

# *The Epistemic Justification of Democracy*

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*In the article, I am concerned with the epistemic justification of democracy: what does the epistemic justification of democracy consist of, and how can we assure that democracy indeed generates decisions of the highest epistemic quality? However, since it is impossible to speak about the epistemic justification of democracy without considering its relation to political justification, and their tension, this article will also question the relationship between epistemic and political justification. I endorse a position called the hybrid stance, not only because I think that, when justifying democracy, we need to consider both the political value of fairness and the epistemic values of truth-sensitivity and truth-conduciveness, but because I believe we should appropriately harmonize them. While the advocates of epistemic proceduralism hold that it best harmonizes the political and epistemic values of democracy, I argue that they do not separate epistemic values as intrinsically different from the political. On the other hand, even if we accept that epistemic justification is tied to intrinsically truth-respecting practices, the question remains which decision-making processes best satisfy this demand. In simpler terms, we must inquire how to divide epistemic labor between citizens and experts. I will try to show that the optimal model needs to preserve both the epistemic potential of the diversity present in the collective intelligence of citizens, and the epistemic potential of the factual knowledge embodied by the individual intelligence of experts.*

**Keywords:** Epistemic justification of democracy, epistemic proceduralism, division of epistemic labor, experts, epistemic diversity.

## 1. *Introduction*

In my book, *Democracy and Truth*, my central claim was that democracy's legitimacy stems not only from its political but from its epistemic justification. In simpler terms, democracy is as good and as desirable a

political system as it is fair—meaning, as much as it supports the freedom and equality of every citizen, but also as much as it generates decisions of high epistemic quality (that is, decisions that solve the citizen's problems, evidence-based decisions, decisions that are the consequence of epistemically responsible conduct or, more succinct, decisions that are truth-conducive or truth-sensitive).

It is not entirely simple to offer a specific and concise explanation of what it means for democracy—a system of procedures, practices, and institutions—to be epistemically justified or to generate epistemically valuable decisions. Truth has traditionally been the foundational epistemic value. However, since truth is something we attribute to propositions, it is not entirely appropriate for assessing (collective) epistemic agency. If we are looking to offer an epistemic appraisal of systems, practices, and procedures, we will need to utilize new standards of epistemic evaluation. In this sense, I have chosen to speak about the epistemic features of a system whose decisions solve its citizens' problems, or, more precisely, about epistemically virtuous practices, procedures, and institutions that generate truth-conducive or truth-sensitive, evidence-based beliefs/stances/decisions. If democracy, as a system, manages to solve its citizens' problems and creates decisions that are—because they are made through scientific methods such as critical thinking, deliberation, argumentation, epistemically virtuous disagreement resolution or like—correct and accurate, then we can say democracy possesses the epistemic feature of being a truth-conducive and truth-sensitive system.

Democracy is undoubtedly the best existing system when it comes to the political value of fairness. Still, it seems that, even though it satisfies the demand for fairness, it frequently produces decisions of low epistemic quality. These decisions are not only inadequate for citizens because they do not answer their problems. They also inspire disagreement through social divisions, exclusion, radicalism, and terrorism; they generate decisions detrimental to the quality of life, health, education, and survival of their citizens and make the citizens' lives miserable by deepening social inequalities. It could be claimed, of course, that only an unfair system that just appears democratic will generate decisions of low epistemic quality. Apart from the option that an only ostensibly democratic system could be both politically and epistemically unjustified, research has shown that even fair democratic procedures—such as majority voting, representative democracies that include debates between party representatives, referendums, and public forums—often generate decisions and beliefs of low epistemic quality. It is always possible for some fair practice to produce a low-quality decision owing to particular circumstances or the quality of the citizens' contribution. However, recent social phenomena imply there is no reason to think that some procedure—a procedure that is politically justified because it includes all citizens as free and equal—will, as if through an invisible hand, generate decisions of high epistemic quality.

There is nothing in the very nature of fair procedures, no relevant epistemic feature of such methods by themselves, that would guarantee the truth-conduciveness of its decisions (Goldman 2010).

In my book, I have attempted to show there is an intrinsic tension between the political value of fairness on the one hand and the epistemic value of truth-sensitivity on the other. Even Ancient thinkers, most prominently Plato, have emphasized that including all citizens in the decision-making process will not generate decisions of the highest epistemic quality. Plato's *kallipolis* is nothing else but a proposal that, to preserve the epistemic quality of decisions, we should sacrifice the political values of equality and freedom: simpler, he pleaded for the epistemic virtues of epistocracy. The tenacity of this conflict is also visible in other practices, such as the different forms of epistemic paternalism and programs of affirmative action I write about in my book. Most political philosophers, aiming to avoid the thorny question of the non-democratic character of the practices that best promote epistemic quality, have purposely omitted the epistemic status of democracy, centering only on its political justification. Contrary to epistocracy and all kinds of elitism, I assume that a desirable political system must surely be politically justified and fair. Nevertheless, it also needs to be epistemically justified.

In this article, I deal specifically with the epistemic justification of democracy: what does the epistemic justification of democracy consist of, and how do we assure that democracy indeed generates decisions of the highest epistemic quality? However, since it is impossible to speak about the epistemic justification of democracy without considering its relation to political justification and their tension, this article will also question the relationship between epistemic and political justification. I endorse a position called the hybrid stance, not only because I think that, when justifying democracy, we need to consider both the political value of fairness and the epistemic values of truth-sensitivity and truth-conduciveness, but because I believe we should *appropriately* harmonize them. In that sense, political instrumentalism, the stance that we should prioritize political values, while epistemic values are only secondary or derived from the political, is as unacceptable as epistemic instrumentalism, the view we should prioritize epistemic values while sacrificing and forgoing the political.

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In my discussion about the epistemic justification of democracy, I will rely on the arguments authored by Ivan Mladenović and Nenad Mišćević, both of whose articles analyze the nature of the epistemic in democracy. Ivan Mladenović raises the question of what demands a democratic system must satisfy, apart from its political rationale, to be considered epistemically justified. Nenad Mišćević, assuming that epistemic justification is tied to truth-respecting practices, wonders which

decision-making processes best satisfy this demand. Even though their articles abound in arguments and solutions that entail a value independent from their debate about my book, I will focus on their central claims related to the epistemic justification of democracy.

## 2. *Epistemic value: is it intrinsic or derived from political value?*

In his article Ivan Mladenović (Mladenović 2020) endorses the stance of epistemic proceduralism, which, as he claims, best harmonizes epistemic and political justification. Epistemic proceduralism, as developed by David Estlund and Fabienne Peter, is a standpoint deserving of our maximum attention, primarily because it was these philosophers who first tackled the epistemic justification of democracy (Estlund 2008a, 2008b, Peter 2008, 2013). In my book, I have tried to show that, despite their pioneering efforts, their positions do not acknowledge epistemic justification. Instead, they either derive it from or reduce it to political justification, which is why I describe them as political instrumentalists.

I claim that Peter's pure epistemic proceduralism, the position that there are no procedure-independent standards of epistemic justification, ultimately reduces epistemic justification to the political, assuming that fair and inclusive procedures will by themselves generate epistemic quality. Moreover, Peter claims that, in the context of the epistemic justification of democracy, we can only understand epistemic quality as the outcome of fair procedures. Estlund is somewhat more moderate, which is why I call his version moderate epistemic proceduralism. Although he does concede there are procedure-independent standards, he assumes the final stance that fair democratic procedures tend to generate correct or epistemically valuable decisions—which is why independent standards appear only as a welcome supplement for particular situations. In any case, Estlund does not have to establish truth-conducive standards separate from fair procedures because he believes that democratic processes inherently contain enough reliability to produce correct outcomes.

We can interpret his ambiguous attitude towards independent epistemic norms as a worry that independent epistemic criteria could imperil the fairness of democratic procedures. Estlund is probably one of the best contemporary critics of epistocracy, and we can understand his final position about epistemic justification as the stance that setting an independent truth-conducive standard could give rise to epistocracy. I believe that Estlund is right to choose this tactic. Namely, establishing separate epistemic standards indeed raises the question of the conflict and the balance between political and epistemic values—where an independent epistemic perspective forms new demands for democratic procedures. However, if we genuinely want to endorse the epistemic justification of democracy, we will need to tackle the question of resolving the tension between political and epistemic criteria. The tactic of minimiz-

ing those epistemic standards for evaluating democratic decision-making processes that are independent of political values is not appropriate for dedicated advocates of the epistemic justification of democracy.

Contrary to my stance, Mladenović holds that Estlund's epistemic proceduralism best harmonizes the political and epistemic values of democracy, and that epistemic proceduralism is an example of a hybrid perspective. As I have already said, while it is vital to support the inclusion of epistemic justification alongside the political, it does not satisfy my understanding of a hybrid approach. Any proper hybrid approach assumes that each value bears an equal independent weight in the evaluation, and strives for an optimum balance of intrinsically different values that occasionally come into conflict. First, both in Peter and in Estlund, epistemic quality, or a reliable record of generating correct decisions, is derived from fair procedures. Second, there is no conflict between these values because any divergence is eliminated by the assumption that epistemic value can be inferred from the political.

Both for Peter and Estlund, there is no *objective* epistemic value (the epistemic feature of truth-conduciveness) that would be the necessary presumption of any intrinsically epistemic justification. For both epistemic proceduralists, epistemic value is a consequence of politically appropriately organized and conducted procedures. While Peter endorses the stance that fair processes will certainly generate epistemic quality, Estlund holds that fair procedures only tend to produce correct decisions. Although it is not entirely clear what "correct" is supposed to mean, the concept resembles Rousseau's correctness theory, where a "correct" decision is one that is supported by the general will. Therefore, a correct attitude is the one that is supported by the majority through fair democratic procedures and is unrelated to objective epistemic value. Fair procedures alone, independent from the informed and non-egoistical stance of those participating in the discussion, possess no epistemic feature that would guarantee epistemic quality. When Estlund and Mladenović claim that adequate democratic procedures tend to generate correct decisions, they are both telling us that they do not perceive epistemic values as separate and intrinsically different from the political. And this is my main point of conflict with epistemic proceduralism: I hold that epistemic value is objective and inherently different from how it is defined by various forms of social constructivism—which upturns the concept of truth by relativizing and annulling its objective value, or by considering it a product of (good) political processes.

Although he does not endorse Peter's pure epistemic proceduralism, Mladenović notes that I erroneously equate her pure epistemic proceduralism with mere fair proceduralism, as Peter advocates precisely for epistemic proceduralism. In contrast, real fair proceduralism is utterly insensitive to epistemic justification. Likewise, he holds that I wrongly neglect the fact Estlund does understand the importance of procedure-independent standards. I repeat that both Estlund and Peter have done a pioneering job in tackling the question of epistemic justification. Before

them, political philosophers have ignored, purposely disregarded, or explicitly refused the issue of the epistemic value of democracy. However, once Estlund and Peter have put this question on the table and opened this significant philosophical debate, we must ask whether they correctly understood the nature of epistemic justification. Pure epistemic proceduralism, precisely because of its utter reduction of epistemic justification to the political, is essentially no different from that proceduralism that deals only with the political values of democratic procedures. Fair proceduralism and pure epistemic proceduralism are not entirely equal because Peter emphasizes the significance of epistemic justification, but their final evaluations are very much alike: everything comes down to assessing and improving the political value of procedures. To make myself clear, while I do believe that the political value of processes is significant, it is not sufficient for justifying democracy.

In his version of (moderate) epistemic proceduralism, Estlund claims that epistemic justification must possess independent standards, only to end with the conclusion that it is acceptable for democratic procedures not to generate truth in some particular case as long as they, in general, produce correct decisions. Mladenović, echoing Estlund, claims that establishing truth as a procedure-independent standard that must always be met is not necessary and that my criterion of epistemic justification is both redundant and overly ambitious. “It is reasonable to suppose that what Estlund terms ‘primary bads’ such as war, famine, economic collapse, genocide, belong to this class of procedure-independent standards,” he writes, and continues “Consequently, for justification of democracy and democratic authority, truth doesn’t need to be the only relevant epistemic standard. It is more reasonable to assume that for justification of democracy, some other procedure-independent standards should have their epistemic significance and that democratic decision-making given its inherently epistemic characteristics should provide reasons for action or reasons to comply” (Mladenović 2020). It is evident that the critical difference between epistemic proceduralism and my stance, which I call reliability democracy, is in how I understand the nature of epistemic justification. While I see epistemic justification as an intrinsic feature independent from political justification and use this definition in establishing procedure-independent epistemic standards, Estlund and Mladenović do not consider this necessary. While I believe that the epistemic justification of democracy must rest on objective epistemic value or quality, they seek epistemic value in the constructs of fair political procedures or, in particular cases, in some political/ethical values, such as “the elimination of primary bads,” independent from what processes can generate.

Mladenović’s concept of reasonable agreement or acceptance, which he proposes as a suitable replacement for my outmoded insistence on truth, is undoubtedly a significant political value that ensures society’s basic functioning in times of disagreement. However, for epistemic

justification, what we need is truth-conducive agreement. We can also attain reasonable agreement around beliefs that are not true, and in procedures that are not (sufficiently) truth-conducive. There is nothing in the nature of fair processes, the general will, and reasonable agreement, that would imply they necessarily possess the epistemic feature of truth-conduciveness. In ideal epistemic circumstances of informed and epistemically responsible citizens who do not dogmatically hold on to their original stance, reasonable agreement could enjoy the feature of truth-conduciveness. However, real epistemic cases are sub-ideal. People are often both inadequately informed and unmotivated to form true beliefs and are subject to biases and prejudice created in closed informational bubbles and echo chambers. In such conditions, reasonable agreement does not have the potential to be truth-conductive.

### *3. The division of epistemic labor between citizens and experts*

In his article “The Limits of Expertism,” Nenad Mišćević embraces—or, to be precise, does not even raise—the question of the epistemic justification of democracy, assuming that the legitimacy of democratic processes and practices must depend on the epistemic quality of their decisions. Mišćević unambiguously accepts the stance that the epistemic quality of decisions and beliefs is closely tied to the epistemic value of truth. He also agrees that the epistemic virtues of some social practice, procedure, or institution, are intimately related to generating true beliefs, i.e., decisions based on true premises. Mišćević correctly labels his and my position by calling us “truth-respecting theoreticians.” From our agreement on this matter, I derive an understanding that Mišćević does not even mention, and which is related to my previous discussion about the position of epistemic proceduralism. Since epistemic proceduralism rejects the procedure-independent and intrinsic standard of truth as the criterion of epistemic legitimacy, I assume that he would, like I have done, develop a critical stance towards epistemic proceduralism of any kind. Namely, his article makes it clear that the epistemic quality of democratic procedures is not ensured simply by making them fair, but that there is some external, procedure-independent, and objective criterion for assessing the epistemic quality of decisions.

Mišćević focuses on the question of how to organize democratic procedures to yield the highest epistemic quality or to attain the value of truth. He seems to accept that this question demands we assess the role of experts in democratic deliberation and decision-making, as they are, as individual epistemic agents, the best guides to the truth—i.e., they are the most truth-conducive epistemic agents. My book devotes a lot of attention precisely to the role of experts. Contrary to epistemic proceduralists, who perceive any inclusion of experts in decision-making processes as a threat of unfair privileging or epistocracy, my model

of reliability democracy attempts to show that the expert participation in the democratic decision-making process improves the reliability of procedures, and, in turn, the epistemic quality of the final decisions. However, the critical question is how to divide epistemic labor between citizens and experts without stripping procedures of their political justification (Christiano 2012). For epistemic proceduralists, this question is meaningless, as they use different methods to shun this possibility as both politically harmful and epistemically inefficient. While Mišćević, on the other hand, agrees with my proposal to include experts to make the final decisions/beliefs/judgments more epistemically valuable, he suggests a different division of labor between citizens and experts. I will try to show that his model of the division of labor leaves less space to citizens, and is, thus, more expertist than my suggestion. I hold that, as such, he argues in favor of some kind of epistemic instrumentalism because he sacrifices political justification for epistemic values, while barely adding anything new to epistemic quality.

Mišćević correctly interprets my stance that consensualism would be the ideal decision-making practice were we to live in ideal circumstances that satisfy the epistemic preconditions for participating in public deliberation. In other words, democratic deliberation and democratic procedures would have complete epistemic legitimacy if they, as processes, possessed the relevant epistemic features that made them reliable. In other words, participants in a debate should be (i) adequately informed about the topic they are discussing, which can be labeled *the condition of adequately informed participants*, and (ii) they must not be egoistically or emotionally tied to their stance in such a manner that they will immediately reject any opposing view, which we can call *the anti-dogmatic condition for participants* (Kitcher 2011, Lehrer and Wagner 1981). However, as it is unrealistic to assume that everyday democratic decision-making and voting procedures will meet these demands—which has been proven by ample empirical evidence—the fulfillment of these conditions can be considered an ideal scenario (Ahlstrom-Vij 2012, 2013, Sustain 2006). In ideal circumstances, democratic procedures and the resulting consensus would generate epistemically valuable decisions.

Nonetheless, in real or sub-ideal cases, people are usually inadequately informed about some of or all the topics they are deciding about, they have seldom been taught to absorb the detailed data needed for making decisions, are not motivated to form beliefs of high epistemic quality correctly, and do not have the time to do thorough research (Goldman 1991). What is more, in everyday decision-making processes, citizens are pliant to many biases, stereotypes, and prejudice, which they are (sometimes) unaware of and which they (voluntarily or automatically) do not control, which casts serious doubt on the condition of adequately informed participants, as well as on the anti-dogmatic condition for participants (Dunning and Kruger 1999, Fricker 2007).



There is also a myriad of structural social limitations in transmitting and filtering knowledge, and in communicating in a globalized world that relies on social networks, the Internet, and non-transparent algorithms for selecting and disseminating information, which leads most of us to live within echo chambers. Such a non-ideal conversational context for fulfilling the conditions of adequate knowledge and openness necessarily thwarts the epistemic quality of the decisions generated through fair democratic procedures. And finally, democratic decision-making itself—or the famous “wisdom of crowds”—has its internal deficits and limitations related to the flattening of beliefs to those which are understandable to everyone, and which are often not of the highest epistemic quality (Gigone and Hastie 1993, Prijić-Samaržija 2005, Prelec, Seung, and McCoy 2017). More succinct, in real-world situations that we describe as sub-ideal epistemic circumstances, it is difficult to expect that public deliberation will automatically generate an epistemically valuable or truth-conducive consensus. This is precisely why the distinction between ideal and sub-ideal epistemic conditions is crucial to understanding my position and the proposal of reliability democracy (Goldman 2010). Since we live in sub-optimal epistemic conditions, democratic deliberation will not automatically—merely by including all citizens in fair procedures—generate epistemic quality. What we need is to design democratic processes in such a way to make them as reliable as possible, i.e., to make them ensure the highest possible epistemic quality.

Miščević agrees that the difference between sub-ideal—or real-world—epistemic circumstances and ideal epistemic circumstances is vital for defining the division of epistemic labor. While I, within my real-world approach, focus on the question of epistemic relationships and the division of labor in sub-ideal circumstances to generate decisions of the highest epistemic quality, he suggests we should keep this parallelism in mind by assessing sub-ideal epistemic conditions as approximates to their ideal theoretic counterpart. While I suggest we explore how best to satisfy epistemic norms and which processes of dividing epistemic labor generate the highest epistemic quality while preserving the democratic rationale, Miščević recommends that we “project the notion of rationality downwards” from ideal circumstances to sub-ideal circumstances to ascertain how approximate they are to their idealized counterpart. Given that, contrary to epistemic proceduralism, I maintain the concept of procedure-independent epistemic quality (truth-conduciveness), which helps us ascertain whether our real and non-ideal circumstances meet specific epistemic standards. However, I hold that Miščević’s example is excellent theoretical and methodological support. While I have attempted to show which aspects of the real world muddle epistemic quality, Miščević provides a useful methodological toolkit for establishing the epistemic quality we are after: we can imagine an ideal situation as a thought experiment and

analyze whether our real circumstances are at all close to ideal. Both my empirical (or naturalistic) approach and his rationalist (or normative) approach could be methodologically beneficial for attaining more epistemic quality.

While we agree that epistemic justification is intrinsic, and while we share the same theoretical framework, we diverge on concrete proposals of procedures that would, in sub-ideal circumstances, ensure the highest epistemic quality. Simply put, we split on the question of the division of labor between citizens and experts. I begin from the attitude that, in sub-ideal circumstances, “the wisdom of crowds” will use no invisible hand to generate the epistemic quality of beliefs and decisions. Instead, we need to ensure it by including experts. My example of the division of labor between citizens and experts is as follows: through *consensus*, the procedures of public deliberation, and majority voting, citizens define the problem they need resolved and oversee the experts by confirming or rejecting their solutions to the problem. Experts, on the other hand, as agents expertly trained to solve problems within their area of expertise, seek answers to the suggested issues and present them to citizens. It is crucial to note that I think citizens should be the ones who will, through *consensus*, choose the experts they best trust to resolve their problems. Here I echo Elizabeth Anderson’s empirical example that citizens with a minimum education and access to the Internet can select a trustworthy expert on the topic of, for example, global warming (Anderson 2011).

Miščević believes that the division of labor and the decision-making process should occur differently. First, he does not think that all citizens are capable of defining “goals and values” because the limitations—the fact they do not fulfill the epistemic conditions—that constrain them in resolving the detected problems will equally restrict them in defining the issues that the experts should address. Second, he believes that not all citizens, for the same reason, will be capable of detecting reliable experts. Instead, they will prefer those who share their stances and whose stances they can recognize. For these reasons, Miščević suggests that citizens, within their interest groups, choose experts who will represent them in later deliberations where experts will (i) define their goals and values, and (ii) best resolve their problems. In other words, citizens participate in debate within their groups—class, ethnic, gender, religious, or like—where they choose experts who will join experts from other—class, ethnic, gender, religious, or like—groups in resolving problems. According to Miščević, we can consider a situation where the chosen expert representatives from different groups deliberate about which issues should be fixed and then solve them some kind of optimum approximation of the ideal state, because experts are more capable of rational debate than citizens, which makes it more likely for them to satisfy our epistemic conditions.

Why do I think that Miščević’s example is more expertist than my own? First, he reduces civic participation and deliberation between citi-

zens to the choice of an expert who will (with other experts) assume the entire epistemic labor of defining the goals, resolving them, and overseeing how they are resolved. Mišćević seems even more distrustful towards the wisdom of crowds than I am because he believes that the epistemic potential of collective intelligence and, in particular, the epistemic diversity of perspectives will not be able to generate epistemic quality in any aspect other than the choice of representative experts. Although all citizens are included, their role in decision-making is far more limited than in my suggestion, and the part of experts is increased. This reduction of civic participation in epistemic labor to the selection of representatives is unacceptable for three reasons.

First, the role of citizens in deliberation and decision-making is reduced in favor of experts, which upsets the balance between democratic and epistemic rationale or justification. In my book, I endorse a hybrid approach that simultaneously assesses the epistemic and the ethical/political justification of processes, practices, and institutions. As I have mentioned above, I believe that epistemic instrumentalism, which sacrifices political goals for epistemic values, is not an appropriate approach. Likewise, I hold that political instrumentalism, where epistemic values are sacrificed for the political, is equally unacceptable. This stance is why I characterize expertism (and its radical form, epistocracy)—the position where experts have the central role in decision-making—as epistemic instrumentalism. Thus, as my book asserts that, in sub-ideal circumstances, there is a structural conflict between political and epistemic values (because the political right to participate does not generate decisions of the highest epistemic quality), the hybrid model is a conscious and conscientious quest for a balance that maintains both political and epistemic values. This binds us to sacrifice the highest possible epistemic quality to preserve the democratic rationale but also to sacrifice political values by giving a unique role to experts. Mišćević's proposal sacrifices political values for the epistemic to the extent that disbalances political and epistemic demands and, aiming to approximate the ideal of rationality, establishes a stronger expertism than I am willing to propose.

Second, I hold that Mišćević has overlooked the epistemic potential of citizens, focusing on their epistemic deficits in sub-ideal circumstances. Just like the collective intelligence of crowds has its deficiencies, individual (expert) intelligence also entails its limitations, which urges us to find an appropriate balance or, more succinct, an antidote for both deficits. Since knowledge is dispersed throughout society (Hayek 1945), “many minds” know little about a lot, while experts know a lot about little (R. E. Goodin and K. Spiekermann 2018). There are many indicators that collective intelligence—due to cognitive diversity and the diversity of perspectives, heuristics, evidence, interpretations, and even biases—sometimes generates solutions better than those made by individual experts (Goodin 2006, Hong and Page 2004, Landemore 2013, 2014, Mercier and Sperber 2011, Page 2007, 2008, Zollman

2010). Moreover, randomly formed collectives are even more epistemically successful than structured collectives such as interest groups. Experts, on the other hand, belong to the homogenous world of the highly educated and the materially well off. Mišćević attempts to secure the condition of diversity in his deliberative groups of experts by stressing that they come from different ideological groups, and preserves the desired level of rationality by only including experts.

However, advocates of collective intelligence claim that knowledge is dispersed through society, and experts cannot fully satisfy the condition of cognitive diversity. Randomly formed collections of citizens ensure a degree of diversity that makes them more reliable truth-trackers than groups of experts who advocate for different comprehensive doctrines. Keeping this in mind, we need to give citizens space where their epistemic advantage of diversity will yield the best epistemic results, which is in the areas where there is no highly sophisticated factual knowledge (Zubčić 2020, Janković 2020). This is precisely the space I recommend for citizens, who should have a crucial role in defining goals/problems, choosing the experts who will resolve those problems, and conducting a second-order assessment of the consensus of trustworthy scientific experts (Anderson 2011). In short, citizens' epistemic potential is underestimated and reduced to their choice of an ideological representative who will define their problems and then resolve them. Unlike Mišćević, I can easily imagine that I, as a non-expert and a citizen, could choose a climatologist who does not belong to my ideological group if they could reasonably be tasked with resolving the previously defined problem of divesting from fossil fuels and transitioning to renewable resources. I can also imagine myself overseeing whether she is appropriately solving this problem. Likewise, I do not think anyone would struggle with choosing trustworthy macroeconomists, who might not belong to their worldview, if we have previously defined the issue of increased economic inequality as the problem he needs to resolve, nor would they struggle with a second-order assessment of whether the work is done. The role of experts lies in providing a technical solution to a problem based on factual knowledge—regardless of whether we are talking about science or morals and political questions. This is precisely why, in my proposal, *all* citizens choose experts who are not selected as the best representatives of their group interests but only as people who can best solve their problem. I believe this model preserves both the epistemic potential of the diversity present in collective intelligence and the epistemic potential of the factual knowledge embodied by individual intelligence.

Third, it is worth asking whether, in Mišćević's division of epistemic labor, the chosen experts will be constrained in their representative role while making decisions and resolving problems. Namely, I am wondering about the condition of being non-dogmatic during deliberation. Since they are chosen to advance the group's interests, their potential for rational discussion is limited not only by their value judgments

but by the fact they need to represent group values. The question is whether, in circumstances of disagreement, they are allowed to be open towards other experts. Their role is to represent their group's stances, which is why—even if they are, as experts, considerate of rational discourse and the strength of evidence—they cannot give up their initial stance. Their situation is an illustration of the Steadfast View in the debate about disagreement. According to the Steadfast View, the fact a peer disagrees with you is irrelevant. Because disagreement, even among peers, does not warrant a response, there may thus be cases where the uniquely rational response for both parties to a dispute is to stick to their initial beliefs (Kelly 2005). In this plot of deliberation between representative experts, we can even imagine the Extra Weight View, the stance that it is rational to give more weight to your own belief simply because it is yours (Wedgewood 2010). The potential of this approach to rationally resolve a disagreement is as small as possible and entails some worryingly skeptical conclusions—since both parties in deliberation stick to their original beliefs, both *p* and not-*p* can be considered equally epistemically valuable. In everyday real-world situations, this means there are no solutions to disagreements, and, thus, no solutions to problems. Should we, as Mišćević writes, need a solution to the migrant crisis, representative experts from different groups will not be able to suspend their stance and the stance of the group. In other words, Mišćević's representative experts do not satisfy the epistemic condition of a non-dogmatic approach to deliberation, which hampers the epistemic quality of their solutions, decisions, and beliefs. An expert chosen by everyone, on the other hand, does not have these constraints, and thus, despite all the restraints limiting them as an individual epistemic agent, he comes closer to the epistemic conditions for generating truth-conducive beliefs/decisions/solutions to problems.

#### 4. *Conclusion*

In the wake of the culture of ignorance and the crisis of enlightenment, the epistemic justification of democracy as a system that makes its decisions through democratic procedures is of utmost importance (DeNicola 2017). However, it is equally important not to perceive epistemic justification only as a byproduct of fair democratic processes but as an intrinsic value related to objective and procedure-independent epistemic value, or, more succinct, to truth-conduciveness. In this sense, the decision to exclude experts from democratic decision-making procedures—a choice we find in epistemic proceduralism as a critique of both epistocracy and more moderate forms of expertism—is not only unjustified but entails unwanted consequences by increasing distrust towards experts and their expertise. We live in a time when citizens distrust experts or all the wrong reasons: citizens do not doubt experts because they have, as individuals or groups, shown they have not been able to solve the citizens' problems (which is a reason why they indeed

should not be granted trust) but because their central virtues of expertise and objective epistemic value have been brought into question.

Today, people distrust experts because they generally do not believe in expertise, which places us firmly within a culture of ignorance. This predicament is particularly harmful because the expertise only real experts can exercise, and which we need for the epistemic quality of our decisions/beliefs, cannot be substituted by the fairest and the most democratic procedures. For this particular reason, we need to reconsider the role of experts in democratic processes and, to ensure epistemic quality, make room for real expertise and those experts who reliably practice it. However, the part of experts in the division of epistemic labor must be appropriately balanced with democratic procedures and civic participation. Experts should present themselves not only through truth-revealing situations that paint them as those who solve their problems but as responsible professionals. In simpler terms, experts must show they are aware of their value limitations, that they acknowledge the citizens' goals and concerns, and that they are non-dogmatic (meaning, that they are willing to resolve disputes by altering their position, rather than by sticking to their original stance). To craft the best division of epistemic labor, we must acknowledge that civic participation is not only the space of the political justification of democracy. Instead, it also contributes to epistemic justification, which is why we must give citizens a fitting role in improving the epistemic quality of democratic procedures.

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