

Violette Shamash ~ Memories Of Eden. When Baghdad Was Beautiful

Imagine a world with no running water or electricity, scorching heat and the constant fear of cholera. Imagine a warren of alleys no wider than a cart. Cows are being milked on doorsteps, street barbers are giving shaves, pulling teeth and lancing boils. Barefoot water-sellers are bent double under their heavy goatskins.

It is 1912 and we are in old Baghdad. To us it sounds like hell. Yet Violette Shamash, born into an affluent family, adored its positive side: sleeping under the stars, hearing the call of the nightingale, smelling scents of gardenias and spices, riding to school on donkey-back. For her it was a kind of Eden. Violette was a privileged witness to a time when nearly 40% of Baghdad was Jewish and Jews, Moslems and Christians embraced each other's differences. Her insights into domestic life, and a society coming to terms with the 20th century, are candid, entertaining, and often very amusing. However, in 1941, disaster struck the oldest community in the Diaspora. A brutal massacre took place over two days of rioting and sounded the death-knell for the Jews of Babylon.

This slideshow contains images from Violette's book, [*Memories of Eden*](#), which not only provides a unique insight into the culture and customs of the Jews of Iraq, but also shows everyday life as experienced by everyone at a time when Baghdadis lived together side by side, in mutual respect, irrespective of religion. William Shawcross has called it "an astonishing record, telling the story of a cultivated and well integrated Jewish community in the heart of Muslim Arabia during the end of the Ottoman Empire and the British Mandate. A superb account of a long forgotten time which is barely imaginable now." Further reviews and comments from academics and literary critics can be seen on our website. We would very much welcome your views and opinions via our blog: <http://memoriesofeden.wordpress.com>

מרכז מורשת יהדות בבל [?] סרטון תדמית

The Babylonian Jewry Heritage Center was established in 1973 to preserve the history of the Jewish community in Iraq and to ensure that it remains part of the future narrative of the Jewish nation. To this end, the Center fosters research, preservation and publication of the culture and folklore of Iraqi Jewry.

Adjacent to the Center is the Museum of Babylonian Jewry, opened to the public in 1988 and exhibiting chapters from the history of Babylonian Jewry throughout the generations over the course of more than 2,600 years.

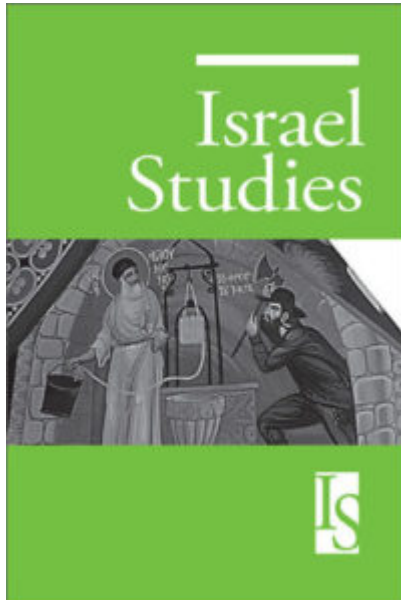
The Jews Of Baghdad

Iraqi Jews had a significant role in the country's contemporary history until the infamous "Farhood" ; AKA the Jewish Exodus from Iraq.

This brief video reminds us of some contributions to Iraq's social and cultural spheres made by its Jewish community.

Avi Picard ~ Like A Phoenix: The Renaissance Of Sephardic/Mizrahi

Identity In Israel In The 1970s and 1980s



Abstract

During Israel's first decades, conflict between immigrants from Islamic countries and the Israeli establishment focused on questions regarding equality. The immigrants protested against discrimination in the labor market, against poor housing conditions, and against police brutality. The question of Mizrahi culture and identity was barely mentioned. In the 1970s and 1980s, however, the ethnic discourse in Israel shifted from economic issues to cultural issues. Different groups challenged the school curriculum, asking for more attention to the history and literature

of Jews from Islamic countries. Mizrahi music started to develop on the fringe of the Israeli musical scene and moved slowly into the mainstream. Political parties (Tami and Shas) identified with Mizrahi identity and emphasizing it, started to appear and to achieve success. This article provides examples of the expression of identity and culture in different fields and analyzes the causes of this change.

The paper online (PDF-Format): https://www.researchgate.net/Like_a_Phoenix_

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Analysis Of Logical Fallacies In Debates Regarding Gender Issues

In The 16th Lok Sabha



Abstract

The 543 members of the Lok Sabha are supposed to replicate the voice of 133 crore Indians. The unparalleled importance of the Lok Sabha makes it important for us to scrutinize the nature and form of arguments presented in it.

This paper uses the concept of logical fallacies to do the same. It picks up the debates on four different bills, spread across five days of Lok Sabha sittings. The debates on the chosen bills – the Maternity benefit (Amendment) Bill 2016, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill 2018 and the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill 2014, mark out the most important Lok Sabha discussions on gender and gender related issues in the first five years of Sri Narendra Modi's Prime Ministership. The paper points out the logical fallacies committed in them, tries to understand why they were committed and explores what those fallacious arguments indicate with regard to the beliefs and ideologies of the parliamentarians. It shows how the chains of logic in the representatives' arguments break down as a result of their preconceived notions and biases, lack of information and most importantly- deep seated patriarchy.

Key Words: logical fallacy, gender, parliament, debate, women, transgenders, society

Introduction

During discussions on bills, members speak for a bill, against a bill, or take a position which is somewhere in between the two. Whichever the case, the members attempt to justify their positions using arguments. These arguments mostly contain valid reasonings or follow a proper logical chain where the premises lead to the conclusions. Sometimes however, the arguments are invalid- the premises in them might not logically lead to the conclusions, they might involve improper assumptions, or they might try to divert the attention from the point of concern. When there are such problems in the reasoning in an argument, the argument is called logically fallacious. Work in the field of pointing out logically fallacious arguments and classifying them started with Aristotle [1], and

the field has expanded and developed since. “A fallacious argument, as almost every account from Aristotle onwards tells you, is one that seems to be valid but is not so” (Hamblin 1970: 12). In these arguments, the premises don’t lead to the conclusions and there is a mistake in reasoning (Copi, et. al. 2014: 109-110). These arguments have been classified into types considering their individual natures and scopes [ii]. A most common type for example, often found in political arguments is the Ad Hominem fallacy . Here the argument is aimed against the people holding the differing opinion and not the opinion in itself, although “the character of an adversary is logically irrelevant to the truth or falsity of what that person asserts, or to the correctness of the reasoning employed” (Cohen and Nagel 1998: 107).

It is mostly manifested in the form of personal attacks, or as it is called in the political arena-‘mudslinging’. Parliamentarian Shri Tathagata Satpathy for example, in the debate on the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill 2016, dated 9th March 2017 says, “We have been kind of overburdened, bored and sick of this Government just throwing these economy-related Bills on the House and on all of us: the torture of making business easy for a few handful people, who will make money to be paid to political parties, and we are bearing the brunt of passing all those laws which will help a handful of Indians, not the large number of Indians” (130). Regardless of the truth or falsity of his claims, the kind of economic policies pursued by the government has no bearing on the merits/demerits of the bill at hand. The parliamentarian, by saying the above is trying to discredit the character of the supporters of the bill but provides no arguments for or against the bill in itself. Again, during the debate on the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018 dated 30 July 2018, Professor Saugata Roy said, “I thought for one day, whether what they were saying is right, whether we are proving ourselves to be blood thirsty, thirsty by asking for death penalty for rapists. Then, my conscience told me, no. Those who rape children of 16 or 12 years, do not deserve any mercy. Let them die, if it is proved. That is why, I support this bill. This is not being blood thirsty. This is being just” (244). There might be good enough reasons for supporting capital punishment for serious crimes but here Prof. Roy relies solely on his feelings and what he thinks his ‘conscience’ told him. Such arguments appeal to the hearer’s emotions more than their reasoning, and commit the fallacy called ‘appeal to emotion’ (Wrisley 2018: 98-101). While emotions might be important parts of arguments, an argument solely resting on the waves of emotions and lacking any concrete base of logical reasoning is deemed to be

fallacious.

Similarly, there are other fallacies which exist and the paper deals with. The list is presented below [iii] -

- *Red Herring*: The red herring is a fallacious argument whose effectiveness lies in distraction. Attention is deflected; readers or listeners are drawn to some aspect of the topic under discussion by which they are led away from the issue that had been the focus of the discussion (Tindale 2007: 28-30).
- *Slippery Slope*: A fallacy in which change in a particular direction is asserted to lead inevitably to further changes (usually undesirable) in the same direction. But the inevitability of the consequences is no way supported by further reasoning (Tindale 2007: 185-187).
- *Hasty Generalization*: A fallacy of defective induction in which one moves carelessly from a single case, or a very few cases, to a large scale generalization about all or most cases (Tindale 2007: 150-154).
- *Strawman*: The Straw Man fallacy involves the attribution or assumption of a position, which is then attacked or dismissed. It involves deliberate misinterpretation of the opponent and attacking that weaker version of the opponent's argument (Tindale 2007: 19-24).
- *Irrelevant Conclusion*: A fallacy in which the premises support a different conclusion from the one that is proposed. Here the arguer ends up providing arguments for something entirely different than what he/she is supposed to (Tindale 2007: 34-36).
- *Post Hoc*: This involves representing as causes things which are not causes, on the ground that they happened along with or before the event in question (Tindale 2007: 174- 179).
- *Fallacy of Presumption*: It is a fallacy in which the conclusion depends on a tacit assumption that is dubious, unwarranted, or false (Copi, et al. 2014: 138-139).

When these fallacies committed by the parliamentarians are revealed and assessed, a large amount of information is revealed about the generalized nature of discussions in the political forum. The red herrings show how members of opposition try diverting attention to the faults of the government, faults which are unrelated to the bill being discussed. They also show how the government tries to bend the focus towards issues they have a better record at, while escaping the complexities of the discussion. The slippery slopes on both sides give us glimpses of the illogical fears which exist hidden among representatives of the

various shades of the political spectrum.

The hasty generalizations sometimes reveal unfortunate attitudes of casual sexism and the false presumptions help us gain a sight of the deep-seated patriarchy in Indian minds. The revelation of fallacies also helps us understand the various strategies (ethical or otherwise) used by the political leaders to sway public opinion.

Among the bills under consideration is the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill which increases the time period of maternity leave for women working in the organized sector from 12 weeks to 24 weeks, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill makes punishment for rape against female minors much more stringent, and makes it possible to award death penalty to criminals who raped girls under the age of 12, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill strengthens the mechanism of prevention and makes provisions for rehabilitation of victims of human trafficking, and the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill aims to improve the lives of the transgender community and involves their institutionalized identification and registration.

Methodology

The 16th Lok Sabha sat for a total of 1615 hours spread over 331 days and passed 133 bills. The written records of all these discussions are available online in [the official website of Lok Sabha](#) [iv]. However, an in-depth analysis of all these documents is extremely difficult, also since a wide variety of issues are discussed in the house, drawing conclusions would be almost impossible. Hence a single subject had to be chosen, bills involving which could be analyzed. In contemporary India, where gender issues often dominate public discussions and all sides of the political arena claim to be champions of 'promoting the welfare of women' if not gender equality per se, gender issues seemed to be the best candidate. Now, in the first five years of Modi era, five bills intricately related to gender issues were discussed in the Lok Sabha- the Maternity benefit (Amendment) Bill 2016, the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill 2018, the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill 2018, the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill 2014, and the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, 2017, discussions regarding four of which have been included. The discussion which occurred on the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Marriage) Bill, however, was unfortunately much more on the lines of religion and the acceptability of state intervention on matters related to religion than on the

lines of gender issues or rights of women. Hence, the paper had to exclude the discussion on that bill from the analysis as the inductions from the fallacies committed in that discussion would have been very different in nature and would not have helped the cause at hand. The discussion on the Maternity Benefit (Amendment Bill) was held on 9 th March 2017, the discussion on the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill was held on 30 th July 2018 and the discussion on the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill was held on 26 th July 2018. Two days of discussion on the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill has been considered - 26 th February 2016 and 29 th April 2016. It must be mentioned that only the written records of the proceedings of the house, which is available in public domain in [Lok Sabha's official website](#), has been considered [iv]. The recorded debates were scrutinized, and all the arguments by all the speakers were taken into account. In each of these arguments, it was checked if the premises of the arguments lead to the conclusions. If not, the type of fallacy committed was found out. In the process, all the logical fallacies committed by the members in the debates were marked out and classified. An attempt to contextualize the various groups of fallacious arguments followed and all the information the exercise could provide was collected. The result of the same has been presented below.

Diversion of Attention

During the debates, attempts were often made to divert attention from the bills at hand through red herrings, sometimes towards issues completely unrelated to gender. Mostly the parliamentarians used it to showcase the apparent commendable jobs of the governments with which they associate themselves. During the debate on the Maternity Benefit Bill, Shrimati M. Vasanthi from Tenkasi, Tamil Nadu, used more than 25% of her speech [v] to describe in detail the Cradle Baby Scheme, the Integrated Child Development Scheme, the newly available Mobile Anganwadi services, the Amma Canteen Scheme, and other such policies and actions of the Tamil Nadu state AIDMK government (126)[vi]. While a few of these policies had significant impact on gender issues, they had no connection with the issue that was the subject of discussion in the house. Similarly, during the same debate, Member of Parliament Dr. Sanjay Jaysawal claimed that no government did nearly as much as the then national government, pointing towards the benefits of the Ujjwala Yojna (160). Sri Om Birla from Kota, during the discussion on the Trafficking of Persons Bill tried to present to parliamentarians the apparently wonderful work done by the national government

in uplifting the 115 backward districts of the country (142). During the same debate, Shrimati Maneka Gandhi, after accepting “this is not relevant to this subject” went on to talk about the rape kits distributed by the national government and its numerous benefits (225). Sri Arvind Sawant, during the discussion on the Maternity Benefits Bill tried to impress upon other parliaments how he had pressed for the availability of washrooms for women in local trains and metros in a meeting regarding railways (135). The use of red herrings to make Lok Sabha speeches sound like advertising campaigns reduces the time devoted to nuanced discussion of the bills on the table. In none of these cases did the parliamentarians attempt to justify or point out the relevance of what they said with regards to the subject of debate. It shows us what our parliamentarians want us to focus on. The most jarring red herring was probably committed by Sri Ramesh Biduri, who during the debate on the Maternity Benefits Bill, after attempting to point out the lack of any activity on government’s side during the last 60 years, started expressing his disapproval of the continuing practice of polygamy among Muslims and the perceived high fertility rates among Muslim women (185).

Fear Mongering and Insults

Slippery Slopes were used by some parliamentarians for fear mongering about the impacts of the bills, presenting worst case scenarios as the only possible results of bills. Their arguments had conclusions which were possible, but highly improbable. Dr Shashi Tharoor somehow “clearly” saw the intervention of some “vested interests” because the draft bill against trafficking of persons had no provision for regular inspection of shelter homes (132). Because the bill talked about cooperation with the private sector, Mr. Tharoor asked, “Are we now through the law empowering a nameless set of companies to profit from dealing with the trafficking of persons?” (135). Similarly parliamentarian Tathagatha Satpathy declared that “we will eventually be nabbing and seizing the properties of the farmers, nabbing these middlemen and topping the flow of migrant labor, which is essential for even developed States”, because the Trafficking of Persons Bill has provisions allowing the police to conduct raids and seize properties which are suspect of being used for trafficking (155). Conversely, some parliamentarians put forth horrible things as definitive impacts if the bill is not passed and asked for support. Srimati Maneka Gandhi said, “If today we do not pass this Bill, we are choosing to deny Tara and all the millions like her the fundamental right to life and liberty” (116).

During the discussion on the Transgender Persons Rights Bill the subject to be feared was interestingly ‘reservations for transgenders’ which some of the parliamentarians had suggested but was not any of the apprehended impacts of the bill. Members of parliament Sri Ramesh Biduri and Nishikant Dubey were sure that transgenders will be alienated from the society and their integration would be impossible if there are any provisions of reservations for transgenders (195)[vii]. Parliamentarians Kuwar Bharatendra Singha and Ravindra Babu somehow felt that reservations would lead to “perpetuation of this transgender quality” and a massive increase in the number of transgenders would be inevitable (184). These slippery slopes give us a glimpse of the fears in the minds of parliamentarians, and the parliamentarians being the citizens’ representatives, the fears of the citizens. Sometimes far-fetched benefits of government actions were pointed out by parliamentarians like Srimati Jaashebeen Patel who believed that the Prime Minister’s order to keep malls and cinema halls open round the year would somehow lead to significant increases in women’s employment (179). Like most other political forums of the country, the Lok Sabha often sees a prosperous trade of accusations and insults. While this is unfortunately unsurprising, it must be remembered that ad hominem hardly add anything of value to the discussions, but rather reduce the space for effective communication and consultation. During the discussion on the Maternity Benefits Bill, parliamentarian Tathagata Satpathy, accused the government of only helping the rich who contribute to their funds, and engaging in “nefarious activities” (134). Sri Ramesh Biduri accused the Indian National Congress of engaging in *nautanki* (unnecessary drama) for vote and not truly wishing the empowerment of women (184). Professor Saugata Roy was dissatisfied with the wording of the Criminal Law Amendment Bill and accused government officials of not knowing proper English (242). Mr. Assaduddin Owaisi claimed that the track record of the government showed that they support the “perpetrators of child rape” (285).

Disregarding Heterogeneity

The fallacies which probably reveal the most about the minds of parliamentarians are hasty generalizations- where probable characteristics of a few in a class are associated with all of the members in the class. They reveal the biases and stereotypes in the minds of parliamentarians.

Gender stereotypes being prominent in India, the number of hasty generalizations committed by parliamentarians during discussions on gender related bills is expectantly high. Sometimes the fallacy was used to make the expected

beneficiaries of the bill look extremely pitiable- subjects for whom sympathy should overflow. In doing so, the speakers, mostly men, established themselves in a position superior to those of the women. Three of Mr. Ravindra Babu's fallacies are instructional in that respect. During the debate on the Maternity Benefit Bill, he commented, "From the time of menarche, that is attaining puberty, till menopause it is very-very difficult to understand, even to hear, the problems faced by a girl" (138). The parliamentarian here makes the experiences of all females sound extremely painful and on the same breadth makes them un-understandable and hence impossible to empathize with. During the discussion on the Criminal Law Amendment Bill, parliamentarian Ravindra Babu referred to females as "members of the weak sex" (254) and tried to arouse the sympathy of his fellow parliamentarians (most of whom belong to the stronger sex) for this supposedly naturally weaker half of the population. He also claimed, "The poor people, especially the girls in the villages do not even know what sex is" (255). While the opinion that a significant portion of the human population has no idea about the basic human activity which leads to the creation of humans might sound ridiculous, it points out the parliamentarian's and popular conception of the 'Indian village girl'- who is kept away (sometimes forcefully) from everything related to sexuality and is hence good and pure and deserving of all the sympathies of the members of the parliament.

A different use of hasty generalizations had been to make all members of the beneficiary group look already benefited and privileged, and therefore less deserving of attention and affirmative action. During the discussion on the Maternity Benefit Bill parliamentarian Tathagata Sathpaty said that the "world is turned" and now it's more about "how the women folk want to deal with us" (130). While it can't be ascertained if the esteemed member said the above with sadness, the statement clearly shows that he is unseeing the deep rooted and systematic gender discrimination against women prevalent all around us. Srimati Kakoli Ghosh Dastidar tried to draw attention "to the fact" that women are now finding it difficult to conceive because they are marrying at a later age as a result of their educational aspirations, i.e. the victims of the problem created the problem (159). Sri Vinayak Raut made a sweeping declaration during the debate on the Trafficking of Persons Bill that all the beggar children of Mumbai are from well-to-do households (157). During a discussion on the Transgender Persons Bill on 26 February 2016, parliamentarian Pralhad Singh Patel stated that education of transgender persons was not a concern because he knew one transgender MLA

who had a MA degree (183). During the same discussion came probably the greatest Hasty Generalisation. Parliamentarian Kuwar Bharatendra Singh shared the knowledge he had gained from a documentary. He explained how the number of transgenders in India is eerily high and only so because transgender communities have been forcefully castrating children for years (183). He effectively communicated his perception of transgenders as horrible criminals and with it probably also gave us a glimpse of his internal transphobia.

Sometimes hasty generalizations by members led to oversimplification of complex problems. Mr. Tathagata Sathpaty expressed his opinion that all rapes ultimately happen because men aren't able to resist their temptations (133). This understanding of rape erases the important associations of gender violence with other sociological issues, understanding of which is necessary for finding solutions to the problem. Similarly, during the discussion on the Criminal Laws Amendment Bill Srirang Appa Barney attributed a single reason to rise in crime rates- lack of fear for the police forces (252). Other hasty generalizations made the world around us look far worse than it can possibly be. Parliamentarian Pinaki Mishra for example, during the debate the Criminal Acts Amendment Bill declared that during her 35 years of experience as a lawyer, no rich man had gone to the gallows in India (250). Sri Om Birla, during the discussion of Trafficking of Persons Bill likewise declared that empathy has ended in India (145).

A different set of hasty generalizations were used by proponents of death penalty for criminals convicted of rape of minors, when other arguments ran out of fuel during the discussion of Criminal Laws Amendment Bill. They imposed their personal opinions as the opinions of all others, creating the impression that everyone wanted what they wanted, although having no proof of it. Srimati Butta Renuka said that all women felt that rapists of minors deserved no punishment other than death (273). Srimati Meenakshi Lekhi likewise declared that the ones opposing death penalty will support the same if tragedy strikes their own homes (277).

Again, a different set of hasty generalizations were observed during the discussion on the Trafficking of Persons Bill regarding the nature of work that is prostitution. Several parliamentarians found it impossible to believe that a woman might engage in prostitution by her own free will. They saw the necessity of their being some compulsion. Parliamentarian Supriya Sule pointed the compulsion as

often being an economic one and said, "This is not something that she does out of choice. She does that either to feed her children or to protect her family. Why else would she do it?" (175). Sri Dharambir (181) and Shrimati Lekhi were of the same opinion- each and every woman abides by, and has no intent of questioning, the laid down norms for engaging in sexual activity; if the norms were violated, that is because the woman was compelled. This reasoning forces down a set of moral values on every woman without their consent. Worse still, it invisibilizes the women who might not accept these set of morals and might freely choose to engage in prostitution. The moral nature of the argument is made clear by Srimati Lekhi's statement, "If I do not want my children to go, how can I tell somebody else's children to go? It is not a trade; it is not a profession and the country thinks very strongly that this is not a profession" (187). How she knew what the country thought, remains an open question.

Misquotes, Irrelevant Statements and Fiery Speeches

A different kind of fallacy- strawman, was observed where some parliamentarians changed what another parliamentarian had actually said and attacked the changed, and easier to attack, version of the argument. While it is difficult to conclude if the parliamentarians changed their fellow members' statements willingly to make their arguments weak or it occurred as a result of genuine miscommunication, strawmans always degrade the quality of debate. For example, during the discussion on the Trafficking of Persons Bill, Srimati Meenakhshi Lekhi criticized Dr Shashi Tharoor's apparent opinion that the rescued should be sent back to their families (185).

But in actuality, the parliamentarian never said the same and had just pointed out that the rescued victims kept in shelter homes are sometimes forcefully kept away from their families. Sometimes the parliamentarians apparently provided reasonings and logics to support their arguments, but in reality, those reasonings and logics had no link with the conclusions of their arguments. This is the fallacy of irrelevant conclusion. The supporters of death penalty for rapists used irrelevant conclusions too. Parliamentarian Ravindra Babu termed the rapists "psychotics and maniacs" and gave that as a reason to justify their death penalty (254). However, if indeed the rapists are 'psychotics and maniacs' and mentally unstable, they become less criminal and more worthy of medical treatment in place of punishment.

Another tactic that the supporters resorted to was stirring up emotions as apparent valid reasons and premises behind their arguments. They said that since

it felt right, it is right. Professor Saugata Roy said that he had asked himself if he was right in supporting death penalty for child rapists and his conscience told him yes, he was; therefore, he said that the bill was no way blood thirsty and only just (244). Shrimati Supriya Sadanand Sule agreed with Prof. Saugata saying that she was wondering if the law was regressive, but then she imagined herself and her child in the place of the victim, felt what a victim would, and knew that it wasn't (270).

Parliamentarian Neoning Erring said, "...in the recent cases of Unnao and Kathua where we really felt bad" (293) and therefore death penalty was justified. Another way the fallacy of appeal to emotion is used is by stirring up feelings of guilt and pity and suppressing logical thought and speech (Tindale 2007: 113-116). As an example, we can look at what Shrimati Maneka Gandhi said while discussing the Trafficking of Persons Bill, where she puts forward a hypothetical worst -case scenario and says we have no institutions or processes to improve the situation other than passing the bill:

How then can we sit silent and let women and children be bought and sold like slaves? When an 11-year old Tara is trafficked from her village, sold into bonded labor, beaten and burnt by her owner, how do we save her? When she is sold for marriage to a 45-year old man and raped every day for months, how do we save her? We have no institutions and no processes to do so. (116)

False Causes and False Assumptions

Another fallacy that was used is the post hoc fallacy. Here two things are assumed to have a causal relation between them just because they happen together. This often leads to an oversimplification of problems and misunderstanding of causes. This is often used to pin the blame of new societal problems on certain new changes in the society which might be positive.

Sri Harish Meena for example, during the debate on the Criminal Laws Amendment Bill said that crimes against women are increasing because of social media, television and pornography. But he made no attempt to explain how the causal relation worked (291). In some cases, the premises used by parliamentarians to support their arguments are simply false. They can be a result of misconceptions, wrong assumptions, mistakes or deliberate falsehoods. These arguments contain the fallacy of false presumption. For example, during the debate on Maternity Benefit Bill, Shrimati M. Vasanthi stated that there are more women than men in the country (124). During the debate on the Criminal Acts Amendment Bill, parliamentarian Ravindra Babu shared his thought that the

women who are victims of rape “will never remain human beings” (255). The largest number of ‘misconceptions’ surrounded transgenders. Kumar Bharatendra Singh asked why we so many transgenders in India- much larger than their proportion in the world while there is no statistical basis of the claim. Another interesting misconception was seen in the speech of parliamentarian Ravindra Babu during the same debate who said, “When they prefer the same sex for their partnership, that is the first sign of a transgender”, and completely mixed up gender identity with sexual orientation. The above shows how transgenders and other persons from the LGBTQ community have been completely sidelined and suppressed; so much so that glaring misconceptions regarding them exist among people’s representatives and lawmakers who are making laws for them, and hardly anyone points it out when those are exposed in the highest forum of debate in the country.

Related Works

Since parliaments are the highest forums of debates and the records of parliamentary debates are easily accessible, a large amount of research work surrounding parliamentary debates and discussion exist. In many cases, computerized textual analysis was performed. However, the tools of analysis used in researches vary widely. In a work titled *‘Analysis of Speeches in Indian Parliamentary Debates’* by Sakala Venkata Krishna Rohit and Navjyoti Singh, an attempt is made to provide a dataset for the synopsis of Indian parliamentary debates and perform stance classification of speeches. Javed Ahmed Bhatt in his work titled *‘Disruption in Proceedings of Indian Parliament: an Exploratory Study’* analyses the extent and role of disruptions in Indian Parliamentary proceedings. Jennifer E. Cheng tried to understand Anti-Racist Discourse with regard to Muslims in the Australian Parliament using the tool of Critical Discourse Analysis in her work titled *‘Anti-racist Discourse on Muslims in the Australian Parliament’*. Likewise, several other works attempt to throw light on a variety of issues using the discussions in parliaments using various tools. Very few however use ‘logical fallacies’ as the scope to look at parliamentary debates. The only other work which could be found to be using logical fallacies as a tool to analysis parliamentary debates was one titled [*‘Analysis of Fallacies in Croatian Parliamentary Debate’*](#) by Gabrijela Kišiček & Davor Stanković of University of Zagreb. It tries to understand the overall tendency of parliamentarians to commit logical fallacies and if and how differences in the same exist with regard party lines and official position. It uses a much more

quantitative approach and is less engaged in attempting to throw light on other social issues using the analysis of fallacies. The tool of logical fallacies have been widely used however by media outlets to analyze discourse outside the parliament like speeches by politicians, reports and other documents.

Conclusion

On the whole, 11 Red Herrings were committed in the debates taken into account. 12 Slippery Slopes, 8 Ad Hominems, 24 Hasty Generalizations, 3 Strawman fallacies, 4 Irrelevant Conclusions, 4 Appeal to Emotions, 1 Post Hoc Fallacy and 9 False Presumptions were also committed. It must be remembered that only the written records of the debates were analyzed, where by and large only the statements of the members recognized by speaker are included. If the analysis occurred based on videos, the number of fallacies found might have been higher.

It is very difficult to know if members actually knew that they were committing fallacies and not making any true contribution to the discussion of the house while committing them. A parliamentarian might commit a red herring fallacy during the discussion on a bill in his attempt to put forward a point he couldn't put forward during the Zero Hour. A parliamentarian might commit a hasty generalization believing that is not a generalization but a scientific truth.

However, these breaks in the logical chain of parliamentarians help us get a glimpse of their inner thoughts and assumptions, and through the understanding of those in our representatives, we can try to understand the same of our country.

Many have recently commented that a quality of debate in the houses of the parliament has fallen [viii] . The veracity of the opinion can be tested through a comparative analysis of debates under the light of logical fallacies. Our representatives in the parliament make the laws of the country and many of them are also involved in policy making and implementation. Hence it is important for us to pay adequate attention to them and their ideas, and also point out their mistakes when committed and strive for better service on their part. An important tool to help us in the same can be an understanding of logical fallacies.

Notes

1. Aristotle was the first to begin categorizing fallacies in a systematic way, first under the title of 'sophistical refutations', in a work of that title which provided a list of 13 fallacies, and later with a revised list in 'The Rhetoric'. There is also a treatment of fallacy in his work 'Prior Analytics'.
2. Fallacies are largely classified into formal and informal fallacies. This paper

deals with informal fallacies because no formal fallacy could be found in the relevant texts. Informal fallacies are the ones mostly committed during verbal speeches.

3. The list only includes those fallacies which were found in the relevant texts. There are a large number of other recognized fallacies.

4. The verbatims of the parliamentarians' speeches are recorded during Lok Sabha proceedings and are made available in <http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx> within a few days. The records mostly only include the speeches of the speakers recognized by the honorable Speaker of Lok Sabha and are subject to his/her demands for deletion and edition of content. Recordings of each day of Lok Sabha proceedings are available in separate documents. The discussion regarding the Maternity Benefit (Amendment) Bill is available in

<http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx?tab=1&lsno=16>. The debate on the Criminal Law (Amendment) Bill is available in

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in <http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx?tab=1&lsno=16>. The parent website where the documents are available is maintained by National Informatics Centre (NIC).

5. The percentage is the percentage of words out of the total number of words of her full speech she had used up in the Red Herring.

6. The numbers within brackets represent the page number of the document which contains the debate where the relevant speech can be found.

7. In all cases where the date is not mentioned, debate or discussion on the Transgender Persons Bill refers to the Lok Sabha debate on the bill which took place on 29 April, 2016.

8. On 1 January 2019 the prime minister of India, Sri Narendra Modi told the news agency ANI in an interview that the quality of debates in the Lok Sabha is decreasing. Many other groups and public figures have expressed similar opinions.

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About the author

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De Bananeneter van Romainville ~ Veganisme in een anarchistische kolonie



Anarchistische kolonie Terre Libérée

In het begin van de vorige eeuw ontstonden in Frankrijk de eerste anarchistische leefgemeenschappen, ook kolonies genoemd, die vaak ook het veganisme propageerden en in praktijk brachten. De kolonie in het dorpje Romainville bij Parijs was in de jaren tien een van de vele kolonies in Frankrijk. Het leven in de kolonies kon naar eigen wil en keuze worden ingevuld, al zal niet overal geëxperimenteerd zijn de vergaande vormen van veganisme zoals in Romainville.

Initiatiefnemer was de fanatieke veganist André Lorulot (1885-1963), rond 1910 redacteur van het tijdschrift l'anarchie. Niet alle bewoners van de leefgemeenschap deelden zijn enthousiasme voor de extreme vorm van veganisme die hij propageerde en die hij als wetenschappelijk beschouwde.



André Lorulot

Vegetarisme bestaat al sinds de oudheid. Pas in de negentiende eeuw ontstond met name in Frankrijk een beweging die het veganisme propageerde – ook al kwam de term pas later in gebruik – en in het begin van de vorige eeuw ontstonden een aantal veganistische leefgemeenschappen. De bewoners waren voor het merendeel afkomstig uit het anarchistische milieu. Voor de Eerste Wereldoorlog telde Frankrijk zo'n tiental van deze leefgemeenschappen, verspreid over het land, die voor korte of langere tijd hebben bestaan. In die jaren, waarin veel plattelandsbewoners naar de steden trokken, moet het niet moeilijk geweest zijn ergens een leegstaand buurtschap of enkele lege boerderijen te vinden. Het aantal bewoners per kolonie bedroeg meestal enige tientallen.

Veganisme in Frankrijk

De eerste anarchistische kolonie in Frankrijk was gevestigd bij het dorpje Vaux (dep. Aisne), tussen 1903 en 1909. In 1911 ontstond in Bascon, een dorp in de buurt, een naturistische, veganistische kolonie. Stichter van deze communes was Louis Rimbault (1877-1949). De belangrijkste propagandist van deze kolonie was Jean Labat (1892-1932), vanwege zijn lange haar en baard plaatselijk bekend als Jezus Christus. Hij maakte foto's van de kolonie en haar bewoners, die hij als ansichtkaarten verkocht.

Een andere belangrijke propagandist van het veganisme was George Butaud (1868-1926), die in 1923 in de kolonie in Bascon ging wonen. Daarnaast begon hij in Parijs een veganistisch restaurant, het *Foyer Végétalien* (40 Rue Mathis), waar ook een slaapzaaltje en een bibliotheek waren gevestigd en waar cursussen Esperanto, scheikunde, natuurkunde en Frans werden gegeven. Samen met Rimbault en de anarchiste Sophie Zaïkowska (1880-1939) stichtte Butaud in 1923 bij Luynes in het departement Indre-et-Loire, een zelfvoorzienend veganistisch dorp: *Terre Libérée*. Ongeveer twintig mensen woonden permanent in de kolonie, per jaar kwamen er tussen de twee- en driehonderd bezoekers, o.a. voor cursussen. Ondanks diverse interne ideologische conflicten en de oorlog, bleef de kolonie tot 1949 bestaan.



Anarchistisch tijdschrift

In 1911 had Louis Rimbault het wel gezien met het communeleven in Bascon. Bij lokale arbeiders in de omgeving had hij weinig belangstelling ondervonden voor zijn opvattingen over anarchistisch federalisme. In Parijs vond hij een baantje in een garage en maakte hij kennis met een aantal anarchistenvan die betrokken waren bij het tijdschrift *l'anarchie*. De redactie daarvan was gevestigd in een pand in de Rue du Chevalier de la Barre, vlakbij de Sacré-Coeur, waar ook de drukpers stond en lezingen konden worden gehouden.

L'anarchie was in 1905 opgericht door de typograaf en actieve anarchist Albert Libertad (pseudoniem van Albert Joseph, 1875-1908), die in die tijd in Parijs populaire lezingen over het anarchisme hield. In *l'anarchie* - oplage zo'n vierduizend exemplaren - pleitte hij voor een individualistisch anarchisme en verzette hij zich tegen de bestaande maatschappijvorm, loonarbeid, huwelijk, dienstplicht, verkiezingen, roken, alcohol en het eten van vlees. Hij was tegenstander van het anarchosyndicalisme omdat deze strijdwijze slechts tot lottverbetering van de arbeiders zou leiden, en aan de bestaande maatschappelijke ongelijkheid niets zou veranderen.

Illegalisme

De sinds zijn geboorte kreupele Libertad was door zijn agitatie en propaganda een voortdurende doorn in het oog van autoriteiten, politie en justitie. Op een avond werd hij door agenten zo hard in elkaar geschopt, dat hij aan de gevolgen ervan overleed. Het redacteurschap van *l'anarchie* ging over naar Maurice Vandamme (1886-1974), die al eerder bijdragen voor het blad had geschreven onder het pseudoniem Mauricius. Deze zette het redactionele beleid van Libertad voort, samen met zijn vriendin Rirette Maîtrejean (1887-1968). Zij schreef felle artikelen waarin zij de maatschappelijke positie van vrouwen bekritiseerde en pleitte voor vrije liefde, iets wat zij ook in praktijk bracht. Een andere medewerker was de fanatieke alcoholbestrijder en veganist André Roulot, die schreef onder het pseudoniem André Lorulot. Mauricius en Lorulot waren pleitbezorgers van individuele en gemeenschappelijke, indien nodig gewelddadige verzetsdaden tegen de heersende maatschappelijke orde. Dit illegalisme, waarbij anarchistenvan ook inbraken en overvallen pleegden met het doel de

maatschappelijke orde te ondermijnen, zorgde ook voor financiële armslag voor de anarchistische beweging.



Victor Kibaltchiche en Rirete Maitrejean

Romainville

In het pand van *l'anarchie* in Parijs groeide het groepje rond Mauricius en Maîtrejean uit tot een kleine leefgemeenschap. Onder hen de in Brussel geboren Victor Kibaltchiche, van Russische afkomst, later bekend geworden als de schrijver Victor Serge (1890-1947), die al in *l'anarchie* schreef onder het pseudoniem Le Rétif (de weerspannige).

Nadat Mauricius als redacteur was opgestapt verhuisde de commune in 1909 op initiatief van Lorulot naar Romainville, een landelijk dorpje zo'n twee kilometer ten noordoosten van Parijs. In een groot huis met twee verdiepingen aan de Rue Bagnolet, kwam de drukpers van *l'anarchie* te staan, werden het redactielokaal en een kleine winkel voor de verkoop van revolutionaire publicaties gevestigd. De drukpers werd ook gebruikt voor het drukken van valse identiteitspapieren. Het huis had een binnenplaats en een ruime tuin met fruitbomen, waar als het weer het toeliet, matinées en soirées werden gehouden met gezamenlijke maaltijden, zang, dans en discussies.



Rue Bagnole, Romainville. In het eerste huis links was de leefgemeenschap gevestigd (coll. MS)

Neem en eet

Naast woning voor de commune werd het huis een tijdelijke aanlooplek voor rondtrekkende geestverwanten of gelijkgestemden die zonder woonruimte zaten en kameraden die zich voor korte of langere tijd voor de politie schuil wilden houden. In de tuin werd een grote moestuin gecreëerd, waarmee men probeerde in eigen onderhoud te voorzien. Lukte dat niet, dan hanteerde men het neem-en-eet-principe. Om het inkomen van de commune aan te vullen pleegden enkele nieuwkomers geregeld inbraken waarna de buit in Parijs van de hand kon worden gedaan.

Vaste bewoners waren, naast Lorulot, Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche, de militante anarchist Raymond Callemine, een jeugdvriend van Kibaltchiche, Jean de Boe en

Eduard Carouy, ook afkomstig uit Brussel, en de dienstweigeraar Octave Garnier en diens vriendin Jeanne Belardi en haar dochtertje. Uit de kring rond l'anarchie kwamen René Valet en Anna Dondon. Callemin, Garnier, Carouy en Valet gebruikten de tuin ook voor schietoefeningen.



De tuin van het huis in Romainville

Olijfolie

De leefgemeenschap was strikt veganistisch. Met name Lorulot maakte zich hiervoor sterk. Eerder had hij in een veganistische kolonie in Saint Germain-en-Laye gewoond, maar daar werd zijn gedrag door de andere bewoners niet altijd gewaardeerd. Terwijl anderen aan het werk waren, bleek Lorulot vaak naakt in een boom te zitten waar hij een zonnebad nam, zoals hij het noemde. 'Jullie zijn de behoeftigen, jullie werken, ik ben de hersens, ik denk', zo verantwoordde hij zijn gedrag. Naakt door de bossen wandelen was een van zijn favoriete bezigheden.

In Romainville dronk men geen alcohol, geen koffie en thee, maar alleen water. De maaltijden bestonden uit rijst, maïs of havermoutpap en geraspte groenten, zonder zout, peper of azijn. Om fit te blijven deed men gymnastiekoefeningen en werden lange wandelingen of fietstochten gemaakt. Sommige van de bewoners, onder wie Lorulot, experimenteerden met *fruitisme*, het eten van alleen maar fruit. Volgens hem was het eten van één banaan per dag de meest complete en natuurlijke voeding en genoeg voor een menselijk lichaam. Wanneer iedereen daartoe over zou gaan, dan zouden er geen kapitalisten meer zijn, geen arbeiders en geen fabrieken en stakingen. Lorulot wilde een 'vie naturelle' leiden gebaseerd op wetenschappelijke grondslag. Hij adviseerde zelfs geen water te drinken maar

alleen olijf- of zonnebloemolie. Het feit dat sardientjes lange tijd in olie bewaard konden worden bewees immers dat het menselijk lichaam door het drinken van olie langer mee zou gaan, zo stelde hij.

Wetenschap

De opvattingen van Lorulot leidden tot spanningen binnen de groep. Voor de anarcha-feministische opvattingen van Rirette Maîtrejean kon hij weinig waardering opbrengen. Hij stelde zich autoritair op en drong de anderen zijn dieet op. Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche weigerden af te zien van het drinken van koffie en thee. Maîtrejean zette grote vraagtekens bij het 'wetenschappelijke' gehalte van de beweringen van Lorulot.

Deze leidde zijn denkbeelden af uit het werk van Duitse wetenschappers als Ernst Haeckel en Ludwig Büchner die publiceerden over natuur, psychologie, darwinisme, fysiologie, natuurbeleving en biologie. In Nederland verschenen de boeken van beiden in de jaren twintig in roofdruk bij *De Roode Bibliotheek* van Gerhard Rijnders, uitgever van *De Vrije Socialist*.



Victor Kibaltchiche

Schreeuw om opstand

De irritaties in de leefgemeenschap liepen steeds verder op. Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche kregen genoeg van het zout- en peperloze dieet en besloten voortaan apart te eten. Lorulot ergerde zich steeds meer aan het gedrag van de illegalisten Callemin, Carouy, Valet en Garnier. Hoewel hij voorheen het illegalisme had omarmd, kon hij zich niet met hun ideologische opvattingen over strijdwijze verenigen en besloot hij te vertrekken. Het redacteurschap van *l'anarchie* kwam nu bij Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche te liggen. De laatste verzette zich al enige tijd tegen het individualisme in de kolommen van *l'anarchie*. Hij wilde het tijdschrift een breed sociaal karakter geven, maar daar wilden de illegalisten weer niet aan. Vooral Callemin pleitte voor harde, doeltreffende aanvallen tegen

het bestaande systeem. Hij en de andere illegalisten wilden hun 'schreeuw om opstand' luid laten horen en de bestaande maatschappij vol treffen. Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche vonden dat acties zoals roofovervallen het systeem niet zouden kunnen ondermijnen. In september 1911 begaf de drukpers van *l'anarchie* het. Rirette Maîtrejean en Kibaltchiche besloten daarop de commune te verlaten en vonden een nieuwe redactieruimte in de Rue du Fessart in Parijs.



De overval in de Rue Ordener door de Autobandieten



Rue Ordener, Parijs, ca. 1910 (coll. MS)

Autobandieten

Callemin, Carouy, Garnier en Valet vertrokken naar verschillende adressen in Parijs en omgeving. Nadat ze kennis hadden gemaakt met de uit Lyon afkomstige chauffeur Jules Bonnot kwamen hun opvattingen over anarchistische actiemethoden in een stroomversnelling.

Op 22 december 1911 pleegden ze in de Rue Ordener in Parijs de eerste gewapende overval in de geschiedenis waarbij gebruik gemaakt werd van een auto. Bij deze overval en daaropvolgende overvallen werd door Garnier en Bonnot

iedere keer de beste auto die ze konden vinden gestolen.

Met een serie even spectaculaire als gewelddadige overvallen hield de '*Bende van Bonnot*', oftewel de *Autobandieten*, Frankrijk maandenlang in de ban. Directe, onverholen aanvallen op banken en vermogende burgers maakten deel uit van de werkwijze.

Dit 'anarchisme van de daad' werd destijds in brede anarchistische kring veelal veroordeeld. Doordat hun acties niet alleen de bourgeoisie troffen, maar er ook onschuldige slachtoffers bij vielen, had de groep al gauw veel sympathie verloren. Voor zowel de sensatiepers als de serieuze kranten was de groep maandenlang voorpaginanieuws.

De geschiedenis van de *Autobandieten* zou op tragische wijze eindigen. Na hun arrestaties en veroordelingen werden Callemin en André Soudy geëxecuteerd. Bonnot, Garnier en Valet stierven tijdens een tweetal belegeringen van de schuilplaatsen waar ze zich hadden verstopt.

De Franse justitie arresteerde ook diverse anarchisten uit de kring van de kolonie. In de nasleep van de affaire Bonnot werd Rirette Maîtrejean na voorarrest vrijgesproken, Kibaltchiche kreeg vijf jaar cel.

Meningsverschillen

Een kolonie als in Romainville bood aan diverse anarchisten de mogelijkheid op verschillende terreinen actief te zijn, ook al waren er meningsverschillen over de te voeren strijd. Het veganisme in Romainville week niet fundamenteel af van dat in andere kolonies. Het zou echter onjuist zijn het veganisme en de samenlevingsvorm van Romainville te koppelen aan het illegalisme en aan de acties van de *Autobandieten*. De autoriteiten, de rechtse pers en de publieke opinie veegden echter alle anarchisten over één kam en ook anarchisten die maar zijdelings met de daders te maken hadden gehad werden destijds gearresteerd.

André Lorulot bleef actief in het anarchistische milieu. Hij richtte in 1911 het anarchistische tijdschrift *L'Idee libre* op.

In 1917 verwelkomde hij het ontstaan van de Sovjet-Unie. Een dictatuur van het proletariaat vond hij noodzakelijk, ook na het neerslaan van de opstand van Sovjet-matrozen in Kronstadt door het Rode Leger van Leon Trotski. Hij publiceerde nog over individueel anarchisme en seksualiteit en gaf een serie brochures uit tegen de kerk en haar verschijningsvormen. Het is opmerkelijk dat in de lijst publicaties van zijn hand na 1911 geen titels meer over veganisme voorkomen. Hij overleed in 1963.



Rirette Maitrejean en haar dochter,
jaren zestig

Parijs

Diverse auteurs hebben over het leven in de kolonie van Romainville geschreven. Het feit dat een aantal bewoners later opging in de *Autobandietsen*, is hier debet aan. Voornaamste bron voor verhalen over de kolonie van Romainville zijn de memoires van Rirette Maîtrejean, *Souvenir d'anarchie* (1913). Hoewel zij hierin duidelijk afstand neemt van het illegalisme en van de daden van Bonnot, Callemín c.s., verloochent zij het anarchisme en ook het veganisme niet. Ze werd typografe en bleef tot op hoge leeftijd actief in de anarchistische beweging. Ze werkte in de jaren dertig voor het tijdschrift *La Revue anarchiste* en in de syndicalistische typografenvakbond en vanaf 1959 voor het tijdschrift *Liberté*. Op het eind van haar leven werd ze blind, maar ze kon in mei 1968 nog kennis nemen van de studentenopstand in Parijs, niet lang voor haar dood. Haar as werd

bijgezet in het Columbarium van Père Lachaise in Parijs, slechts enkele meters van de laatste rustplaats van André Lorulot.



Columbarium, Père Lachaise, Parijs (foto: M. Smit)

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