

**ABSTRACT:**

<b>Name of Responsible Researcher:</b>	<b>Leandro De Brasi</b>
<b>Project Title:</b>	<b>Epistemic Pathologies of the Public Sphere: The Remedial Role of Intellectual Other-Regarding Virtues</b>

**The central aim of the project is to identify epistemic pathologies of the political public sphere and examine the role intellectual other-regarding virtues play in remedying them.** More specifically, this project aims to show that certain epistemic pathologies concerning the deliberative argumentation of political issues and the transmission of information related to those issues can be counteracted by means of socially-oriented intellectual virtues, so to achieve an epistemically healthier public sphere.

Since the second part of the 20<sup>th</sup>C, democracy has been regarded as the only legitimate political arrangement. On a normative level, democracy now represents an undisputed background and deliberative democracy is regarded as one of the most promising approaches within democratic theory. This particular normative framework sees the communicative processes in which decision-making procedures are embedded as the primary source of political legitimacy. So it puts an emphasis on the notion of the political public sphere and the deliberation by which it is constituted, as well as highlighting the utmost importance of such deliberation being adequate. Importantly, ordinary citizens are required to adequately engage in deliberative argumentation and natural testimony for political legitimacy. However, there seems to be a public sphere crisis, in which the deliberative quality of the communicative processes is affected, and certain epistemic pathologies of deliberative argumentation and natural testimony seem to contribute to it. So this project aims to identify some such pathologies which are the result of implicit processes related to cognitive biases and social prejudices and which require, at least partly, a corrective at the personal level (and not only at the structural one). Moreover, the project aims to show that the identified pathologies can be counteracted by certain intellectual other-regarding virtues, which aim to perfect our epistemic interactions with others, and show that their realistic development stands in need of a socio-educational process, hence requiring the educational system to foster the intellectual character that increases the epistemic performance of citizens in the political public sphere. Given this, a plainer version of the project's *specific objectives* are:

- 01:** To consider different alleged epistemic pathologies of deliberative argumentation and identify those which, first, are likely to be the product of implicit processes and which, second, are likely, at least partly, to require a corrective at the personal level.
- 02:** To consider different alleged epistemic pathologies of natural testimony and identify those which, first, are likely to be the product of implicit processes and which, second, are likely, at least partly, to require a corrective at the personal level.
- 03:** To examine the nature of intellectual other-regarding virtues, identify instances of them and explore whether they are a psychologically realistic category, given empirical challenges, and their potential remedial role in epistemic interactions.
- 04:** To inquire the extent to which the identified pathologies of deliberative argumentation and natural testimony in O1-2 can be counteracted by means of the identified other-regarding virtues in O3.
- 05:** To inquire whether the development of the identified remedial other-regarding virtues in O4 requires a socio-educational process and whether this development should be an aim of the educational system.
- 06:** To identify and consider whether different educational strategies and practices can contribute to the developmental process identified in O5 for the relevant intellectual other-regarding virtues.

The project belongs within the recent applied turn in epistemology given that, motivated by the above political developments, it aims to provide some guidance as to how to increase our epistemic performance in the political public sphere. But for any recommendations to be effective at improving our epistemic communicative practices, one clearly needs to engage with the relevant empirical research. The methodology adopted is then naturalistic in the results-continuity sense (where philosophy is informed by and consistent with science) and an applied cognitive linguist, specializing in argumentation theory, psychology of reasoning and discourse analysis, joins the project as Co-Investigator.

Moreover, the project is expected to clarify and expand our understanding about the political public sphere's epistemic pathologies (including the recognition that some often regarded pathologies aren't so and that some novel forms of epistemic injustice are so) and to find a novel psychologically realistic, virtue-based remedy to some such pathologies. In this way the project can contribute to the field and hopefully to the Chilean society at large. Moreover, the renewed focus on civic studies in the Chilean educational system with its new "Sciences for citizenship" subject further shows the project's local relevance and how timely it is. The contribution to be made will be appreciated in the project's various expected products: at least four academic articles (in *WoS/Scopus* indexed journals), media articles, academic and dissemination talks, and a document on the research's findings for the Sciences for Citizenship teachers, among other things.