because G has insufficiently constrained ability to intervene.[7]

In response to these thought experiments, one might reply that such scenarios are very specific or unlikely to happen. But note that the issue here is conceptual, which means that one or two possible cases showing that the ignorability of the possible intervening types of A is consistent with A's domination are enough to conclude that ignorability fails to track non-domination. To put it another way, 'A is not A_p' (or 'G is not G_p') kind of knowledge with no practical consequences with regard to B's certain doing – i.e. the ignorability of A's possible intervening type – does not entail that A does not dominate B. For, as the thought experiments have shown, it is well conceivable that there might be possible intervening types of a person that are ignorable, but nevertheless this person might still have insufficiently constrained ability to frustrate somebody's choice.

4. Conclusion

We argued that the notion of ignorability in terms of which Ingham and Lovett offer a moderate understanding of republican freedom does not do the intended theoretical job. The authors fail to show, in virtue of ignorability, that freedom is *not* determined by the probability of an intervention. For, to show that there might be cases where A dominates B despite *no* probability of A's interference, they invoke other prevention conditions connected to A's domination. But they ignore that if there is a need to invoke them, they should also be taken into account for the assessment of the probability from the start, which would show that there is a high probability of interference. Furthermore, we argued that the claim that A's possible types who prefer to intervene with B are ignorable does not entail that A does not dominate B – i.e. that, on the republican view, B is free from A to φ. In other words, because there might be cases in which the type of the agent is ignorable yet there is a domination of this agent, adding the notion of ignorability into the definition of republican freedom as non-domination seems to be problematic from the perspective of republicanism itself. Ingham and Lovett introduced the notion of ignorability to narrow down logically possible types who prefer to intervene (or possible worlds that contain these types), but it turns out that this notion narrows down too much, including the possible types of those who, according to their understanding of domination, has actual domination. This shows that ignorability does not determine (non-)domination, and that there is inconsistency between the notion of ignorability and their notion of domination.

Notes

1. Another crucial requirement of republican freedom is *the arbitrariness requirement*, which holds that A dominates B if A arbitrarily interferes with B. Here *arbitrariness* can be interpreted in two ways: procedural and substantive. According to the first interpretation, an interference is arbitrary if it is not effectively constrained by certain procedures and rules in the society (Lovett 2010, p. 96). According to the second interpretation, interference is arbitrary if it is not controlled by the interfered persons *or* forced to track their interests and ideas (Pettit 2012, p. 58, 1997, p. 55).
2. Ingham and Lovett introduce this definition as a definition of moderate republicanism. However, it is clear that this definition defines the notion of ignorability, rather than any form of republicanism. Therefore, we believe, it must have been a technical mistake to name it as a definition of moderate republicanism, and throughout the text we refer to this definition as the definition of ignorability.
3. In MacCallum (1967), the notion of a *preventing condition* is deliberately vague to encompass not only an agent, let it be a person or a group of persons, but also *things* (such as trees, stones, one's feelings) that might prevent some action or becoming. However, social and political philosophy usually focuses on the cases where a preventing condition is a person or a group of persons.
4. One might object that, on Lovett's version of republicanism, only an arbitrary interference, not an interference as such, is a threat to freedom, and that since under the traditional law husbands are *legally* allowed to interfere with their wives, an interference of the employers, that is, their rejection of recruiting the wife on the grounds that her husband might interfere with her is *not* arbitrary. After all, unlike Pettit, Lovett endorses procedural arbitrariness, according to which an interference is arbitrary if it is not effectively controlled by certain procedures and rules which are common knowledge in society (see footnote 1). And the employer's behavior with regard to the wife's choice to work corresponds to the commonly

known rules of the given society. Hence, the objection might go, our criticism of Lovett is unsuccessful because it is not based on the procedural arbitrariness. However, we think that this objection is irrelevant for the following reason: In their paper under discussion here, Ingham and Lovett do not endorse any particular interpretation of arbitrariness – substantive or procedural. It seems that their goal is to show that the impossibility problem does not hold in either interpretation of arbitrariness. Furthermore, even if we, in correspondence with the abovementioned objection, took Lovett's previous writings (Lovett 2010, 2012) and his endorsement of procedural arbitrariness as relevant for Ingham and Lovett (2019), the example itself would be rendered pointless. The reason is that there is a dependence between the interference of the employers and the husband's (possible) interference; the former would be non-arbitrary given the non-arbitrariness of the latter. In other words, if we accepted that the employers' behavior is non-arbitrary, hence not a threat to the wife's freedom, then Ingham and Lovett's own example would be pointless, because since the husband is legally allowed to interfere at will, his (possible) interference should also have been regarded as non-arbitrary, hence also not as a (potential) threat to the wife's freedom. But since Ingham and Lovett designed the example to show unfreedom of the wife, it is reasonable to say that, at least for the sake of the example discussed, here they do not endorse the procedural interpretaton of arbitrariness.

5. According to liberals, domination reduces one's overall freedom in proportion to the probability of interference (cf. Carter 2008, p. 70). When now, at time t, we ascribe freedom to A to do x at time t + 1, we also take into account of someone else's possible interference to A's x–ing between t and t + 1. Even if the interference is not actualized, it affects A's freedom, more exactly, A's overall freedom.

6. Of course, this does *not* mean that domination is only determined by non-ignorability of A's (possible) type. A might actually have a preference to (arbitrarily) interfere with B's φ-ing, which would also mean that A dominates B.

7. Since in these examples we specify the subjects (the wife and the prisoner) as being depressed, it might seem as if we ignore the fact that the specific psychological states or predilections of the subjects involved here are irrelevant to Ingham and Lovett's theory of domination. After all, we can imagine many different situations with persons in weird psychological states, who, for example, desire to be held captive or do not want to be free. Nevertheless, it is well-known that, for the republicans, the fact that such persons do not desire to be free, or are indifferent to their freedom, does not mean that they are not under domination, because regardless of what they desire about their freedom, the fact is that it is not in their own hands, but depends on the will of the people who have unconstrained power to control them. Thus, in this line of thought, one might object that that we specify the wife and the prisoner in our examples as not caring about their freedom is irrelevant to the republican conception of domination. However, note that this objection would be about the relation of the notion of domination and the psychology of the corresponding subjects, rather than about the notion of ignorability *per se*. Our thought experiments do not intend to show that domination depends on the psychology of the intervener. The purpose of the thought experiments is only to show that, as far as the ignorability of a type depends on 'significant practical consequences' (see the definition of the ignorability), there might be cases in which A, who has no actual preference to intervene, has a domination, but the common knowledge about his possible type who prefers to intervene would have no significant practical consequences. The fact that psychological predilections or preferences of the subjects are involved here is just the direct result of Ingham and Lovett's design of the concept of ignorability, but not because of the domination issue *per se* – i.e. the ignorability of a type has necessarily to do with practical consequences, which in turn necessarily depends on the type's psychology (preferences) and knowledge about it.

Disclosure statement

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