

Treating Young and Old as Equals: Basic Income and Relational Equality¹

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ABSTRACT

In *Justice Across Ages*, Juliana Bidadanure draws our attention to inequalities between the young and old. Bidadanure's innovation is to appeal to ideas of relational inequality between age groups. Drawing on the work of Iris Marion Young (1990) and Elizabeth Anderson (1999) she argues that justice between ages will be restricted if our attention is purely concerned with distribution. She holds that relations between age groups can be damaged by problems such as domination, infantilization, paternalism and exploitation. These relational problems are deeply troublesome, even if, over the course of our lives, we find ourselves on both sides of these relations. In the book, a new form of basic income is proposed. This, she argues, will go some way to ensuring relational equality between age groups. I focus on two relational conflicts raised by Bidadanure's basic income proposal. The first conflict involves state paternalism, the second conflict involves exploitation. I argue that if Bidadanure is to resolve or mitigate this relational conflict, then it seems crucial for her to explain: (1) why her basic income proposal does not institutionalize conditions of relational inequality; or (2) why some relational inequality is a price worth paying.

Keywords: Juliana Bidadanure, basic income, age-group equality, relational equality, paternalism, exploitation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Politicians and academics across the political spectrum warn about divisions between the young and the old, an undeniable tension that has ignited our political discourse and penetrates the deepest parts of our public and family lives. Disagreements over long-term public debts,

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unequal labor market vulnerabilities, long-term youth unemployment, and prolonged parental dependency are the latest outbreaks of this epidemic. And all the while our scorching earth is fanning the flames, with younger generations instigating worldwide protests against climate change and calling for sharp cuts to greenhouse gas emissions. The inflammatory effects of these disagreements can be felt in our political institutions, across our university campuses, in our schools, in our streets, and in heated debates in the media and online. Deep inequalities between the young and old are the source of this social discord. What is desperately needed is a theory of justice between age groups. Julianna Bidanure's brilliant book *Justice Across Ages: Treating Young and Old as Equals* (2021) provides such an account.

In the book, Bidanure aims to answer the question of how we should respond to inequalities patterned on age membership. To answer this question, she first distinguishes two types of inequalities: birth cohort inequalities and age-group inequalities. Birth cohorts are groups of people born at a specific time who age together. In contrast, age groups are groups of people at a certain stage of their lives, for instance, children or the elderly. As Bidanure insists, this distinction is important because only inequalities between birth cohorts are systematically inequalities between persons over time. Inequalities between age groups, on the other hand, are often temporary, because we pass through the different life stages. The book is divided into two parts. The first part of the book develops a theory of justice between young and old and puts forward three principles of intergenerational equality. The first principle involves *distributive fairness between birth cohorts*. The second requires that we distribute resources between the old and young in a way that secures lifespan sufficiency and lifespan efficiency. Principle three appeals to relational egalitarianism, i.e. institutions should establish communities whose members are able to relate and stand as equals regardless of their age. In the second part of the book, Bidanure evaluates a range of age-specific policies including a revisionary basic income, which will be my focus in this paper.

Bidanure's book offers a powerful and insightful conception of justice between age groups. The book is brilliant. So much so that it is difficult to find points to critique. However, in what follows, I consider two ways in which Bidanure's basic income proposal comes into conflict with relational equality. The first conflict involves paternalism, the second conflict involves exploitation. This is important because relational equality lies at the heart of the book and is a distinguishing feature of Bidanure's account of justice across ages.

2. TREATING YOUNG AND OLD AS EQUALS

The central aim of chapters 1-4 is to explore what counts as treating young adults as equals. In these chapters Bidadanure develops three principles of intergenerational equality. The first principle involves *distributive fairness between birth cohorts*. Just institutions should distribute resources between old and young in a way that ensures that the next generation is left no worse than its predecessors. The second principle involves prudent lifespan planning for age groups. It requires that we distribute resources between the old and young in a way that secures people a reasonable range of opportunities throughout their lives, while also targeting people as early as needed to make their lives go well overall. Thus this second principle has two parts. It requires: (i) *lifespan sufficiency*, i.e. institutions distribute resources between age groups in a way that ensures freedom from deprivation at all life stages and secures an age-relative set of opportunities for people as they age; and (ii) *lifespan efficiency*, i.e. institutions allocate resources earlier rather than later in the lifespan when doing so can increase our chances of living a life of high overall quality. Principle three appeals to relational egalitarianism. This is the view that a just society is one in which people relate to one another as equals and are free from relationships of infantilization, paternalization, domination, exploitation, and oppression. Thus, when approaching inequalities between young and old, Bidadanure makes the case that we must scrutinize them for signs of inequalitarian relationships. True equality calls for something more, something that is possible only after relational equality has taken root. This view has important implications for how our institutions and social policies should be designed. Institutions should aim to establish communities whose members are able to relate and stand as equals regardless of their age.

While Part I develops a theory of justice between young and old, Part II evaluates a range of age-specific policies, including a revisionary basic income, which will be my focus in this paper. A basic income is an income that is unconditionally paid to all on an individual basis, with no means test or work requirement. The idea of a basic income began centuries ago. In *Agrarian Justice*, Thomas Paine (1796: 612) presents one of the first elaborate proposals for a basic income, claiming: “It is not charity, but a right, not bounty but justice, that I am pleading for.” Bidadanure’s revisionary contribution is that she examines basic income from a temporal perspective. She makes the case for basic income by grounding its foundations in her principles of generational equality. Bidadanure begins by considering two basic income policies: Universal Basic Income (UBI) and Basic Capital (BC). Her intention is to discern which policy best aligns

with her principles. Universal Basic Income is a continuous stream of income in regular instalments. It involves a monthly cash grant given to all members of a community unconditionally, and under most proposals, it is set at a sufficiently high level to enable a life free from economic insecurity. Basic Capital is a large grant that all citizens would receive in a lump sum when they turn 21 years of age.

One of the main arguments that Bidanure offers in favor of UBI is that it can ensure *lifespan sufficiency*, as it guarantees *lifelong* basic economic security. Because UBI ensures that no one ends up abjectly deprived at any point in their life, it seems to cohere nicely with Bidanure's lifespan sufficiency principle. Bidanure also notes that the continuous stream of money provides conditions for nondomination and helps people to stand as equals at every point in their lives, thus securing relational equality between age groups (202). Conversely, BC does not seem to secure lifespan sufficiency. Individuals receive a large cash sum at the age of 21 and it is theirs to save, spend, or invest. As Bidanure points out, whether individuals receive lifespan sufficiency is determined by the quality of their investment. If individuals waste their assets through bad decisions (or sheer bad luck) they will be left with no robust protection from poverty or deprivation (190). For these reasons, Bidanure argues that BC is also unlikely to align with the goals of relational equality. People would be free from domination only if they invest their cash sum in the right way. However, BC does align well with Bidanure's principle of lifespan efficiency, because it provides young adults with the opportunity to invest in lifelong projects. For example, it makes it easier for young adults to get a degree, to start a business, or put down a deposit for a house. This option is unavailable for UBI. On most proposals UBI is unmortgageable, i.e. individuals cannot alienate their future basic income for a current project. For these reasons, Bidanure suggests that we may want to consider a hybrid proposal that accommodates the advantages of BC in securing lifespan efficiency with the advantages of UBI in ensuring lifespan sufficiency and relational equality between age groups. Here she puts forward two policy proposals:

Proposal 1. UBI + baby-bond proposal

- Part of the basic income from birth to 18 years of age would go to the parents as child benefit payments, and the other part would be saved into a bond and would be made available to the individual when they turn 18 years old.
- From 18 years onwards, adults would continue receiving their UBI on a monthly basis. .

Proposal 2. Partly mortgageable UBI proposal

- Introduce a basic income but allow individuals to alienate up to half of their future basic income guarantee every ten years, to fund projects that they may have at any point.

Although the UBI + baby-bond proposal includes payments for the first 18 years of an individual's life, it is not clear whether the partly mortgageable UBI proposal also includes such payments and what happens to those payments. The focus of discussion with regards to the latter proposal concerns how alienating part of our future income might lead to deprivation and domination, thus threatening the principles of lifespan sufficiency and relational equality. However, Bidanure argues that the former baby-bond proposal could help us meet the increasing need of the young for capital, without undermining the value of lifelong basic economic security (207).

Importantly, Bidanure grounds her proposals in relational egalitarianism. Basic income is fundamental to treating young and old as equals. She points out that whilst there is ample recognition that it is wrong to paternalize, infantize and exploit people based on their ethnic origin, religion, or gender, there is comparatively little recognition that these modes of relating are also problematic when they are patterned on age membership. She says, "the same reasons we have for objecting to those modes of relating in general still largely apply in the case of age" (134). Inequalities between young and old are unjust when they *constitute or enable* relationships of inequality. Institutions should aim to establish societies whose members are able to relate and stand as equals. Bidanure examines the long-term parental dependency of young adults as an example of an inegalitarian mode of relating that we should seek to transform. She argues that the opportunity to be economically and spatially independent is important for relational equality because young adults may be forced into taking paths that go against their own reasonable conception of the good life (141).

I agree that it is deeply wrong to paternalize, infantize, and exploit people based on age. But we need to look more closely at basic income because these problematic modes of relating can also be created and sustained by Bidanure's UBI proposal.

3. STATE PATERNALISM

According to relational egalitarians, state paternalism is morally problematic because it involves the state treating its citizens like children. It evinces a failure of respect and delivers a special sort of insult to autonomous agents. In order to determine whether Bidanure's UBI proposals are paternalistic in this way, we first need a sound conception of paternalism. Two of the most prominent accounts have been developed by Seana Valentine Shiffrin (2000) and Jonathan Quong (2011) who both offer a respect-based account of paternalism.

According to Shiffrin (2000), an act (or omission) by Agent A towards B is paternalistic when,

1. A aims to have (or to avoid) an effect on B or on her sphere of legitimate agency.
2. A substitutes her judgment or agency for B's.
3. A's act is directed at B's interests or at matters that legitimately lie within B's control.
4. A acts on the grounds that compared to B's judgment or agency with respect to those interests or other matters, A regards her judgment or agency to be (or as likely to be), in some respect, superior to B's. (Shiffrin 2000: 218)

This account gives explicit emphasis to the motive behind paternalism. According to Shiffrin, this motive is central to explaining why paternalism delivers a special sort of insult. It evinces a failure of respect.

Quong (2011) begins with a political conception of our moral status as free and equal citizens. Following Rawls (1996), citizens are characterized as free and equal in virtue of their possession of two moral powers: a capacity for a sense of justice and a capacity for a conception of the good. According to Quong (2011), paternalistic actions come into conflict with this conception of our moral status. This involves one person or group denying that another person or group has the necessary capacity for a conception of the good (Quong 2011: 101). On this account, an act (or omission) by Agent A towards B is paternalistic when (i) A attempts to advance B's interests and (ii) A acts (or fails to act) on a belief that B lacks the ability to make sensible decisions for herself (Quong 2011: 100-1). Thus paternalism is wrong because it constitutes disrespect. It is an insult and denigrates a citizen's moral status.

On both of these accounts, paternalistic state action is *presumptively* wrong, even if the state is correct in its judgment. It is disrespectful to treat

an adult like a child, to treat them as if they are incapable of acting in their own interests. This is not to say that the state may never act paternalistically all things considered. But it has *pro tanto* reasons to avoid policies that treat its citizens as if they cannot rationally govern themselves. To see how Bidadanure's UBI proposal is paternalistic, consider the following cases:

Poppy's Plan. Poppy decides at age 18 to start a business. Poppy applies for a business loan and seeks private investment. The banks and private investors think Poppy's business plan is superb, but they will only loan Poppy the money on the proviso that she pledges her lifetime share of UBI as collateral for the loan. If Poppy defaults, the investors will take possession of the asset. Poppy brings her case to the state and argues: (1) she is a responsible agent; (2) she is seeking this arrangement freely, rationally, and under conditions of sufficient information; and (3) there will be no additional costs on others if she receives her lifetime share of UBI early.

Elizabeth's Plan. Elizabeth decides at age 18 to donate her lifetime share of UBI to help her family in Ukraine who have been ravaged by war.² She brings her case to the state and asks for an advance on the funds. She argues: (1) she is a responsible agent; (2) she is seeking this arrangement freely, rationally, and under conditions of sufficient information; and (3) there will be no additional costs on others if she receives her lifetime share of UBI early.

Now imagine that the state allows Poppy and Elizabeth to use their baby bonds (or alienate up to half of their future basic income for ten years) but *refuses* their request to alienate their lifetime share of basic income. This to ensure that their needs are met, and they will be treated as an equal throughout their adult life, i.e. the state must ensure that Poppy and Elizabeth will not be subject to disrespect or domination should they fall short of funds. But the state's decision means that Poppy cannot start her business and Elizabeth does not have enough money to rescue her family and keep them safe.

There is a paternalism concern in each of these cases. This can be captured by Shiffrin's account. The state seeks to avoid an effect on Poppy and Elizabeth's legitimate sphere of agency. The state's action is directed at their interests, and it elects to prioritize its own judgment in place of theirs. The state is also presuming that it is the best judge of what is in their own interest. Likewise, paternalism can also be captured using Quong's account. The state is attempting to advance Poppy and Elizabeth's interests and acting on a belief that they do not have the moral power to plan, revise,

² Let's assume that Elizabeth lives in the UK or the US.

and rationally pursue their own conception of the good. Very simply, if the state thought citizens could make sensible decisions themselves regarding their UBI allocations, then state inference would not be necessary. The state's action is paternalistic and denigrates their moral status.

Because the state is treating Poppy and Elizabeth in this way, Bidadanure's policies fall foul of the relational egalitarian standard. It is difficult for the state to invoke these relational problems to justify its refusal to pay Poppy and Elizabeth their lifetime share of UBI. In cases such as these, the state will be directly implicated in creating and maintaining the very conditions that justify UBI in the first place, i.e. the state is denying their request in order to ensure that they are not subject to disrespect or domination by others, but in its refusal the state itself will be subjecting them to such treatment. On these grounds, we can see an internal tension between Bidadanure's relational egalitarian principle and her UBI policy. Grounding her basic income proposal in her relational egalitarian principle can thus deliver contradictory judgments about the permissibility of particular state actions. As noted by Bidadanure, the state has *pro tanto* reasons to avoid policies that treat its citizens as if they cannot rationally govern themselves.

In response, it might be argued that these kinds of tensions are inevitable because Bidadanure has a pluralistic relational egalitarian view. It is therefore not surprising that protecting some dimensions of relational equality will sometimes compromise some of the others. Importantly, I am not arguing against a pluralist approach, nor am I arguing that paternalistic state policy is unjustifiable. My position is only that paternalistic policies are *prima facie* wrong. I do not think that Bidadanure can choose UBI over BC without relying on paternalism. It might be true that Bidadanure's UBI policy is justified, all things considered, but I think it also remains true that the policy involves a presumptive wrongness. We can see this by returning to the cases above. In advancing Poppy and Elizabeth's interests, the state elects to prioritize its own judgment in place of theirs and presumes that it is the best judge of what is in their own interest. The state is also acting on a belief that Poppy and Elizabeth do not have the moral power to plan, revise, and rationally pursue their own conception of the good. In Poppy's case, she cannot start her own business. In Elizabeth's case, she cannot rescue her family in Ukraine. So there is the substantial cost of denigrating their moral status. In order to rebut my position about the *prima facie* wrongness of the state's actions, Bidadanure would need to insist that UBI can be implemented over BC without relying on paternalism.

In this regard, Bidadanure might argue that I am not taking her lifespan sufficiency principle into account. The mortgage restriction on her policy

proposal is not motivated by a concern for the good of that person. Instead, it is motivated by the requirements of lifespan sufficiency at all ages and of relational equality between age groups insofar as it requires such sufficiency. On this basis, Bidadanure can choose UBI over BC without resorting to paternalism. But I don't think that Bidadanure can escape the paternalism worry by appealing to lifespan sufficiency. Problems still emerge because of the way in which lifespan sufficiency is justified.

Recall that Bidadanure justifies lifespan sufficiency by way of prudent planning for age groups. This works in the following manner. Following Norman Daniels, Bidadanure rejects the idea of conceptualizing different age groups as competing for resources and opportunities. This approach is deceptive because it disregards the fact that we all age. Instead, we should frame the question about the fair distribution of opportunities and resources between age groups as a problem confronting a single individual who must reason how to prudently allocate resources across the different temporal stages of her life. Bidadanure appeals to this prudential lifespan account as a way of generating good reasons for age-relative resource allocation. Prudent trade-offs are guided—and justified as fair—when they make life as a whole go better than the alternative. From this position, Bidadanure argues that it is reasonable to imagine that prudential planners would not allocate resources that fall below a critical threshold. Instead, they would choose to distribute resources between the old and young in a way that secures people a reasonable range of opportunities throughout their lives (lifespan sufficiency). Institutions distribute resources between age groups in a way that ensures freedom from deprivation at all life stages. Bidadanure maintains that UBI aligns best with this principle: UBI can guarantee lifelong economic security because the cash is continuous rather than invested early.

Bidadanure is confident that prudent planners could generalize individual plans and converge on lifespan sufficiency. Moreover, their agreement provides justification, i.e. because prudent planners would agree to lifespan sufficiency, the principle is justified. But we can again see a paternalism worry. This worry concerns Bidadanure's justificatory procedure: there is likely to be disagreement about what distribution makes our lives as a whole go better. For example, Elizabeth has a conception of the good in which she strongly prefers to save her family, rather than having security throughout her life. She would readily trade away her security to save her loved ones in Ukraine. Equally, Poppy has a conception of the good in which she prefers to forego lifespan security to run her own business. These examples illustrate that there is likely to be reasonable disagreement about how to budget resources over a lifespan.

Decisions can vary depending on an individual's background, their sensitivity to risk, or even their appreciating the option to revise their life plans. Importantly, if the prudential procedure swings the result in favor a particular conception of the good, then this raises a paternalism concern.

A paternalism concern can again be captured using Shiffrin's account. The state's action is directed at Poppy and Elizabeth's interests, and it elects to prioritize a prudent planner's judgment in place of theirs. Likewise, paternalism can also be captured using Quong's account. The state is attempting to advance Poppy and Elizabeth's interests and is acting on a belief that they do not have the moral power to plan, revise, and rationally pursue their own conception of the good. Again, if the state thought that they could make sensible decisions themselves regarding their resource allocations, then the state would not defer to the judgment of the prudential planner. The state's action is paternalistic and denigrates their moral status.³ Thus, if Bidanure's UBI policy is motivated by the requirements of lifespan sufficiency, and if lifespan sufficiency is subject to paternalism complaints due to the prudential procedure, then Bidanure cannot choose UBI over BC without resorting to paternalism.

Again, I am not arguing that state-legislated paternalism cannot ever be justified. I am making the more modest claim that state-legislated paternalism is presumptively wrong, and a moral taint remains. Paternalism is particularly striking when no additional cost will be imposed on others. When the state supplants its judgment for those of its citizens, then it is requiring them to accept a very specific view of the good life which they may not share. In such cases, the state will diminish citizens' moral status. The problem with state paternalism, unlike person-to-person paternalism, is that it enforces a blanket policy that applies across the board. It does not allow us to assess individual cases such as those of Poppy and Elizabeth. It is insensitive to the diversity of reasonable plans and trade-offs that people are entitled to make for themselves. Worryingly, if the state can override young citizens' judgments in these types of cases, why not in others? Why not restrict young adults from driving, drinking alcohol, surfing or gambling, given that these activities also risk putting people below a sufficiency threshold and will impact their ability to revise their plans and ambitions over time? Respecting young people and treating them as equals is at the heart of Bidanure's account. It therefore matters a lot that we understand the reasons and justification for state paternalism in particular cases. Once we open the door to this

³ Paul Bou-Habib (2011) also raises this concern. He argues that prudent planners offer a one-size-fits-all solution that negates the diversity of reasonable plans and trade-offs that individuals are entitled to make for themselves. I think Bou-Habib makes an important point. I build on this position by invoking a paternalism concern.

principle, there is a risk that it will license a wide range of paternalistic actions that will trouble relational egalitarians.

4. THE EXPLOITATION PROBLEM

I'll now focus on the second way in which Bidadanure's basic income proposal might come into conflict with her relational egalitarian principle. This involves a common relational objection to UBI—from those on both the right and the left of the political spectrum, expressed by the public, politicians, and academics—that UBI is exploitative, because it allows the idle to live off the labor of their fellow citizens without making a reciprocal contribution to society. Theorists refer to this as the “exploitation objection”. For example, Rawls insists that we should not design institutions to subsidize those who decide to surf all day; if surfers want an income, they will have to use their productive capacity (Rawls 2001, p. 179). Similarly, Stuart White argues:

[W]here others bear some cost in order to contribute to a scheme of cooperation, ... it is unfair for one to willingly enjoy the intended benefits of their cooperative efforts unless one is willing to bear the cost of making a relevantly proportionate contribution to this scheme of cooperation in return. (White 1997: 317-18)

On this basis, exploitation consists in a breach of fair reciprocity. More specifically, it occurs when people are engaged in cooperative relationships together. There is exploitation if the distribution of rewards from cooperation fails to be roughly proportional to the distribution of effortful contribution. To knowingly impose disproportionate burdens or benefits on those with whom one is engaged in cooperation is exploitative. Thus if the “idle” claim a share of income generated through a cooperative UBI scheme, without contributing when they can do so, then they take unfair advantage of their fellow citizens. The idle exploit their fellow citizens. But we can take the wrongness of this exploitation claim further and hold that the idle do not treat their fellow citizens with dignity and respect in their failure to act cooperatively. As Ruth Sample (2003: 57-8) insists, a lack of respect for the value in human beings is what motivates a charge of exploitation. Thus it might be argued that if Bidadanure's UBI policy encourages such free riding then it is exploitative and legitimizes unequal relationships. In the intergenerational context, it might also be argued that younger generations will benefit more from the cooperative scheme than older generations when it is initially introduced. This is because younger generations will receive more UBI payments over their lifetime compared to older generations.

There are two ways that Bidadanure might respond to the exploitation objection. First, she might argue that UBI is all things considered justifiable, even if it is exploitative and involves unfair advantage-taking and a relational wrong. This is because the relational costs of not having UBI are more morally problematic for younger people than the exploitation that basic income allows. Bidadanure argues that the advantage of her UBI proposal is that it works to mitigate inegalitarian relationships of dependency and domination between age groups. For example, young people need a job to satisfy their basic needs, employers use this dependency (and fear of unemployment) to gain power over them, a power that they can use to dominate and push temporary or zero-hour contracts, long hours, and zero sickness pay. By unconditionally guaranteeing everyone an income, UBI can help mitigate these situations of dependency and domination. Political philosophers such as Nicolas Vrousalis (2013, 2021) have examined how situations of dependency with this kind of structure can result in a specific form of relational exploitation involving domination.

Now, Bidadanure can argue that by introducing her UBI policy and unconditionally guaranteeing everyone an income, we can limit these situations of dependency and domination facing young people. For example, we can imagine a society with Bidadanure's UBI policy. Because UBI is unconditional, this society might have an exploitation problem (involving unfair advantage-taking and failure of respect) if some citizens live off their UBI without working (assuming they have the ability and option to work). Nevertheless, the basic income will create a robust floor that mitigates dependency and domination in employment contracts between young and old. We can compare this to another society without a UBI policy. This society does not have an exploitation problem (in terms of the idle taking unfair advantage and disrespecting their fellow citizens). But the lack of UBI pushes people into the labor market and results in a higher level of dependency and domination between age groups. Young people are dominated and pushed into degrading and precarious contracts. Here Bidadanure might argue that the exploitation that basic income allows seems a price worth paying in order to mitigate exploitation in which the young are dominated and pushed into unfair contracts. In this sense, the exploitation might be justified all things considered, but it is presumptively wrong. Again, it matters a lot how we weigh these relational conflicts and understand the reasons and justification for exploitation in particular cases.

A second way that Bidadanure might respond to the exploitation problem is to say that reciprocity and respect are important political values, but they should only apply after people have been given the

resources they are entitled to at the basic level of justice (i.e. they have been given lifespan sufficiency). Moreover, there is no unfairness or exploitation (in the reciprocity sense) if basic income is funded by undeserved benefits. For example, Land Value Taxation (LVT) involves taxing the value of the land, but it does not include the value of improvements that have been made to the land (buildings, private property, etc.). This is an idea that has been endorsed by many, in different times and places (e.g. by Herbert Spencer (1851), Henry George (1879), and Hillel Steiner (1994, 2017, 2022)). Each of these theorists holds that every person is entitled to an equal share of the total value of natural resources. They argue that because land was originally unowned, everyone is morally at liberty to make use of the land. It follows that if some people exclude others from land and natural resources which they might otherwise use, then they must compensate them. In societies today, where most (if not all) land and natural resources are owned, this compensation involves a land tax to be paid by landowners on the value of their sites. All people are then entitled to an equal share of the revenue produced by land tax. Under this proposal, a chunk of the basic income could be saved and made available when people reach adulthood. Adults could then receive their share of UBI on a monthly or annual basis. This scheme nicely aligns with Bidanure's UBI + baby-bond proposal. It enables lifespan efficiency because everyone receives a lump sum in early adulthood to invest in lifelong projects, but it has the added advantage of being global in scope. It therefore guarantees an equal basic income for everyone regardless of their temporal or geographical location. Arguably, this would make a significant contribution to promoting economic development in poorer societies, reduce the hierarchy of nation states at the global level, and mitigate the need for economic migration from those societies. Importantly, LVT avoids this exploitation conflict in its entirety. There is no conflict because LVT is grounded in an equal share of the total value of natural resources. There is no exploitation (in the sense of a breach of fair reciprocity), since LVT would be funded by a tax on land, minus the value of the improvements that have been made to the land. If no one made the land, it is not the product of the labor and efforts of others. It therefore cannot be exploitive to share the value of the land for the good of all.

But there will be a nagging objection that the level of income generated from land will not be enough to provide lifespan sufficiency. One might argue that the income generated from LVT will be very low given factors such as a rising population, depleting natural resources etc., which diminish people's share of basic income. However, theorists have put forward various strategies to circumvent this objection. These strategies involve widening the scope of what constitutes the planet's natural

resources beyond land to include spatial locations, oceans, portions of the electromagnetic spectrum, the earth's atmosphere, inheritance, genetic information, etc., all of which will be subject to LVT taxation and equal redistribution. One strategy involves taxing inherited wealth. Daniel Halliday (2018) argues that it is necessary to tax inheritances because they are flows of unearned wealth. Steiner (2023) argues for full hereditary taxation. This is on the grounds that all wealth produced by earlier generations (those no longer in existence) counts as a natural resource. Similarly, Van Parijs (1991,1995) has extended the scope of undeserved gifts to include employment rents. As noted by Van Parijs, luck, discrimination, and favoritism play an important role in the allocation of jobs. A relatively new strategy has been put forward by theorists such as Busilacchi (2009), Glaeser (2011), and Van Parijs and Vanderborght (2017). This strategy incorporates the earth's atmosphere as a renewable natural resource into the LVT scheme. This scheme is thought to realize climate justice, but also generate huge revenues that could be redistributed to all in the form of a global basic income.⁴

5. CONCLUSION

I have focused on two relational conflicts raised by Bidadanure's basic income proposal. The first conflict involves paternalism, the second conflict involves exploitation. If Bidadanure is to resolve or mitigate this relational conflict, then it seems crucial for her to explain: (1) why her basic income proposal does not institutionalize conditions of relational inequality; or (2) why some relational inequality is a price worth paying. Resolving this conflict seems especially important for Bidadanure, given the pivotal role that relational egalitarianism plays in her account of justice between the old and young. Although I have focused on issues that I find worrisome, Bidadanure's book is exceptional and an essential tool for examining what justice requires between age groups.

⁴ It is argued that the earth's atmosphere is a scarce renewable resource whose use as a sink for our carbon emissions has an opportunity cost that could be best reflected in a price. Van Parijs and Vanderborght (2017: 228) hold that the best way of realizing climate justice consists of three steps. First, we need to identify our atmosphere's threshold to digest our carbon dioxide without producing damages. Second, we sell to the highest bidders the emission rights that match this threshold for a given period. This will be determined through auction and percolate into the prices of all goods worldwide in proportion to their direct and indirect carbon content. This will then impact production and consumption patterns including travelling etc. Third, the huge revenues generated by the auction are to be redistributed in the form of a global basic income tax to all.

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