

Illusions and reality of public deliberation*

Ilusiones y realidad en la deliberación pública

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Abstract: This work sets out to analyse the model of deliberative process developed by Haidt in his theory of Social Intuitionism. Specifically, I intend to submit to analysis the two illusions which, according to Haidt, govern public deliberation. I shall argue that those illusions do not exist in reality, but result from an erroneous approach to the deliberative process. In his proposal, Haidt forgets to acknowledge the epistemic dimension of deliberation and the place occupied by moral emotions in the communicative process. In my opinion, this emotional dimension of deliberation should be defended from deliberative democracy.

Keywords: Neuropolitics, Social Intuitionism, illusions of moral deliberation, disagreement, moral emotions.

Resumen: Este trabajo tiene como objetivo analizar el modelo de proceso deliberativo desarrollado por Haidt en el marco de su teoría del Intuicionismo Social. En concreto, pretendo someter a análisis las dos ilusiones que, según Haidt, rigen la deliberación pública. Defenderé que esas ilusiones no existen en realidad, sino que resultan de una aproximación errónea al proceso deliberativo. Haidt olvida reconocer en su propuesta la dimensión epistémica de la deliberación y el lugar que ocupan las emociones morales en el proceso comunicativo. En mi opinión, esta dimensión emocional de la deliberación debe ser reivindicada también precisamente desde la democracia deliberativa.

Palabras clave: Neuropolítica, Intuicionismo Social, ilusiones de la deliberación moral, desacuerdo, emociones morales.

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1. Introduction

Advances in modern techniques of neuroimaging and its application in the field of politics have led to the development of neuropolitics. This discipline establishes a correlation between brain function and subjects' thoughts and behaviour in the ambit of politics. On this basis, authors such as Lakoff, Haidt, Connolly or Westen argue that political behaviour is not governed by dispassionate rationality, but is clearly emotional. To be precise, it would be based on elements such as biases and heuristics, which are beyond the subject's control. So, a key idea argued by these authors is that in order to influence the political process, and in particular, the ambit of public deliberation, it is necessary to know how to tap into the emotional factors that govern the deliberative process and allow us to persuade interlocutors to share our opinion.

One author who has developed a model of public deliberation from neuropolitics is Jonathan Haidt in his theory of Social Intuitionism. In this paper, I intend to tackle the deliberative model developed by Haidt. Firstly, I shall tackle some of the central ideas of Social Intuitionism and its model of deliberation. Then I shall submit to analysis the two illusions which, according to Haidt, are present in public deliberation in the rationalist model. In particular, I shall present some of the criticisms that can be made of these supposed illusions from deliberative democracy. Finally, I shall argue the need for deliberative democracy to recognise moral emotions as constituents of rationality.

2. Public deliberation in Social Intuitionism

Social Intuitionism is a dual process theory that has emerged from neuropsychology in response to Piaget, Kohlberg and Turiel's rational model. Haidt agrees with Kahneman (2012) and Greene (2013) that moral judgments are the consequence of two different psychological processes, System 1 and System 2. The former is an unconscious, fast and effortless appraisal with an emotional character. On the other hand, System 2 is a slow, onerous and conscious process of reflection. Haidt calls System 1 "intuitions" in his theory of Social Intuitionism. According to Social Intuitionism, the vast

majority of moral judgments are the result of intuitions, affective valences with cognitive value that generate, in an unreflective manner, the response appropriate to the stimuli received from reality. Intuition reaches our conscience in the form of an emotional valence of approval or rejection of the aforementioned stimulus, accompanied by a moral judgment. But intuition also imprints an attitude on the subject. Attitude constitutes an affective component over which the subject has no control and which predisposes the subject emotionally either for or against its object. This is a key idea within social intuitionism which will determine the deliberative process in the public forum.

According to this neuropsychological theory, in a political debate the participants are not conscious that their position is the result of intuition rather than reasoned reflection prior to moral evaluation (Haidt & Bjorklund, 2007). For this reason, although the person believes that she is coming to the debate in order to form an opinion on the topic in the light of reflection on the arguments expounded therein, in reality she comes with a predetermined opinion, which is impermeable to the arguments and evidence presented by interlocutors.

This thesis leads Haidt to reject the traditional model of rationalist deliberation. Haidt attacks the two fundamental pillars on which that rationalist model is based. The rationalist focus of public deliberation has as its basic concept the thesis of the reflective origin of moral judgments; that is, the idea that each interlocutor in the debate is guided by a criterion of justice founded on moral principles. Based on those principles, the individual forms his judgments and tries to articulate arguments he considers reasonable in order to convince his adversary of the rightness of his own position. The second pillar consists in the belief that the adversary, equally motivated, will evaluate the former's arguments, will accept that they are better than his own, and will change his opinion. According to Haidt these ideas are "the two illusions on which the moral world is founded" (Haidt, 2001, p. 823), no more, no less.

In order to show that these two beliefs are mere illusions, Haidt turns to the feelings of frustration and irritation, together with distrust of the interlocutor, experienced by persons when they see that their arguments have not been successful in convincing the adversary (Haidt, 2001, 2012). It often happens that the arguments presented by parties in the debate do

not convince the interlocutor, in spite of which each considers her own arguments to be the correct ones in the light of the evidence. The continuous exchange of arguments and evidence, with a failure to agree, provokes frustration in both participants, who end up concluding that their interlocutor is either an ignoramus or malicious (Schulz, 2010). According to Haidt, this situation is caused by an error in the rationalist deliberative model which has permeated our common conception of public deliberation. The aforementioned rationalist model attributes the means by which opinion is changed in the debate to the exchange of reasons (supported by a combination of evidence and a criterion of justice). But, according to Haidt, this model is erroneous because, as Stevenson (1937) shows, the confrontation of evidence produces not a change of opinion but quite the opposite, the polarisation and hardening of positions. In fact, a number of studies support this idea (Isenberg, 1986; Auber, Crott & Werner, 1992; Sunstein, 2002).

According to the theses of social intuitionism, this persistence of moral disagreement would produce two conclusions. The first is that reasoning: a) neither stems from reflection and an evaluation of the evidence presented by the interlocutors, nor b) is directed at rational persuasion. On the contrary, and as the second conclusion, reasoning consists in a biased elaboration and a setting out of *post hoc* reasons in accordance with the subject's previous attitude to the matter. Moreover, subjects adopt such reasoning uncritically from society (Haidt, 2001; Mercier & Sperber, 2011). In this way, public deliberation is reduced to a clash of *post hoc* reasons which merely support the thesis towards which each interlocutor has a positive attitude. As a consequence, in the heat of debate, the other's opinion is not perceived as something that could help in reaching the best decision, but rather as something to be refuted, with positions based on opposing attitudes regarding the object of debate. For this reason, according to Haidt, brandishing reasons before someone who supports a different thesis, and expecting them to be acknowledged as better than one's own, can never produce a positive result.

Nevertheless, Haidt (2012) argues that it is possible to change our interlocutor's opinion in the deliberative process. If moral disagreement is the consequence of disagreement in attitude, moral agreement should come about through convergence of attitudes. For this to be possible, one must begin by acknowledging a key aspect of the deliberative model of social

intuitionism: the objective of deliberation is not to forcibly achieve the best rational agreement by acknowledgement of the best argument, but to transform the attitude of the interlocutor into one similar to one's own. In this way Haidt rejects the traditional deliberative model based on the confrontation of evidence and arguments. Instead of rational arguments, which lead to polarisation in debate, Haidt establishes metaphors, the evocation of images and other rhetorical elements as the central components of the deliberative process. The reason for this is that the aforementioned devices are considered more useful in order to create in the interlocutor a new intuition as a result of which she will be able to perceive, or as the authors of neuropolitics put it, "frame" the problem in a different way, thus eliciting from the subject a new attitude, similar to that of the speaker. It is in this way that the interlocutor will change her opinion (Haidt, 2001; Haidt & Bjorklund, 2007).

However, is it certain that our positions in the political process are based on intuitions of which we are not conscious? Above all, does Social Intuitionism succeed in refuting the rationalist focus of deliberation, typical of deliberative democracy? The best way to answer these questions is to deconstruct the two illusions on which, according to Haidt, the moral world and, specifically, public deliberation, are based. Let us begin by analysing the first illusion.

3. First illusion. The *wag-the-dog* illusion

The first illusion consists in the erroneous belief that judgments have a reflective origin. Different theories of the dual process of moral judgment, such as those of Greene or Haidt, question this belief, which is strongly argued in the rationalist model. These theories of the dual process are based on the study of reactions given by different subjects in the face of dilemmas or extravagant situations that generate revulsion or disgust. Following on from this analysis, researchers hold that there are two sources of moral judgment, the intuitive or emotional (System 1) and the reflective (System 2). In scenarios provoking emotional reactions (such as that of the person cleaning a lavatory with the national flag, or the footbridge case where they decide whether to throw the obese man onto the track) the subjects make

emotional judgments. Only when scenarios do not awaken emotional reactions in the subject, thus allowing him to reason, do judgments have a rational origin (for example, when the subjects reflect on the Heinz dilemma or on Greene's switch case).

But if this is so, the criticism could be made is that the methodology employed by neuropsychology is tautological (Pava, 2009).¹ The results of the experiment are fixed in advance by the nature of the scenarios used. If we focus on Haidt, he takes the view that the majority of judgments are emotional, because he mainly uses scenarios where subjects are placed in a third person situation and contemplate extravagant actions by other subjects. Given these conditions, scientists confine themselves to evaluating the reaction that the action of a third party elicits from the subject of the study. Hence, Haidt defines moral judgment as "the evaluation (good v. bad) of a person's actions or character" (Haidt, 2001, p. 817).

However, if we confine moral judgment to the reaction to a third party's (extravagant) action, the chief role in the formation of moral judgment will be occupied by emotions. This is logical because the reduction of moral judgment to a mere reaction to a specific imaginary situation presented in a laboratory requires us to isolate that situation from the global context which that situation would have if it were to occur in reality; and when a situation is isolated from the context that gives it true meaning, then the possibility of using reason to evaluate the action is eliminated.² For this reason, judgment will be directed here by cognitive biases and intuitions wrought by experience. But, and this is the most important point, by setting aside subjects' reasoning, Haidt actually studies the reaction of subjects to certain events, rather than their moral evaluation of those events (Monin, Pizarro & Beer, 2007).

In fact, it is clearly evident that psychological analysis does not accurately embody the way in which people make moral judgments in real life. The formation of moral judgment is a transparently reflective process in which subjects take into consideration the circumstances surrounding the

¹ On the tautology of the neuroscientific methodology see also Kahane (2014).

² Nevertheless, Haidt recognises the causal role of reflection in the formation of moral judgments by an individual. This will occur in a minority of situations, when biases are not present in the formation of the judgment (Helion & Pizarro, 2015).

case. Aristotle provides a focus on moral judgment which accurately embodies this idea. For him, moral judgments are made through *phrónesis* or practical wisdom, that is, by reasoned evaluation of the circumstances present in the case. Based on the elements of the context the individual takes into consideration (and dependent on which of those are given more value) she will form one judgment or another. For example, remembering an old joke, Adela Cortina (2012) says that somebody in the street was once asked if she would allow themselves to be corrupted. Then that person replied: “if this is a survey, of course not; if this is a serious offer, how much money are we talking about?”

This evaluation of circumstances as a key element of moral evaluation is also demonstrated by the fact that when a variable changes, so too does the judgment. For example, a teacher who notices that a pupil is always late for lessons will think that he is a sleepyhead. However, if she discovers that the reason for his tardiness is that he is poor and has to walk a long distance to school, a new variable appears that will change her judgment about the child. In this respect, the reaction to emotional impulses is mediated by our beliefs. If we hear the sound of whistling behind us, we do not react in the same way if we are walking in a street in broad daylight or are in a dark alley at night (Pizarro & Bloom, 2003). Thus we see how in the real world moral judgment is always made within a rationally considered context, in contrast to the situations studied by neuropsychologists in their laboratories, in which subjects are permitted to take into consideration only a few variables, as Greene, for example, does with his dilemmas.

But a key element in moral evaluation is the analysis of intent. Persons judge the behaviour of another person as moral or immoral solely to the extent that they can attribute intentionality to that person. But in order to do that, we must reflect on the context in which the subject exists. This attribution of intentionality to subjects is precisely the basis of the Aristotelian distinction between voluntary, not voluntary and involuntary actions (Aristotle, 2014).

Haidt could respond to all this by saying that many of our judgments are in fact made acritically without reflecting on the context. Haidt sees evidence of this in the justification individuals give for harmless wrongs. Many subjects say that those acts are immoral, but they are not able to give an appropriate justification for this. Hence Haidt claims that our judg-

ments are intuitive and not rational. But this response is not acceptable. As Levi (2007) and Cortina (2011) show, subjects' inability to justify many of our moral judgments is not the result of the intuitive origin of judgments, but of their heteronomous character. This happens not only in the case of morality, but also in others such as science or history. Just as people believe that adultery is immoral because this is what they have heard from their religious or moral leaders, in the same way they know that America was discovered in 1492 because historians have told them so. But persons do not by themselves develop their own reasons as to why adultery is immoral, nor do they turn to Columbus' logbooks to check whether America really was discovered in 1492. But, as Cortina (2011) shows, in order to avoid persons adopting moral judgment by heteronomy, the capacity for rationality must be fostered in persons.

So, now that I have shown how persons form their non-heteronomous moral judgments by reflection, let us turn to the analysis of Haidt's second illusion of moral judgment.

4. Second illusion. *The wag-the-other-dog's-tail illusion*

According to Haidt, the expectation of rational persuasion experienced by subjects in deliberative processes constitutes the second illusion of public deliberation. Nevertheless, in my opinion, that expectation, far from being an illusion, is fully justified. The response one can give Haidt with regard to this question can be made on two levels. One level is epistemic and the other relates to the role of moral emotions in deliberation. Let us begin with the first and in a later section we shall discuss the second.

We must say firstly that the focus of social intuitionism is incapable of distinguishing the two forms of communication designated by Habermas (1984): strategic action (aimed at success) and communicative action (aimed at understanding). In the former, persons try to impose private interests or preferences, and only in the latter are these positions really guided by a criterion of justice.

The first model would be illustrated by a married couple who are trying to decide where to spend their holidays. We are not considering here a prototypical example of deliberation on what is just, but a case of what

deliberative democracy defines as “bargaining among interests” (Knight & Jonson 1994, p. 282). The positions express conflicting preferences, interests or desires that were fixed prior to bargaining (going to town as opposed to going to the beach, for example) and that do not change in the course of the debate. In fact, the interlocutors do not even evaluate the opponent’s arguments. The reasons expressed by each have no purport other than to persuade the interlocutor to accept their own suggestion. But if this is so, this couple is not truly deliberating, rather each is trying to impose their own preferences by means of persuasion.

On the other hand, the nature of deliberation is distinct from that of bargaining among interests. It can be distinguished because the positions are based on a criterion of justice independent of the interests of the subjects. Thus, its aim is rational agreement. A typical example is the discussion held by members of a jury. In it they debate the innocence or guilt of the accused. The members of the jury do not try to adjust existing preferences or selfish interests but rather they try to find the most just decision. They do this by reflecting on the evidence presented during the trial, a criterion of justice and the intention of reaching the best agreement by using rational argument accepting the position that is based on the best argument (Habermas, 1973; Cohen, 1997; Christiano, 1996).

However, in social intuitionism moral judgments express the attitude of pleasure or displeasure towards something. But this approach is erroneous. When subjects say “this is fair”, they are not expressing interests, preferences or tastes. They are not saying simply “this suits me”. Moral judgments harbour an aspiration for universality, so that the alternative to what has been stated to be just is not considered acceptable (Cortina, 2007). But in addition, and most importantly, moral judgment also entails an aspiration for intersubjectivity: it is hoped that this judgment will be rationally accepted by everyone; and if the interlocutor rejects our judgment, she must have good reasons for doing so, which also derive from a criterion of justice.

This is a central thesis which links every deliberative process. As is shown from deliberative democracy, when arguing, subjects presuppose a criterion of justice directed to the common good, as well as a method of finding the best decision (Cohen, 1986; Christiano, 1996). This criterion of justice has two fundamental features which, in turn, define the process of

deliberation itself. In the first place, the criterion of justice must be intersubjective. This is because by the mere fact of arguing, subjects implicitly harbour an expectation of reaching the understanding and agreement of all parties. On the other hand, the criterion of justice must be independent, of our preferences and interests (and it is this that truly distinguishes deliberation from bargaining) as much as of the actual decision-making process (because the reverse would make moral criticism unfeasible under current norms). Thus, a person defending a proposal with reasons does it because she believes that it is the best, or is at least fairer than the alternatives, not because it is the proposal that best satisfies her own interests.

So the aspiration for intersubjectivity and, thus, rational persuasion, is a constituent element of the deliberative process. Deliberation is founded on a reciprocal expectation of rational persuasion. Each subject expounds her arguments with the aspiration of rationally persuading the others, while accepting that she will be convinced by a better argument that makes everyone see that this other argument is the correct one. Thus, deliberation becomes an adjustment of beliefs among citizens on which constitutes the best option to take, in the light of acknowledgment of the best argument (Cohen, 1986). This is the result of a central thesis of deliberative democracy: the epistemic value that those authors attribute to deliberation. For deliberative democracy, subjects do not discover that which is just in isolation, but in dialogue with others, because the exchange of information allows the making of better decisions than the mere aggregation of votes typical of antagonistic democracy (Cortina, 2013; Pérez Zafrilla, 2009b; Bohman, 1996; Richardson, 2002).

This explains Haidt's error in attempting describing the expectation of persuasion as an illusion in which subjects have been erroneously educated. Quite to the contrary, the aforementioned expectation is an essential element of every deliberative process. In deliberation, in contrast to simple bargaining, persons are in fact guided, and assume that others are also guided, by a criterion of justice (not by selfish interests) that is presupposed to be intersubjective and that, at least in principle, allows agreement to be reached by reasons.³

³ This is a key idea defended by the authors of deliberative democracy as a whole, from their different schools of thought (Pérez Zafrilla, 2009a).

But deliberation also has a moral basis. When deliberating, subjects presuppose certain moral principles. On the one hand, establishing a deliberative connection with another person necessarily presupposes a duty to acknowledge the other as a valid interlocutor (Cortina, 2007) or, to put it in liberal jargon, as a subject deserving of respect (Rawls, 1993). This is because when entering into deliberative processes, subjects acknowledge a moral relationship that must be respected. This depends on recognising that our relationship with the other in the dialogue should be based on symmetry and recourse to reasons that the other can reasonably accept, which excludes from the deliberative process any form of manipulation. Moreover, those participating in a debate acknowledge the duty to be guided by civic virtue as well as a supposedly intersubjective criterion of justice. If somebody were, on the contrary, to be guided by selfish interests, she would not strictly be deliberating but bargaining, thus failing the reciprocal expectation of persuasion that applies in deliberation. In this regard, the very claim of persuading with rational arguments meets not only a mere epistemic criterion but, more importantly, a moral evaluation. This leads us to the second section of our response to this second illusion: the emotional dimension.

5. Attitudes and moral sentiments

As I have shown, subjects assume that those who listen to their reasons will be convinced and will support the proposal made. Accordingly, when individual A is not convinced by B's arguments, and presents counterarguments from a position B does not share, B may think that A is not morally motivated to accept the best argument in the deliberation. On this point we should ask whether, as Haidt believes, B's judgment on A's lack of moral motivation in the deliberation stems from an intuition created by an illusory expectation of rational persuasion in which subjects have been traditionally educated.

Let us begin by analysing attitudes. Attitude plays a highly relevant role in the formation of moral judgment. It is characterised by combining both cognitive elements (beliefs, convictions) and emotional elements (feelings for or against the object), which maintain interaction with each other, with-

out forgetting other aspects such as neuronal (palpitations) or attitudinal (Cortina, 2013; Cobo Suero, 1993).⁴ The aforementioned interaction is key to the understanding not only of the moral position of the subjects but also the development of the debate. Attitude is not the mere taking of a rational and conscious position towards a fact, but nor is it a mere visceral reaction. It represents a learned but involuntary predisposition, shown in a fixed way towards an object (Cortina, 1993).

However, attitude possesses a dimension that goes beyond the affective disposition born of the pleasure or displeasure that something produces in us. I am referring to its ethical dimension (Cobo Suero, 1993). Subjects, insofar as they are essentially moral beings, possess an attitude of behaving in accordance with principles and values. That attitude arises from the subject's commitment to those values, and will therefore be dependent on the aforementioned commitment. The degree of the subject's commitment to moral values will depend on the character the subject has forged in her life. The disposition with which the subject approaches a specific situation will depend on the level of commitment (or, if you like, the respect) she gives those values. This being the case, ethical attitude is characterised by its strong cognitive essence: subjects are conscious of the attitude with which they approach their actions, whether it is ethical or unethical. For example, as was said earlier, participants in debates are required to be guided by a criterion of justice independent of their interests. Thus, those participating with the disposition to respect that norm will participate with an ethical attitude, while those who do not aspire to do so will demonstrate an unethical attitude.

Having said this, it is easy to see how one person's judgment on her interlocutor's lack of moral motivation comes about in the heat of argument in the framework of debates on moral or political topics when the interlocutor remains unconvinced by the arguments set out; and that judgment is intensified by certain attitudes and reactive feelings of frustration, suspicion or indignation towards the interlocutor. The thesis I want to de-

⁴ The concept of "attitude" is addressed above all in psychology, whereas philosophers tend to speak of habits. These concepts are not synonymous insofar as habit focuses on a predisposition for action whereas attitude has a more general application, such as favourable or unfavourable disposition towards an action by oneself or others, or towards a person or a group.

fend here is that reactive feelings arising in the face of the impossibility of persuading the adversary also have a distinctly moral character. Thus, the expectation of persuasion, far from being an illusion, as Haidt believes, has a moral nature.

We must bear in mind that emotions possess a clear cognitive aspect, as they appear linked to beliefs; and in cases where we find moral emotions, that cognitive aspect will have a moral character. This is the case with emotions such as indignation, anger or resentment. These emotions are, as Cortina (2007) shows, the “antennae” which allow reason to perceive forms of injustice. It is the capacity for indignation that allows us to recognise an unjust agreement, while compassion reveals to us the suffering of others. This is because those emotions presuppose the existence between the subjects of a relationship governed by moral principles that should be respected. But, most importantly, that relationship is founded on an impersonal reciprocal expectation, to be fulfilled by others as much as by oneself (Cortina, 2011a). This impersonal nature is what makes moral emotions a central element of moral life, given that through them a consciousness of duty is revealed in the subject, a consciousness that goes beyond the mere affective reaction of the pleasant or the unpleasant arising in certain circumstances and to which Haidt attempts to reduce morality. We feel indignation, guilt, anger, humiliation or shame because we believe that someone (ourselves or another person) is not behaving in the manner required of everyone under that reciprocal expectation which is at the basis of moral behaviour, or because we believe that someone has not received the treatment she deserves (Habermas, 1990).⁵ Moral emotions presuppose, therefore, and at the same time express, a rational criterion of justice and injustice, as that is precisely their distinctive element.

Thus it seems that reactive feelings of frustration, suspicion or indignation present in the debate, as well as the consequent belief that perhaps our interlocutor is not morally motivated, reflect that public debate is conducted on moral presuppositions of which subjects are fully conscious. In fact, how would someone feel mistrust or rage on discovering that her interlocutor has not been persuaded by the arguments presented, or how would she

⁵ Therefore, any claim that moral emotions represent a threat to the rationality of moral judgments should be rejected.

think that the interlocutor is not morally motivated, unless it is acknowledged that the dialogical relationship is based on moral parameters that should be respected?

However, Haidt certainly does not deny that interlocutors maintain an ethical attitude in debate. In fact, Haidt (2001) claims that it is an error to think that our interlocutor lacks ethical motivation, simply because she is unpersuaded by our arguments. His thesis is that such a judgment, born of reactive feelings, is a response to the illusion of expectation that the interlocutor will be convinced by our arguments (second illusion). In turn, that expectation is a consequence of the first illusion (a belief in the reflective origin of judgments). The consequence of all this is the denial that deliberation is governed by that reciprocal expectation of moral motivation. Believing that deliberation is based on a supposedly moral expectation is an illusion, according to social intuitionist theory.

Nevertheless, this idea is completely lacking in sense. Firstly, as shown in the previous section, the expectation of persuasion derives from the aspiration for intersubjectivity that accompanies each speech act. But also because the reciprocal expectation of moral motivation is another condition inherent in reasoning, and it is expressed in debate precisely through moral emotions such as those felt in the face of a failure to persuade. These reactive feelings represent the cordial aspect of reason, which notes a moral relationship that is not being respected (Cortina, 2007).

But there is more. It is precisely the expectation that others will be persuaded by the reasons given that explains the distinction we make between acceptable and unacceptable forms of communication in the field of deliberation. In deliberation, we accept rational argument but do not accept other rhetorical devices such as demagoguery, fallacies, lies, *ad hominem* arguments or insults, and this is done from a criterion of morality. Such rhetorical devices are condemned as forms of manipulation and, thus, emotional coercion; and it is obvious that neither manipulation nor coercion are acceptable, since they violate the requirement to acknowledge the other as a valid interlocutor. In fact, it seems to us that those who resort to them do so because they have no reasonable arguments with which to defend their position, thus in reality they are not pursuing universal interests but, rather, unspeakable interests (of a selfish nature), which cannot be supported in any argument reasonably acceptable to others. Those resort-

ing to rhetoric (understood in the limited sense defined here) are attempting to impose their interests through persuasion and to this end will accept as valid every type of rhetorical device, such as those mentioned above. To put this in Habermasian terms, those using rhetoric are guided not by communicative rationality but by strategy, and are not truly deliberating but bargaining.⁶

It is precisely the use of demagoguery or lies in debate that is the main cause of the occurrence of reactive emotions, warning us that someone is violating the ethical commitments that should be respected (Benhabib, 1996; Markovits, 2006). Because where demagoguery or fallacies intervene, agreement is frustrated by the lack of ethical attitude in those using the aforementioned rhetorical devices. Those reactive feelings can help us to detect that lack of ethical attitude. This shows us the importance of ethical attitude in deliberation. There will only be a true deliberative process where subjects share an ethical attitude towards the acknowledgement of the best argument and nobody has an unethical attitude aimed at imposing their own interests. This is shown by the authors of deliberative democracy (Habermas, 1984; Rawls, 1993; Cohen, 1997). Hence the moral relevance attitudes acquire, and that Haidt fails to see, as happens with the distinction between strategic and communicative forms of communication.

There is yet more. Even if we attempted to reduce attitude to that affective disposition towards an object generated by intuition, we would not be able to separate this from the recognition of the moral value of our interlocutor's proposal. Changing attitude in debate naturally presupposes three things: in the first place, the subject's commitment to an interest of justice. Secondly, the subject's disposition to be persuaded by an argument that is better constructed. And finally, the conscious and reflective recognition that the interlocutor's argument has a moral value greater than our own. In other words, our attitude in the debate cannot change without acknowledging a different moral significance. But for this to happen, it is necessary to evaluate the interlocutor's arguments. It is this evaluation that can change attitude, and not the reverse, as Haidt maintains (Saltzstein & Kasachkoff, 2004; Mercier & Sperber, 2011).

⁶ The forms of rhetoric that would be excluded would be those, such as demagoguery, motivated by intent to deceive or imposition of interests.

However, as Cortina (2007) shows, acknowledgement of the best argument in deliberation does not depend merely on its internal logic. The willingness of subjects to recognise as good those arguments that satisfy universal interests will play a fundamental role in it. Achieving this, according to the author, requires a desire for justice and a predisposition to recognise and empathise with the needs of others.

This would be the positive (and essential) aspect of the presence of emotions in the field of deliberation, which has not been acknowledged by other focuses of deliberative democracy. The Anglo-Saxon school of this political theory grants almost total primacy to rational argument, while the presence of emotions in deliberation occupies a secondary place. Recourse is had to rhetoric only as a support to rational argument, especially when the latter is unable to generate agreement on what is just (rejecting, at any rate, its use for unethical purposes) (Richardson, 2002; Dryzek, 2000; Gutmann & Thompson, 1996). However, the recognition of rhetoric by this theory of democracy has been increasing in the last decade (Pérez Zafrilla, 2017). In contrast, in the Hispanic school of thought, Adela Cortina (2010, 2011b, 2013), with her recent proposal of communicative democracy and her idea of cordial reason, has opted for acknowledgement of moral emotions in deliberative democracy. In fact, Cortina defines her proposal of communicative democracy as a “cordial form of deliberative democracy” (Cortina, 2010, p. 24).

6. Conclusion

So, deliberation constitutes a form of communication governed as much by epistemic elements as by those related to moral emotions. Those elements are implicitly acknowledged by subjects when beginning a deliberative process. Therefore, deliberation cannot be reduced, as Haidt claims, to a mere battle of intuitions. Accordingly, it is of no use to approach deliberation merely by studying psychological processes, since this will address only the cerebral and psychological bases of deliberative processes, but not their principles (Cortina, 2011a). Social intuitionism is, moreover, incapable of recognising the distinct forms of communication that exist. This means

that Haidt's psychological focus constitutes a reductionist conception of the deliberative process, and is therefore erroneous.

Thus, Haidt is mistaken in presenting the expectation of persuasion as an illusion in which the deliberative process has been trapped. The same happened with the first illusion of moral judgment, relative to the supposedly reflective origin of moral judgments. Both elements, far from being illusions, constitute the fundamental premises on which all forms of deliberation are based. For this reason, Haidt's emotivist postulations with regard to his conception of judgment, reason or attitude, mean that social intuitionist theory does not provide a suitable approach to deliberative processes. Therefore, we can conclude that Haidt's deliberative focus lacks viability to articulate an acceptable deliberative theory. Nevertheless, this should not lead us to grant absolute primacy of reason over emotions. On the contrary, deliberative democracy should underline the importance of moral emotions in rationality in order to recognise unjust situations in the deliberative process, as I have shown in this work.

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