



HAVING  
Too  
MUCH

PHILOSOPHICAL  
ESSAYS ON  
LIMITARIANISM

EDITED BY  
INGRID ROBEYNS



<https://www.openbookpublishers.com/>

©2023 Ingrid Robeyns (ed.). Copyright of individual chapters is maintained by the chapters' authors.



This work is licensed under an Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivs 4.0 International license (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0). This license allows re-users to copy and distribute the material in any medium or format in unadapted form only, for non-commercial purposes only, and only so long as attribution is given to the creator. Attribution should include the following information:

Ingrid Robeyns (ed.), *Having Too Much: Philosophical Essays on Limitarianism*. Cambridge, UK: Open Book Publishers, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0338>

In order to access detailed and updated information on the license, please visit <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0285#copyright>

Further details about the CC BY-NC-ND license are available at <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>

All external links were active at the time of publication unless otherwise stated and have been archived via the Internet Archive Wayback Machine at <https://archive.org/web>

Any digital material and resources associated with this volume will be available at <https://doi.org/10.11647/OBP.0338#resources>

ISBN Paperback: 978-1-80064-966-8

ISBN Hardback: 978-1-80064-967-5

ISBN Digital (PDF): 978-1-80064-968-2

ISBN Digital ebook (EPUB): 978-1-80064-969-9

ISBN Digital ebook (XML): 978-1-80064-971-2

ISBN DIGITAL ebook (HTML): 978-1-80064-972-9

DOI: 10.11647/OBP.0338

Cover image: Skyscrapers, photo by Roland Pierik, CC BY-NC-ND 4.0

Cover design: Jeevanjot Kaur Nagpal

# II. The Self-Respect Argument for Limitarianism

*Christian Neuhäuser*

---

Limitarianism is the view that justice requires the limitation of wealth, at least under certain conditions. In its original form the view was developed by Ingrid Robeyns and normatively justified by the use of two arguments, the democratic argument and the argument from unmet urgent needs (Robeyns 2017; 2022). The democratic argument states that a certain concentration of wealth undermines the fair value of political equality. Very wealthy and especially extremely rich people have disproportionate and sometimes dominating political power. Justice requires the limitation of wealth to a point where it does not undermine political equality. The unmet urgent needs argument states that wealth above a certain threshold does not contribute anything, or at least anything that is significant for the flourishing of wealthy people.<sup>1</sup> For this reason, money above this threshold can be put to much better use meeting the urgent needs of others, which can reasonably be conceptualized as a requirement of justice. Justice therefore requires the redistribution of wealth above this threshold. Due to efficiency considerations, it might be better not to tax all money above the threshold, but only a large portion. Economists often judge seventy per cent to be an efficient upper/highest marginal tax rate (Hamlin 2018).

In this chapter I want to contribute to the justification of limitarianism by providing a novel argument for limitarianism which is distinct from

---

1 The account of flourishing can either be ontologically objective in the sense defended by Martha Nussbaum (2006) or made objective through public procedures, as advocated by Amartya Sen (2009).

the two arguments developed by Robeyns.<sup>2</sup> This argument is based on self-respect as a primary basic good (Rawls 2001; Eyal 2005; Stark 2012). According to this argument, limitarianism is needed to protect the social basis of self-respect of all members of society so that they can develop a sense of self-worth and pursue their personal projects. Since this kind of self-respect is a more important basic good than wealth above a certain threshold, limitarianism can be justified either as a principle of justice or as a direct policy implication of the principles of justice, if it turns out to be required to secure the social basis of self-respect. This self-respect argument is compatible with the democratic and unmet urgent needs arguments. At the same time, it stands on its own. Even if the democratic argument and the unmet urgent needs argument fail, the self-respect argument can provide a robust basis for the justification of limitarianism (Volacu/Dumitru 2019; Timmer 2019; Huseby 2022).

In this chapter, the self-respect argument for a limitarian principle of justice will be developed in five sections. In the first section I will discuss the idea of self-respect as developed by Rawls. I will argue that even according to the best available interpretation of the Rawlsian conception of self-respect as provided by Cynthia Stark (2012), the conception is still incomplete. The Rawlsian conception of self-respect is too psychological and ignores the normative structure of the dependence of self-respect on social respect in a problematic way. Because of this, Rawls overlooks the function that economic equality, or rather limited economic inequality, has as a social basis for self-respect. This critique of the classical Rawlsian conception of self-respect lays the foundation for the self-respect-based argument for limitarianism. In the second section I will give a brief informal overview of this argument, and in the remaining three sections I will discuss the most important elements of the argument. In the third section I will defend the claim that self-respect depends in a normative way on the status as a citizen of equal standing. In the fourth section I will argue that the difference principle is ill-suited to securing equal standing as a social basis of self-respect. This leads to the claim in the fifth section that for this reason the difference principle should be complemented by a limitarian principle. This can

---

2 A number of additional arguments have been developed by other authors since then (e.g., Zwarthoed 2018; Dumitru 2020; Gough 2020; Timmer 2021; Elena Icardi as well as Tim Meijers in this volume). The argument presented here is different from those arguments.

be understood either as a principle of justice that is integrated into the second Rawlsian principle or as a policy that is directly justified by the second principle of justice. This depends on, as I will argue later, how the difference principle is interpreted. The chapter ends with a brief summary of the argument and the prospect of an ecumenical view regarding the limitarian principle.

## 1. Self-Respect as a Primary Good and Its Dependence on Equal Respect

John Rawls famously states that self-respect is one of the basic goods and may be the most important one. He gives self-respect a central, albeit sometimes overlooked, place in his theory of justice. And Rawls is quite clear about the importance of self-respect. He writes about it as a basic good (2001, p. 59):

The social bases of self-respect, understood as those aspects of social institutions normally essential of citizens are to have a lively sense of their worth as persons and to be able to advance their ends with self-confidence.

Rawls thinks that self-respect is necessary for self-esteem, which in turn is necessary to be able to pursue personal projects, which in turn is necessary for giving meaning to life. In short, in the Rawlsian framework self-respect is a necessary condition of a meaningful life. This is apparently also the reason why it is so important for Rawls to state in different places that his principles of justice provide a sufficient social basis for self-respect. It is true, of course, that a liberal theory of justice can contribute to the meaning of life only indirectly through providing means for different ends, since according to liberal beliefs individuals should be autonomous in giving meaning to their lives. However, a liberal theory of justice still needs to provide the social basis that enables people to do so. If it does not, it fails people in terms of what is most important to them.

The question then is how exactly the principles of justice secure the social basis of self-respect. My understanding is that the best interpretation of the Rawlsian account of self-respect at the time of writing has been provided by Cynthia Stark (2012). She argues that it is a mistake to assume that self-respect is a basic good only because

it is of instrumental value. Instead, Rawls is best read as claiming that self-respect also has intrinsic value and that the principles of justice are necessary to secure this intrinsic value. Stark makes her point by arguing that self-respect depends on both personal and political circumstances. On the basis of this assumption, she claims that a citizen needs to be able to see their social contributions as valuable in order to have secure self-respect. This valuable contribution can be understood in three ways. According to the first understanding, the contribution has to be seen as especially meritorious for self-respect. The more valuable the contribution is, the more reason someone has to respect themselves. According to the second interpretation, the contribution has to be intrinsically good for the contributor themselves. Contributing to society in a specific way needs to make the life of the contributor better in a direct way. According to the third interpretation, the contribution simply has to matter socially. It has to be something that benefits society, albeit not in an especially meritocratic way.

Stark argues that the first interpretation is incompatible with the egalitarian perspective of Rawlsian theories, because it would create a hierarchy of respect and self-respect based on the assumed value of social contributions. The real issue is between the second and third interpretations. Stark argues that only the third interpretation is supported by Rawls' theory, because it is only here that the linkage between political circumstances and self-respect which is needed for a political theory of self-respect is established. The problem with the second interpretation is that the political duty of mutual respect, the difference principle, and the priority of liberty would not be needed for self-respect if the value of self-respect was merely seen as something that is intrinsically good for a person. It is possible to achieve a basic structure in which people are able to freely pursue their personal life projects without these political principles. If, however, self-respect depends on the fact that one's social contribution matters socially, those principles become crucial. It is only when those principles are in place that citizens can have a secure sense that their contributions are seen as valuable by society and that they matter in this way. This is true because those principles are meant to ensure, as I will argue later, that people can act as citizens that make socially important contributions and are seen as such.

With her interpretation, Stark manages to refute a serious counterargument against the Rawlsian position that has been levelled

in the literature several times (Thomas 1978; Eyal 2005; Doppelt 2009). Supporters of this counterargument understand self-respect as being in line with the second interpretation and therefore as only having instrumental value for pursuing personal life projects. This disconnects self-respect from the principles of justice in a problematic way, because it is conceivable to make self-respect psychologically immune against what in Rawlsian terms has to be seen as prevailing injustices. Based on this assumption, the critics argue that the argument for the specific Rawlsian principles of justice based on the basic good of self-respect is deficient, because the instrumental good of self-respect can be secured in other ways. If this were true, the basic good of self-respect would not properly be secured by the Rawlsian principles of justice and they would have to be revised accordingly.

However, if Stark is correct that for Rawls self-respect has intrinsic value and that it depends on socially valuable contributions, then this counterargument is not sound. Since self-respect is of intrinsic value in the sense that it is not only linked to the individual conception of the good life of a citizen but is also directly attached to socially valuable contributions, the principles of justice are necessary to secure this attachment. I think that Stark's interpretation of Rawls is superior to the others provided in the literature because it manages to show that his theory is not inconsistent in an obviously damaging way. At the same time, Stark's interpretation brings out two other problems with Rawls's understanding of self-respect that are important when considering limitarianism. The first problem is that even according to Stark's reading, Rawls' theory still is too psychological. The second, and for this chapter the crucial, problem is that according to her interpretation it appears to be somewhat arbitrary to see political equality as necessary but economic inequality as unproblematic for self-respect.

Rawls might not have intended to create the first problem, which is that the understanding of self-respect is overly psychological. As Stark points out, he sees self-respect as being of intrinsic value as well as dependent on political circumstances rather than solely on personal ones. Someone who is not respected properly by the institutions of the basic structure of society has reason to see their self-respect as being violated regardless of whether or not this harms their psychological ability to pursue their personal projects. However, even according to Stark's interpretation, the intrinsic value of self-respect is understood as being foundational for a secure belief in the objective worth of the

personal projects one pursues. This belief is secured, in Stark's reading, by a society which communicates that the contribution of at least some of those projects matter socially. The principles of justice and institutions derived from them are needed to secure this belief in the social value of one's contributions.

I think that this understanding of the relation between self-respect, the principles of justice, and socially valuable contributions has it backwards. It is not because people's self-respect depends psychologically on socially valuable contributions that they deserve respect in the form of the principles of justice. Instead, people first deserve respect as equal members of society who matter. Because of this, part of the task of the principles of justice is to offer them the opportunity to engage in contributions that are socially valuable.<sup>3</sup> If a person is not respected by society and its institutions, their complaint must not be that psychologically they cannot experience the social worth of their projects anymore. They might be very aware of the fact that society treats them wrongly but may still be secure in the belief that they matter and what they have to offer matters too. Their complaint is that society does not respect them or their 'self', so to speak, in the way it should. The kind of harm done to their self-respect, which has a negative effect on them, is normative and not primarily psychological.<sup>4</sup> So the ameliorated Rawlsian understanding of self-respect advocated here is that a person respects themselves if they see themselves as a member of society with equal standing to other members who are entitled to be respected as such.

The second problem emerges once the normative understanding of self-respect is established, and it is closely related to the question of why

---

3 Note that 'socially valuable' is very different from 'economically valuable'. If social structures are set up properly, persons with severe mental disabilities can make socially valuable contributions, for instance by having close relations with other people and broadening their view of life and humanity. The understanding of self-respect advocated here, therefore, can be used to defend the equal social status of persons with severe disabilities. However, this does not change the fact that Rawlsian contractualism is faced with the problem of being under-inclusive in its set up of the original position (Nussbaum 2007).

4 My reading of this normative conception of self-respect is that it goes back to the work of Avishai Margalit (1994). Colin Bird (2008) briefly mentions this in his criticism, but continues to level his critique against a psychological conception of self-respect. One problem, certainly, is that Margalit is rather sketchy in his remarks on this topic, and to the time of writing no author has sufficiently analysed the distinction between a psychological and a normative conception.



a principle of limitarianism might be needed in a Rawlsian theory of justice. According to Rawls, one reason for choosing equal basic rights, including the fair value of equal political rights, is the fact that they are needed for citizens to see themselves respected as contributing members of society (1971, p. 441). It is only when they are seen as politically equal citizens that they will have sufficient reasons to believe that they are respected by the institutions of the basic structure. If this position is convincing, and for the purpose of this chapter I assume that it is, a further consideration presents itself immediately. It could be argued that economic equality is also necessary for citizens to see themselves as being respected as equal members of society since economic institutions are part of the basic structure. Therefore, these institutions should be designed to ensure strong economic equality.

However, this is not the position Rawls takes. He favours the difference principle instead, which arguably allows for an economic incentive structure which at least in principle allows considerable, though not boundless, economic inequality (Reiff 2012). It is not so clear why Rawls believes that economic equality is unnecessary for ensuring respect as a social basis of self-respect. Maybe it is because he believes that political equality and fair equality of opportunity will ensure that the level of economic inequality is not too high, but this is far from a given, as I will discuss later on. This uncertainty opens up a discussion about whether the difference principle alone is well-suited for protecting the social basis of self-respect. If the difference principle is compatible with a relatively high level of economic inequality and if this threatens self-respect, then it needs to be replaced with or maybe supplemented by a limitarian principle. The purpose of such a limitarian principle would be to limit economic inequality to a level required to ensure that the social basis of self-respect is not threatened.

One promising way to avoid this need to supplement the difference principle with a limitarian principle would be to argue that the difference principle is not only concerned with the primary goods of income and wealth but also directly with self-respect. If understood in this way, any difference in income and wealth allowed by the difference principle is already limited to such a degree which means that the social basis of self-respect is not threatened. In this case, the limitarian principle would already be built into the difference principle. In the fifth section I will argue that it does not matter much what the right interpretation of the

difference principle is. It is enough to establish that the Rawlsian position based on an ameliorated normative understanding of self-respect has to embrace a limitarian principle of justice and a policy that directly limits the highest level of possible incomes and wealth accumulation. The argument presented in the next sections of this chapter is meant to achieve that result.

## 2. Respect, Economic Inequality, and the Difference Principle

As mentioned in the previous section, according to Rawls, political inequality is incompatible with equal respect but economic inequality appears to be compatible with it. Since not only political but economic institutions are part of the basic structure of society, this different assessment of the political and the economic realm is in need of an explanation. There needs to be a considerable difference between the political and the economic status of citizens that is strong enough to explain the need for equality in the political realm and a lack thereof in the economic realm. Moreover, and most importantly, for the Rawlsian position to hold, it must also be the case that there are no other reasons independent of the one present in the political case that ground economic equality as a requirement for equal respect.

There is indeed a reason why political equality is required that is not present in the economic case, and it has to do with the binding decision-making and the monopoly of force of the state. However, it does not follow from this difference that economic equality or at least a limitation of inequality is not required. This is because there is an independent reason for this requirement, which is based on the primary good of self-respect. There still remains a difference between the political and the economic realm, because the independent reason leads to a weaker requirement, not for strict equality but for limited inequality. I will discuss these claims in three steps in this section, because they provide the background for the argument for a limitarian principle that will be developed in the following sections.

The first step of the argument is to acknowledge that there is one clear reason for requiring strict equality in the political case that is not present in the economic case. This reason is simply that the state is

an agent of utmost power, because the basic rules of society are made binding in a political process and the state is granted the monopoly of force to enforce compliance with those rules (McMahon 1994). It is only when citizens have an equal say over those rules that they have reason to see themselves as equal members of society. Having less say than others obviously directly constitutes having a lower rank, because one is politically dominated by those others and subjected to their political will. This is the reason, I surmise, why Rawls demands that a fair value is given to the right to equal participation and that it is not just a formal right (Krishnamurthy 2013; Edmundson 2020).

The same structure of domination is not present in the economic case, because arguably there are no binding decisions of a similar magnitude that are backed up by a monopoly of force. Instead, at least in relatively ideal circumstances, economic agents have the option to exit specific institutional arrangements without considerable costs such as not working for a certain company or not buying certain products anymore. But even under those relatively ideal circumstances, most citizens probably cannot afford to stop working altogether and everyone has to buy at least some goods. But improved exit options and the continual possibility of changing the legal rules that govern economic structures and institutions through political decision-making processes reduce domination at the workplace to such an extent that it becomes very unlike political domination on the state level. This is also the reason for the failure of direct parallel-case arguments that demand democratization of companies, simply because states have to be democratic in order to be legitimate (Jacob & Neuhäuser 2018).

The second step of the argument is to consider the possibility that there is another reason for linking economic inequality and status as a member of society with equal standing. First, it should be clear that it does not directly follow from the disanalogy between political and economic equality that there are no reasons for requiring equality in the economic realm. It may simply be that there are different arguments for such a requirement that directly apply to the economic realm. However, to my knowledge no such argument has been provided by the time of writing. There are many different general arguments for a presumption of equality that could be applied to the economic realm (Timmer 2021). But the problem with those arguments is that they only make a *prima*

facie case, since reasons for departing from strict equality can be given.<sup>5</sup> The difference principle, for instance, gives such a reason by favouring maximizing welfare over equality (Freeman 2013). Such reasons can be disputed, of course, but even then, strict equality would not be a direct requirement of justice. It would just be the result of the fact that all reasons for departing from equality are defeated, which is rather unlikely in any case.

The argument that probably comes closest to a more direct defence of strict equality in the economic case is forcefully brought forward by Elizabeth Anderson and some other republican-minded authors (Anderson 2017; González-Ricoy 2014; Breen 2015). Anderson claims that in many workplaces workers are dominated in a way that undermines relational equality. Since relational equality is demanded by justice, those kinds of domination are unjust. I think this demand is compatible with a Rawlsian framework broadly conceived. As will be further discussed in the next section, Rawlsian self-respect depends on relational equality in the sense that everyone has a claim to be seen and treated as an equal member of society. It is also possible to agree from this point of view that domination at the workplace undermines this form of equal standing. However, this does not establish a requirement of strict equality in the whole economic realm that includes an equal distribution of wealth and income. Instead, it establishes that all forms of inequality that lead to domination or undermine a person's standing as an equal member of society in other ways are unjust.

In the third step, the basic idea of the argument against excessive inequality deriving from self-respect can be given as a reason for demanding equal standing in the economic realm. According to this argument, citizens have a right to be seen and treated as equal members of society since this is what the normative understanding of self-respect as a primary good of utmost importance requires. Moreover, forms of economic inequality that undermine a person's standing as an equal member of society are objectionable from this point of view. Also, forms of economic inequality that do not undermine equal standing are not objectionable on the ground of the normative self-respect argument. As I see it, this leads to a limitarian principle, because such a principle can

---

5 Which is famously one of the tasks that Gerald Cohen (2008) continued to labour on.

be designed to reduce economic inequality to such a degree that it is compatible with equal standing as just described.

This argument for restricting economic inequality has to answer a number of questions. What exactly is equal standing and why is it so important for self-respect? What forms of economic inequality undermine equal standing and what forms do not? In what way might a limitarian principle be needed to secure equal standing? Dealing with these questions is crucial for determining whether a limitarian principle should be integrated into the Rawlsian framework of the principles of justice to disallow forms of economic inequality that damage equal standing. Is a limitarian principle needed for those principles to meet their task of securing the social basis of self-respect? I want to approach this set of questions in the following sections step by step. This discussion will show that the basic liberties and the fair equality of opportunity principle are crucial for securing self-respect but that the difference principle as the sole distributive principle is ill-suited to this task because it fails to establish equal standing. This result opens up conceptual space for supplementing the difference principle with a limitarian principle.

### 3. Equal Standing and Self-Respect

The concept of the equal standing of citizens is crucially important for answering the question concerning whether or not economic inequality of a certain magnitude is a threat to self-respect. This depends on two assumptions, namely that economic inequality threatens this kind of equal standing and that equal standing as a citizen is a social basis of self-respect. So, the crucial question is what speaks for those two assumptions? In this section I will argue that equal standing is necessary for self-respect, albeit in a normative sense rather than a psychological one. The assumption that economic inequality undermines equal standing will be addressed in the next section, although fully defending these assumptions is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead, I want to highlight that they are not without plausibility, which is sufficient to give the limitarian principle some grounding as a principle of justice in a Rawlsian framework broadly conceived.

In order to establish the dependency of self-respect on equal standing as citizens, two things have to be shown. First, the normative

dependency of self-respect on respect has to be established (Dillon 2022). Second, it has to be explained why this concerns respect as an equal member of society and not simply as a citizen with equal legal rights. The idea that self-respect depends on the respect of others is criticized by pointing to the fact that a person can retain their self-respect even if they are disrespected (Bird 2008). The critique takes it for granted that the dependency is understood as being causal and that through psychological mechanisms self-respect is causally undermined by various forms of disrespect. If, however, cases can be provided in which someone retains their self-respect in such a situation, the claim of dependency is undermined. I think this anti-dependency argument is wrong, because it presupposes an overly heroic conception of the self. However, I will not defend the hypothesis of psychological dependency, which requires a chapter of its own, here.

Instead, I want to argue that the dependency thesis can be read in another, straightforward normative way and that this is sufficient to establish that self-respect does depend on social respect. The basic idea is quite simple. Members of society have a normative right to make their self-respect dependent on social respect (Alcoff 2006; Brownlee 2020). This means that they have a right to develop a conception of self which depends on others respecting them as contributing members of society. This right exists regardless of whether or not their self-respect psychologically depends on respect, just like in the case of freedom of religion. Even if someone can live a perfectly happy and fulfilling life without exercising a certain religion and even if they have absolutely no interest in becoming religious, they still have a right to freedom of religion.

The remaining question, then, is why should we assume that there is such a right to make self-respect dependent on social respect? The Rawlsian answer relies on the basic idea of conceiving of society as a nexus of cooperation (Freeman 2009). According to this idea, people are justified in developing a conception of the good in which their social cooperation plays a central role. It is natural to assume that for those people social cooperation becomes a central part of their self and that they want to be respected for their cooperative efforts. In other words, they want their self-respect to depend on being respected as cooperative members of society. Since cooperation is what justifies the existence of the basic structure in the first place, they are perfectly justified in

developing a conception of the good which involves making their self-respect dependent on being respected as contributing members of society. The fact that they might be able to retain their self-respect even if they are disrespected is of no consequence for this normative dependence of self-respect on social respect.

Even if it is established that self-respect depends on respect, the question that can still be asked concerns why basic liberal rights are not a sufficient social basis for self-respect. According to the Rawlsian argument, the claim that one should be respected as a cooperating member of society implies more than simply having equal basic rights. As Rawls (2001, p. 60) states, it also requires the realization of the fair value of political rights, fair equality of opportunity, and the difference principle. Rawls is not very clear about why he thinks that those principles are required, but Stark's (2012) interpretation of his conception of self-respect clarifies this point. The principles of justice are designed to ensure that everyone can respect themselves as members of society that make a socially valuable contribution to society. As stated earlier, I agree with this interpretation, which explains why self-respect depends on being respected as a member of society with equal standing. Citizens have a right to equal standing in the sense that they have a right to be seen as members of society who make a valuable contribution to society.

One might want to object that not all members of society do in fact make valuable contributions. Moreover, it can be objected that they do not make equally valuable contributions and therefore do not deserve equal respect. The reply to the first part of the objection is that contrary to the standard objection of excluding young children and disabled persons, the Rawlsian framework can be interpreted as demanding a basic structure which makes it possible for every member to make a valuable contribution. Moreover, according to this understanding, contributions are not reducible to economic cooperation.<sup>6</sup> And there are basic structures where not everyone can contribute something valuable. A crass example is a society where persons with physical

---

6 For instance, people with severe disabilities can make various valuable contributions simply by making other people happy due to their personality. Rawls did not develop his theory in this direction and its contractualist grounds are a serious obstacle to doing so, which Martha Nussbaum (2007) and others have rightfully criticized. But I think Samuel Freeman (2007, pp. 107–108) is right to argue that the Rawlsian framework is not hostile to this very inclusive conception of cooperation.

disabilities are seen as non-contributing and maybe even cast out. However, if one adopts a very inclusive understanding of cooperation and assumes that every human being is worthy of respect, this just means that such a basic structure is unjust and needs to be replaced by another, more inclusive one.<sup>7</sup>

The reply to the second part of the objection is that the value of contributions should not be ranked, precisely because this would introduce status hierarchies that undermine basic respect and the idea of society as a cooperative enterprise. Instead, members of society should be granted what Ian Carter (2011) has called, albeit in a different context, opacity respect regarding their contributions. Opacity respect means that people deserve the same level of respect despite certain differences in the kinds of contributions they make. This kind of opacity respect ensures the stability of the cooperative social structure. Moreover, since cooperative contributions always also depend on talent and social preconditions, what counts morally according to the Rawlsian framework is the contributing effort and not its effect.

This is so because it is possible to conceive of different just societies in which different talents and personal properties are able to contribute more or less to the cooperative enterprise. Given this flexibility, the choice of a certain social structure is always arbitrary to some degree, which renders achievements as always also dependent on luck and never on merit alone (Neuhäuser 2021). The fact that the value of cooperative contributions depends on the arbitrary character of social structures reinforces the argument that contributions should not be ranked but instead should be subject to opacity respect.<sup>8</sup>

If this is true, the principles of justice and the basic structure of society need to reflect this right to be respected as equal members of

---

7 It is possible to make the argument of this paper while dropping the cooperation demand. What is crucial then for basic respect as being a member of equal standing is not cooperation, but membership alone. Such a position is advocated by Martha Nussbaum (2007) among others. I have strong sympathies with this position, but will stick with the cooperation demand in this paper, because its purpose is to make a case for limitarianism within a Rawlsian framework.

8 The idea of opacity respect might be seen as undermining the argument of this paper. If everyone has a claim to equal respect regardless of the value of the contribution, why is a limitation of wealth needed to equalize the reward of this contribution in order to express equal respect? Opacity already ensures equal respect, or so it seems. The rather simple answer is that opacity respect is a normative claim. Based on this, limitarianism contributes to a social structure that enables equal respect.



society regardless of the effective value of the contributing effort. In the next section I will argue that unlike basic liberties and fair equality of opportunity, the difference principle on its own is unable to secure equal social standing as a social basis of self-respect.

#### 4. The Difference Principle and Equal Standing

Basic liberties are obviously important for protecting equal standing as a social basis of self-respect. Having the same basic liberties directly expresses equal standing. It might be objected that a very reduced set of basic liberties might fulfill this function. However, since basic liberties also secure the other primary goods and respect for the moral powers of citizens, they have to be adequate and not minimal (Schemmel 2019, 2021). Moreover, equal standing requires basic equality with respect to holding political and legal power. Political decision makers and judges are still citizens and as such have an equal standing to other citizens, not a higher one. An adequate set of basic liberties that includes the fair value of political equality can be understood as securing this equal standing against disproportionate forms of political and juridical power (Thomas 2018).

Likewise, fair equality of opportunity is obviously important for equal standing. It is only when everyone has a fair chance to work in certain occupations or in certain working roles that those positions are compatible with equal standing. Fair equality of opportunity ensures that every member of society is considered earnestly for those positions. And occupations and certain roles have to be designed in such a way that they do not undermine people's equal standing as citizens. Judges, for instance, do not deserve special treatment outside of the courtroom. At the same time, they do have considerable juridical power. If this power is properly controlled and functionally justified, then it does not undermine equal standing as long as everyone has a fair chance to reach this position. A controversial question raised in Rawlsian theorizing, of course, is what fair equality of opportunity entails (Sachs 2012; Lindblom 2018). But here it suffices to point out the importance of this principle for securing equal standing as citizens.

The same is not true for the difference principle though. At least in theory it seems to allow for a relatively high level of economic inequality if this leads to maximizing the economic welfare of the economically

worst-off members of society. If it is true, however, that a person's standing as an equal member of society is the social basis of self-respect, then it is not clear that maximizing citizens' economic welfare is what the worst-off themselves would choose and hence what would be chosen in the original position.<sup>9</sup> Even if in an alternative scenario B the economic situation of the least advantaged members of society is slightly worse in purely economic terms than in situation A, they might still prefer this situation A where economic inequality is lower. The reason for this choice must not be an unfounded preference for strict economic equality or even some kind of envy, which might lead to levelling-down objections (Gustafsson 2020). The reason for this position might instead be the independent value of equal social standing as a social basis of self-respect. The crucial question for this line of argument, then, is why economic equality or at least strongly constrained economic inequality is important for equal standing.

The answer to this question depends on how this standing as an equal member of society as a social basis of self-respect is to be understood. I think at least two arguments can be made for believing that equal standing depends on limited economic inequality. The first argument rests on the importance of being able to participate in common social practices, which is needed to directly express the idea that one has equal standing. The second argument points to the importance of access to economic goods, which is needed to symbolically express equal standing. Both arguments together establish, or at least I think so, that the level of economic inequality should not be too high if the social basis of self-respect is to be protected. They do not establish a need for strict economic equality though.

The first argument against economic inequality emphasizes the importance of social practices for equal standing (Harel Ben Shahr 2018). If citizens are to have equal standing, it is not sufficient to have only basic rights and fair equality of opportunity. They also need to be able to take part in social practices that are seen as normal activities of people living in a certain society, regardless of whether they want to make use of this ability and take part in them or not (Alcoff 2006; Brownlee 2020). These can be all kinds of practices such as dining out,

---

9 For this reason, the method of reflective equilibrium calls for an intuition-based revision of the theory of justice.

going on holiday or visiting museums, the cinema or festivals. It can also be sporting activities or other hobbies, contributing to school activities for kids or outings from workplaces, or engaging in lifelong education. It is reasonable to assume, though, at least in market-based societies, that these activities and especially taking part in them on a regular basis costs a considerable amount of money. If it is correct that it is important for people to be able to fully take part in these kinds of activities, they need to have access to the necessary economic resources for doing so.

At this point it might be objected that this is not a problem connected with wealth or even with economic inequality as such. Instead, it is a problem connected with poverty, because people must not be prevented from taking part in important social practices because they do not have enough economic resources to do so. In other words, the minimum income should not be too far away from the median income. This objection, however, underestimates the relational economic character of important social practices (Hirsch 1977). If, for instance, the richest twenty per cent of society have much more money than the rest, they can create and engage in social practices that no one else can afford. They can also intentionally or unintentionally use their social power to present these practices as especially worthy of respect. In this way a status society is created in which the equal standing not only of poor people but even of the thirty per cent whose income is above the median income, but who do not belong to the rich, is threatened. To ensure that economic inequality does not threaten equal standing through status-conferring practices, an upper as well as a lower threshold is needed.

The second argument for the dependence of equal social standing on limited economic inequality is similar to the first argument. The difference is that in this case it is not important social practices to which people must have economic access, but status goods directly instead.<sup>10</sup> Certain goods have a specific use value, which is the value of symbolically expressing social status. Having the title of doctor in philosophy is, among other things, a (hopefully) non-economic good that expresses (or tries to express) a specific social value of education and, in the minds of some people, intelligence and maybe even wisdom (Halliday 2016). Likewise, a Rolex watch or a Porsche car are economic goods which express (the value of) being rich. Often this judgement is

---

10 This is what Fred Hirsch (1977) has described as status-based positional goods.

accompanied by the impression that the owner must also be successful, a valuable member of society, smart and so on. Just as in the case of the doctoral title in philosophy implying wisdom, this impression might be wrong, but this is immaterial in terms of it being a widespread view. If such symbolic meanings of expensive luxury goods are widespread, they can become part of a status economy that threatens equal standing (Brennan & Pettit 2004). In a consumer economy where huge marketing resources are used to nudge people into buying these kinds of goods, the creation of status hierarchies and the exploitation of status anxieties make for a good marketing strategy.

Both arguments certainly depend on a number of empirical assumptions, though. Is it true that the described status hierarchies exist? Do people really ascribe symbolic meaning to luxury goods? If those practices and status goods exist, are they really so widespread that they threaten equal standing? It is not the task of this chapter to provide empirical proof for the thesis that status practices and status goods exist and undermine equal standing. Instead, the argument rests on the presupposition that this is the case and that it is conditional in this sense. It is still important to analyse the normative structure of the argument, which is the focus of this chapter, because everyday evidence strongly supports the empirical assumptions. Many people do have a keen sense of status and how it is expressed in hierarchical practices and symbolic communication in their daily lives (Frank 2020). Fights about status and status-related anxiety also seem to play an important role in the success of populist movements undermining the stability of liberal democracies (Cohen 2019). Moreover, the importance of many social practices and economic goods is hard to explain without referring to their status-conferring function. This evidence is sufficient, or at least I think so, to question whether the difference principle is well suited to securing equal standing or whether instead another principle that limits economic inequality more directly is preferable.

## 5. The Difference Principle and the Limitarian Principle

If economic inequality of a certain magnitude undermines equal standing as a social basis of self-respect, then the difference principle might be either deficient or not properly spelled out. Whether it is the former or the latter depends on how the relation between the social bases

of self-respect and the difference principle is interpreted. The difference principle is open to many interpretations (Van Parijs 2003). Here two possibilities are relevant. According to one interpretation, the difference principle is concerned with all five kinds of primary goods, including the social bases of self-respect. According to the second interpretation, there is some distribution of work going on among the principles of justice with respect to the primary goods. The first principle of justice secures basic rights and liberties as well as freedom of movement and free choice of occupation. The first half of the second principle ensures that “powers and prerogatives of offices and positions of authority and responsibility” (2001, p. 58) are distributed on the basis of fair equality of opportunity. The difference principle, then, is about income and wealth. The primary good of the social bases of self-respect is, according to this second interpretation, indirectly secured by all principles of justice and corresponding institutions. In other words, the fair distribution of the other primary goods by the principles of justice also secures the social bases of self-respect.

I think there is reason to believe that the second interpretation is the correct one, but will leave this interpretative issue aside, because it is immaterial for the argument made here.<sup>11</sup> This is so because in either case the difference principle needs to be supplemented by a limitarian principle in order to secure the social bases of self-respect and especially the equal standing as a contributing member of society. The difference is simply that according to the first interpretation something like a limitarian principle must already be built into the difference principle, which is simply not spelled out. The reason for this might be that Rawls is rather unclear about what self-respect requires. If, however, the proposal here is correct and self-respect does require equal standing as a contributing member of society, which in turn requires limited economic inequality, this leads directly to a limitarian principle as a strict requirement of justice, which is embedded in the difference principle. If the second interpretation is correct, then a limitarian principle is not

---

11 Rawls writes: “In a well-ordered society where all citizens’ equal basic rights and liberties and fair opportunities are secure, the least advantaged are those who belong to the income class with the lowest expectations” (2017, p. 59). He adds later on in relation to the social bases of self-respect: “These social bases are things like the institutional fact that citizens have equal basic rights, and the public recognition of that fact and that everyone endorses the difference principle, itself a form of reciprocity” (2017, p. 60). I think quotes like this hint at the second interpretation.

embedded in the difference principle, but the Rawlsian set of principles of justice are insufficient to ensure that the social bases of self-respect are secured. A limitarian principle needs to be added to make sure that economic inequalities do not undermine equal social standing.

In effect, in both cases a limitarian principle is needed to ensure that economic inequality does not occur to an extent that is problematic for self-respect. Having an upper threshold alone is certainly insufficient for this task and additionally a lower threshold is needed as well. In a discussion with Rodney G. Peffer (1994), Rawls acknowledged that it is implicitly assumed that such a lower threshold is met in a well-ordered society. In contrast to this, Rawls does not explicitly acknowledge the need for an upper threshold and a limitarian principle, which according to the argument developed here is an oversight. Such a limitarian principle needs to be part of the principles of justice in order to secure the social bases of self-respect. Just like with other abstract principles of justice, political institutions and public reason have the task of further specifying where the lower and upper limits have to be set in order to secure equal standing. According to the argument based on self-respect, this depends on what kinds of social practices and status symbols that create status hierarchies are present and widespread in a given society.

One remaining question is whether the limitarian principle should be understood as replacing the difference principle. If so, the distribution of income and wealth between the lower and the upper limits would be outside the scope of distributive justice. Instead, the limitarian principle could be understood to undergird the difference principle. In this case the difference principle would govern the distribution of income and wealth within the established limits. I do not want to take a firm stance on this issue here. The purpose of this chapter is to show the importance of integrating a limitarian principle into the Rawlsian framework in order to secure the social bases of self-respect. However, I want to make one quick remark on this issue: the advantage of the second proposal of undergirding instead of replacing might be that it is rather unlikely that in between a lower and an upper threshold of income and wealth no questions of justice emerge. Fairness might require maximizing the situation of the worst-off for the space between those thresholds. In line with this, Rawlsians can hold on to the incentive argument embedded in the difference principle (Casal 2017; Lister 2018; 2020). Within the limits of lower and upper thresholds the basic economic structure could still be

set up in such a way that people have an incentive to be more productive and inventive in economic terms in order to make more money, which would be beneficial for the economic development of the whole society, at least if the requirements of sustainability are met too.

This proposal of supplementing the difference principle with a limitarian principle within the Rawlsian framework is certainly faced with a number of objections. One objection appears to be especially in need of an answer for the whole idea to get off the ground. It states that there is not much space for inequality in the original Rawlsian theory and for this reason no additional limitarian principle is needed. According to this objection, Rawls is aware of the need to limit economic inequality (1971, p. 545). He simply believes that this is already built into his theory. The basic liberties and especially the fair value of political liberty together with fair equality of opportunity already imply a serious limitation of economic inequality, because stark inequalities lead to forms of social power that undermine the first principle of justice and the first half of the second principle of justice. The only way to effectively curtail this power is to limit inequality. Institutions that are designed to ensure political equality and fair equality of opportunity, such as a property-owning democracy, also restrict economic inequality (O'Neill & Williamson 2012). In other words, since a limitarian principle is an implicit part of the Rawlsian framework, there is no need to make it explicit.

What can we make of this argument? To be frank, I do not think that it is an objection at all. It is certainly possible that the Rawlsian principles of justice implicitly require a limitation of economic inequality. It might also be the case that the political institutions that are required by those principles already limit inequality to a sufficient degree. Alan Thomas (2018), for instance, argues that a Rawlsian scheme entailing a property-owning democracy will have very egalitarian consequences, because only then will the fair value of political liberty and the fair equality of opportunity be secured. My disagreement with inferring from this assumption that an additional limitarian principle is unnecessary is twofold.

First, it is not impossible that those principles can be satisfied in a way that allows for considerable economic inequality. For instance, it might be possible to secure the fair value of political liberty by decoupling the political system from economic influence through strict policies.

The USA, for instance, has very little regulation of political campaign contributions, while other countries have much stricter rules. It is also possible, to give another example, to tightly regulate the movement between holding a political office and gaining a managerial position in private industry in order to prevent revolving door lobbyism. Similar policies with restricting effects regarding the influence of money on educational and professional opportunities are conceivable. The more effective such policies turn out to be, the weaker the case becomes for reducing economic inequality based on the classical Rawlsian principles of justice. Since the question of how likely this is seems to be an open and at least partially empirical one, the need for a directly limitarian principle in order to secure the social basis of self-respect remains.

Second, even if the other principles indirectly ensure the limitation of inequality, the limitarian principle provides an additional and direct argument for such a limitation. Since the argument for the limitarian principle is grounded in the provision of the social basis for the important primary good of self-respect, it is especially forceful, at least within the Rawlsian framework. If it is true that self-respect rests on equal social standing and that equal social standing requires a limitation of economic inequality, then this makes for a strong argument for such a limitation. A variety of policies such as having an unconditional basic income, taxing riches, redistributing capital, and so on can be justified by using the limitarian principle as a requirement of self-respect if it can be shown that those policies are needed to effectively limit economic inequality.

## 6. Conclusion

The aim of this chapter was to show that a limitarian principle of justice is worthy of consideration within a Rawlsian framework. I have argued that limiting inequality can be understood as a requirement for securing the status of all members of society as equal citizens. This equal status can in turn be understood as a social basis for the self-respect of people in their role as cooperating members of society. A just society has to secure the possibility that everyone can make valuable contributions and it must acknowledge the right of all members of society to be of equal rank as contributing members. This rank is ensured by granting all citizens equal status, which in turn requires limiting inequality in



order to prevent status competition and hierarchies and to enable all citizens to participate in status-expressing social activities.

This self-respect-based argument for limitarianism can be understood as complementing other arguments for limitarianism that are based on considerations of welfare, sustainability and (republican) democratic participation. At the same time, I think it has an additional role to play. If Rawls is correct in that self-respect is an important enabling condition for people to see themselves as contributing members of society, securing self-respect will in all likelihood enhance compliance with the principles of justice. This higher compliance will, in turn, make it easier for states to meet urgent needs, work towards sustainability and establish substantial democratic structures. In other words, implementing a limitarian principle can be seen as an important tool that can be used to work towards making societies more just.

## Acknowledgement

Many thanks for improving the argument go to Daniel Beck, Niklas Dummer, Martina Herrmann, Tim Meijers, Lea Prix, Mark Reiff, Ingrid Robeyns, Beverley Sykes, Dick Timmer and Jonas Zorn.

## References

- Alcoff, Linda Martín. 2006. *Visible Identities: Race, Gender, and the Self*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. 1999. What's the point of equality?, *Ethics*, 109(2), pp. 287–337.
- Anderson, Elizabeth. 2017. Private government, in: E. Anderson (ed.), *Private government: how employers rule our lives (and why we Don't talk about it)*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, pp. 37–71.
- Bird, Colin. 2008. Self-Respect and the Respect of Others, *European Journal of Philosophy*, 18(1), pp. 17–40.
- Breen, Keith. 2015. Freedom, republicanism, and workplace democracy, *Crit Rev Int Soc Pol Phil*, 18(4), pp. 470–485.
- Brennan, Geoffrey & Pettit, Philip. 2004. *The Economy of Esteem: An Essay on Civil and Political Society*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brownlee, Kimberley. 2020. *Being Sure of Each Other: An Essay on Social Rights and Freedoms*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Carter, Ian. 2011. Respect and the Basis of Equality, *Ethics*, 121(3), pp. 538–571.
- Casal, Paula. 2017. Mill, Rawls and Cohen on Incentives and Occupational Freedom, *Utilitas*, 29(4), pp. 375–397.
- Cohen, G. A. 2008. *Rescuing Justice and Equality*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Cohen, Jean L. 2019. Populism and the Politics of Resentment, *Jus Cogens*, 1(1), pp. 5–39.
- Dillon, Robin S. 2022. Respect, *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, <https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2022/entries/respect/>.
- Doppelt, Gerald. 2009. The Place of Self-Respect in A Theory of Justice, *Inquiry*, 52, pp: 127–154.
- Dumitru, Adelin-Costin. 2020. Rescuing Sufficiency from Itself, *South African Journal of Philosophy*, 39(3), pp. 347–59.
- Edmundson, William A. 2020. What Is the Argument for the Fair Value of Political Liberty? *Social Theory and Practice*, 46(3), pp. 497–514.
- Eyal, Nir. 2005. 'Perhaps the Most Important Primary Good': Self-Respect and Rawls's Principles of Justice, *Politics, Philosophy and Economics*, 4(2), pp. 195–219.
- Frank, Robert H. 2020. *Under the Influence: Putting Peer Pressure to Work*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Freeman, Samuel. 2007. *Rawls*, Oxfordshire: Routledge.
- Freeman, Samuel. 2009. *Justice and the Social Contract: Essays on Rawlsian Political Philosophy*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Freeman, Samuel. 2013. Property-Owning Democracy and the Difference Principle, *Analyse & Kritik*, 35(1), pp. 9–36.
- González-Ricoy, Ihigo. 2014. The republican case for workplace democracy, *Soc Theory Pract*, 40(2), pp. 232–254.
- Gough, Ian. 2020. Defining Floors and Ceilings: The Contribution of Human Needs Theory, *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 16(1), pp. 208–19.
- Gustafsson, Johan E. 2020. The Levelling-Down Objection and the Additive Measure of the Badness of Inequality, *Economics and Philosophy*, 36(3), pp. 401–406.
- Halliday, Daniel. 2016. Private Education, Positional Goods, and the Arms Race Problem, *Politics, Philosophy and Economics*, 15(2), pp. 150–169.
- Hamlin, Alan. 2018. What Political Philosophy Should Learn from Economics about Taxation, in M. O'Neill & S. Orr (ed.), *Taxation: Philosophical Perspectives*, (pp. 17–36) Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Harel Ben Shahaar, Tammy. 2018. Positional Goods and the Size of Inequality, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 26(1), pp. 103–120.
- Hirsch, Fred. 1977. *The Social Limits to Growth*. London: Routledge.
- Huseby, Robert. 2022. The Limits of Limitarianism, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 30(2), pp. 230–248.
- Jacob, Daniel, & Neuhäuser, Christian. 2018. Workplace Democracy, Market Competition and Republican Self-Respect, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 21(4): pp. 927–44.
- Krishnamurthy, Meena. 2013. Completing Rawls's Arguments for Equal Political Liberty and its Fair Value: The Argument From Self-Respect, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 43(2), pp. 179–205.
- Lindblom, Lars. 2018. In Defense of Rawlsian Fair Equality of Opportunity, *Philosophical Chapters*, 47(2), pp. 235–263.
- Lister, Andrew. 2018. The Difference Principle, Capitalism, and Property-Owning Democracy, *Moral Philosophy and Politics*, 5(1), pp. 151–172.
- Lister, Andrew. 2020. Publicity, reciprocity, and incentives, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 50(1), pp. 67–82.
- Margalit, Avishai 1994. *The Decent Society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- McMahon, Christopher 1994. *Authority and democracy: a general theory of government and management*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Neuhäuser, Christian 2021. Property-owning democracy, market socialism and workplace democracy, *Review of Social Economy*, 79(3), pp. 554–580.
- Nussbaum, Martha. 2007. *Frontiers of Justice: Disability, Nationality, Species Membership*, Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- O'Neill, Martin & Williamson, Thad. 2012. *Property-Owning Democracy: Rawls and Beyond*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Peffer, R. G. 1994. Towards a more adequate Rawlsian theory of social justice, *Pacific Philosophical Quarterly*, 75(3–4), pp. 251–271.
- Rawls, John. 1971. *A Theory of Justice*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Rawls, John. 2001. *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Reiff, Mark R. 2012. The Difference Principle, Rising Inequality, and Supply-Side Economics: How Rawls Got Hijacked by the Right, *Revue de Philosophie Économique*, 13(2), pp. 119–173.
- Robeyns, Ingrid. 2017. Having too much. In Jack Knight & Melissa Schwartzberg (Eds.), *Wealth - Yearbook of the American Society for Political and Legal Philosophy* (pp. 1–44). New York: New York University Press.

- Robeyns, Ingrid. 2022. Why Limitarianism?, *Journal of Political Philosophy*, 30(2), pp. 249–270.
- Sachs, Benjamin. 2012. The Limits of Fair Equality of Opportunity, *Philosophical Studies*, 160 (2), pp. 323–343.
- Schemmel, Christian. 2019. Real Self-Respect and its Social Bases, *Canadian Journal of Philosophy*, 49(5): 628–651.
- Schemmel, Christian. 2021. *Justice and Egalitarian Relations*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stark, Cynthia. 2012. Rawlsian Self-Respect. In Mark Timmons (ed.), *Oxford Studies in Normative Ethics* (pp. 238–261). Oxford, UK.
- Sen, Amartya. 2009. *The Idea of Justice*. Harvard: Harvard University Press.
- Thomas, Larry. 1978. Rawlsian Self-Respect and the Black Consciousness Movement, *Philosophical Forum*, 9, pp. 303–314.
- Thomas, Alan. 2018. *Republic of Equals*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Timmer, Dick. 2019. Defending the Democratic Argument for Limitarianism: A Reply to Volacu and Dumitru, *Philosophia*, 47(4), pp. 1331–1339.
- Timmer, Dick. 2021. Limitarianism: Pattern, Principle, or Presumption?, *Journal of Applied Philosophy*, 38(5), pp. 760–773.
- Van Parijs, Philippe. 2003. Difference Principles. In Samuel Richard Freeman (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Rawls*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Volacu, Alexandru & Dumitru, Adelin Costin. 2019. Assessing Non-Intrinsic Limitarianism, *Philosophia*, 47(1), pp. 249–264.
- Winters, Jeffrey A. 2011. *Oligarchy*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Zwarthoed, Danielle. 2018. Autonomy-Based Reasons for Limitarianism, *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 21(5), pp. 1181–1204.