

We Are Facing Economic Collapse On Top Of A Pandemic. What We Do Now Matters.



Prof.dr. Robert Pollin

As the COVID-19 virus spreads, the U.S. economy has begun to crumble like a house of cards.

The sudden collapse of the economy is revealing how the “great economy” that Donald Trump has been boasting about on Twitter for the past three years was in fact a mirage caused by wild Wall Street rallies, and boosted by Trump’s massive tax cuts and deregulatory efforts contrast which rolled back all kinds of environmental standards with total disregard for the impact on public health and the climate crisis.

As the shutdowns orchestrated to stop the spread of the novel coronavirus create financial ruin for individuals and businesses across the country, the economy is “teetering on collapse,” points out Robert Pollin, distinguished professor of economics and co-director of the Political Economy Research Institute at the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, in this exclusive interview for *Truthout*.

But Pollin also argues that — with the right decisions — we have the means not only to rescue the complete collapse of the economy, but also to move in the direction of a just, equitable and sustainable socioeconomic order. The following transcript has been lightly edited for length and clarity.

C.J. Polychroniou: Can you give a succinct summary of the myths and realities of Trump’s economy from the day he took office and up until the outbreak of

COVID-19?

Robert Pollin: Throughout his presidency, until basically last week, Trump's mantra on the economy is that conditions have never, ever been better. This was always a ludicrous assertion. But as distinct from many other of Trump's assertions, this one was based on at least some slivers of evidence, with the two critical slivers being the stock market and the unemployment rate. It is true, first of all that, as of last July, the U.S. stock market had reached an historic high, with the S&P 500 index exceeding 3,000 for the first time. It is also true that the official unemployment rate had hit a record low of 3.5 percent as of February. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the last time the official U.S. unemployment rate was below 3.5 percent was 1953.

But the stock market rise reflected, more than anything, a combination of (1) companies deliberately inflating their own stock prices through buying back their shares on the open market; and (2) the reinforcement, with Trump, of the upward distribution of income and wealth that has proceeded now for 40 years under neoliberalism. For example, with Trump's signature across-the-board tax cuts in 2017, the benefits for the poorest 20 percent of the population amounted to an average of \$100 while the richest 1 percent received \$55,000. Over the next decade, the poorest 20 percent would then see their taxes go up while the richest 1 percent would benefit from further cuts.

With the historically low official unemployment rate, if we add up the people who were working part-time but wanted full-time jobs as well as those who have temporarily given up looking for work, plus we account for the share of people who have dropped out of the labor force following the 2007-09 Great Recession, we are now at a more realistic unemployment rate of nearly 10 percent. This is about 16 million people, roughly equal to the entire populations of New York City, Los Angeles and Chicago. On top of this, wages had only begun to start inching up with the unemployment rate at its historically low level. This is after 40 years of most working people experiencing falling or stagnating real wages.

In short, our current economy was never anything close to the halcyon image projected by Trump until this week. In any case, all of those rosy descriptions are now a thing of the past.

How has the novel coronavirus affected the U.S. economy? Do you think there are

both short-term and long-term impacts?

The coronavirus is devastating the U.S. economy as I write. I am certainly not focused here on the stock market having fallen by roughly 20 percent since its peak on February 14. More to the point: If we add up current employment in the hospitality and leisure industries — including restaurants, bars and hotels — plus retail trade, plus transportation, we are talking about 38 million jobs. That is roughly 25 percent of all employment in the U.S. economy. Now let's assume, conservatively, that half of these people are facing layoffs or at least extended furloughs. That's close to 20 million people. Unless the government does something dramatic, this, by itself, could easily raise the official unemployment rate above 10 percent in a matter of weeks, i.e. to a point higher than the worst phase of the Great Recession. The effective percentage of people experiencing serious employment stresses — i.e. lost paychecks from furloughs or reductions in hours — could easily be at least double that figure, i.e. 20 percent or above. These back-of-the-envelope calculations do not even take account of the fact that government tax revenues are plunging with people losing income and cutting back on spending. As governments lose tax revenues, how are they then going to find the funds to pay teachers, firefighters, police officers and even health care workers?

All of these are not merely “short-term” events. They are immediate effects, happening right now, at a breakneck pace. There will also be deep longer-term effects. But what exactly these will be will depend on how we intervene politically now in handling the crisis. For example, the Federal Reserve has already announced that it is prepared to bail out Wall Street yet again, under the same type of interventions that they conducted during the 2007-09 crisis. But maybe this time we can successfully make a case that at least a significant share of the financial markets need to be nationalized, not just bailed out. A wholesale financial market bailout means that Wall Street continues to operate under a perverted variant of socialism that has emerged under neoliberalism — i.e., Wall Street's risks are borne by society as a whole while their profits remain all for themselves.

The stock market rallied big time last week after Trump's announcement of a national emergency on account of COVID-19. But then the market plunged again last Monday, experiencing its worst day since the 1987 crash. How significant are such stock market swings from a macroeconomic standpoint?

Whatever happens with the stock market does not, by itself, cause the economy to perform better or worse. The fact is, as I noted above, the stratospheric level that the stock market had reached before the coronavirus took hold resulted from both market manipulations by corporations buying back their own shares, plus the upward redistribution of income. So an orderly, long-term decline in the stock market would be a good thing if it meant a reduction in market manipulation and a reversal of the long-term rise of inequality. But the market volatility that is occurring now is reflecting the expectation that the real economy — which includes people's incomes, jobs, pensions and health care coverage, not just stock prices — is teetering on collapse. If, for example, the official unemployment rate were to rise to 10 percent or above, there is no amount of fancy stock-buyback schemes, or further tax cuts for the rich, that can compensate for an overall decline in economic activity of this magnitude. An economy with an official unemployment rate of 10 percent will produce huge falls in real productive investments in the economy by private businesses — i.e., people opening new businesses or purchasing equipment and hiring people to expand their existing business operations. When this happens, stock market prices will continue falling, as one indicator of what is happening in the real economy.

Given that we are clearly in the midst of a public health and economic crisis alike, what realistic measures are there available to policymakers in order not simply to stave off an economic collapse, but also to put the U.S. economy on a truly sustainable and equitable track?

Step one must entail doing everything possible to deal with the public health emergency. That means, effectively, that Medicare for All must be put into operation right away, at least until the crisis conditions have lifted. That is, everyone needs to be able to get tested and treated for the novel coronavirus, without facing any kinds of financial concerns whatsoever. That is the only way in which the spread of the virus has a chance of being controlled. Once the crisis has past, it should then have become obvious that Medicare for All needs to be in place all the time. We will have to make that case forcefully after the crisis conditions lift.

Concurrent with ensuring that people get the treatment they need, we must expand our capacity to treat people dramatically and right away. This means creating temporary hospital facilities as needed, for example, in the college dormitories and hotels that are empty now anyway. It means expanding health

care staffing by creating jobs for health care workers at all levels who have been unemployed or underemployed, as well as bringing retired health care workers back into the labor force. This won't happen unless these workers — along with all other health care workers — are offered good pay to take on the enormous challenges they will face.

We then have to make sure that people experiencing income losses have money in their pockets. All workers first, therefore, need to be certain that they will be receiving paid sick leave. Right now, 24 percent of all workers do not have paid sick leave coverage. But this benefit is skewed toward higher-paid workers. Roughly 70 percent of the lowest-paid workers (those in the bottom 10 percent in terms of income) [do not have paid sick leave](#) benefits. Yet these workers, are the ones who will be most badly hurt by the coming job losses and furloughs.

Beyond extending paid sick leave to everyone, the federal government needs to send out checks to everyone, just as George W. Bush did in 2001, after the Wall Street crash that year (which occurred before 9/11). The Bush program included \$300-\$600 checks for two-thirds of U.S. families. Something in the range of double those amounts — something like \$1,500 to \$2,000 per family is warranted now, for starters. More is likely to be needed depending on the course of the crisis.

Directly supporting people with money is a far more effective intervention now than the payroll tax cuts being advanced by Trump. For one thing, the payroll tax cuts will dribble out slowly, when we are facing a collapse of people's incomes through mass furloughs and layoffs that are immediate. With the payroll tax cuts, higher-income people will, again, get more money coming back to them, when what we need are benefits flowing disproportionately to lower-income people, who are facing the most severe income losses. The payroll tax cuts will also not help at all people who are unemployed. We therefore also need to greatly expand unemployment benefits across the board. Businesses should be given tax credits to match their extension of paid sick leave to their workers. They should also receive some form of tax cut or credit to help keep them afloat during the crisis. But using the payroll tax cut as the stimulus tool is dangerous in any case, since payroll taxes are the way we finance Social Security.

All of these measures will, of course, require lots of money, right away. This is at a moment when the federal government's fiscal deficit, at 4.6 percent of the gross domestic product (GDP), is at a historic high for an economic expansion period as

opposed to a recession. Our big federal deficit today is the direct result of the Trump tax cuts for the rich. But we cannot worry right now about how much the deficit increases, at least as a first-order problem. In 1943, in the middle of World War II, the federal deficit rose to nearly 27 percent of GDP. We still have a long way to go to hit that level.

Moreover, if the federal deficit were to rise to anything close to that level, the Federal Reserve can simply buy up the excess supply of U.S. government bonds, what is called “debt monetization” in technical parlance. This enables the government to effectively print money to finance the government interventions necessary to effectively counteract the crisis. I do not favor this approach to government financing under most circumstances, unlike some other progressive economists. But right now, we need to use all available policy tools to the extent necessary to stave off an economic collapse on top of the health care pandemic.

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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 a 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 [i] , 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 parliamentarians 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

<http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx?tab=1&lsno=16>. The debate on the Trafficking of Persons (Prevention, Protection and Rehabilitation) Bill is available in <http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx?tab=1&lsno=16>.

The debate on the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill which occurred on 29 April 2016 is available

in <http://loksabhaph.nic.in/Debates/textofdebate.aspx?tab=1&lsno=16>. The

debate on the Rights of Transgender Persons Bill which occurred on 26 February 2016 is available

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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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 naturalistische, 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 anarchisten 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 anarchistena 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 Rirette Maîtrejean

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 aanloopplek 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 Callemin, 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 verenigen met hun ideologische opvattingen over strijdwijze 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 Callemine 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 *Autobandiëten*, 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, Callemine 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)

Bronnen en literatuur

A. L. Constandse, *De Autobandieten*, BOO, Zandvoort 1935, herdr. Kelderuitgeverij, Utrecht/ De Vooruitgang, Amsterdam/Chantilly 2010;

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Frédéric Lavignette, *La Bande à Bonnot à travers la presse de l'époque*, Fage Éditions, Lyon 2008;

Lou Marin, *Rirette Maîtrejean. Attentatskritikerin, Anarchafeministin, Individualanarchistin*, Verlag Graswurzelrevolution, Heidelberg 2016; Richard Parry, *The Bonnot Gang*, Rebel Press 1987;

Bernard Thomas, *Anarchisten, Ein Bericht*, Walter-Verlag, Olten und Freiburg, 1970;

www.happycow.net

The INSANE Logic Of The YODEL

Video lecture on the wide & wild world of the YODEL based on the book YODEL IN HIFI. This film premiered in LONDON on 11 March 2014 at the Peckham Liberal Club as part of the Muckle Mouth series. Book YODEL IN HIFI: From Kitsch Folk to Contemporary Electronica. For info:<http://uwpress.wisc.edu/>

Break the voice and you enter the marrow of existence. The film documents the ubiquitous and unique presence of yodeling just about everywhere. From roots deep in the earth to soundings that probe deep space... And no genre is safe: opera, hip-hop, rock, pop, folk, jazz, house, techno, reggae... FEATURES: Werner Herzog, Bernhard Betschart, Phil Minton, Myriam van Imschoot & Doreen Kutzke, Barbara Hannigan, Taylor Ware, Francelle Maria, Drag Queen Lady KinMee, Dominatrix Manuela Horn, a yodeling cat, Tarzan, Bob Marley, Aka Pygmies, Prison work songs, hollerin', Jimmie Rodgers, SE Rogie, Mike Johnson, Kia Brekkan, Kishore Kumar, Cyrill Schläpfer, Erika Stucky, Christine Lauterburg, Alice Babs, Focus, Mental Theo & Charly Lownoise, Bobbejaan Schoepen, Honeymoon Killers, Harry Torrani, George Van Dusen, Brian Eno, Cranberries, Buzzcocks, People Like Us, Mysterious Asthmatic Avenger, Shelley Hirsch, Jacques Dutronc, Munich House Mafia, Franzl Lang, Fatima Miranda, Kristina Fuchs, Zabine, Meredith Monk, Neil Rolnick, Anna Kiefer, Paul Dutton, Mij, Tim Buckley, Slim Whitman, Mal Webb, Wandervogels, Chinese yodeling, tea-picking yodels, Korean, Japanese, Filipino, Basques, Cambodian, Taiwanese, Persian, Tuvan, Georgian...

This film uses original footage but mostly relies on found and archival footage. My hope & goal is to make a feature length documentary using high quality stock and more original footage. I am looking to partner with a producer and filmmaker with interest in the subject.

All sources & credits for found footage used in this film available upon request.

Yodel in HiFi: From Kitsch Folk to Contemporary Electronica ::
<http://uwpress.wisc.edu/books/4594.htm>

YODEL-AY-EE-OOOO: The Secret History of Yodeling Around the World ::

<http://www.routledge.com/>

Wreck This Mess Radio :: <http://www.mixcloud.com/wreckthismess/>

Youtube Channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/>

Bart Plantenga is a freelance researcher, writer, translator, and editor. He is the author of *Yodel-Ay-Ee-Oooo: The Secret History of Yodeling around the World* and the compiler of the CD *Rough Guide to Yodel*. He lives and works in Amsterdam and is the disc jockey of radio show *Wreck This Mess*.

Author's website: bartplantenga.weebly.com/

Author's blog: bartyodel2.wordpress.com

Multatuli online



*Lithografie naar
portret van Multatuli
door César
Mitkiewicz*

Multatuli - pseudoniem van Eduard Douwes Dekker (1820-1887) - wordt beschouwd als de belangrijkste schrijver uit het Nederlands taalgebied. Zijn

invloed op de Nederlandse literatuur, de koloniale politiek, het feminisme en de arbeidersbeweging is baanbrekend geweest. Het Multatuli Genootschap/Stichting Multatuli Huis wil de belangstelling voor deze schrijver en denker levend houden door op multatuli.online zijn volledige werk en correspondentie en alle documenten (zoals teksten, afbeeldingen, archivalia) die op hem betrekking hebben digitaal en in samenhang te publiceren. De website is bestemd voor belangstellenden en onderzoekers maar ook voor wie hier kennismaakt met Multatuli.

De realisering van dit project zal stapsgewijs plaatsvinden. Op dit moment zijn alle [zelfstandige publicaties](#) van Multatuli aanwezig, alle bewaard gebleven [correspondentie](#) (ca. 5000 brieven), een [biografie](#) (door Dik van der Meulen) en het complete voor deze website gedigitaliseerde [Multatuli Archief](#) (eigendom van het Multatuli Genootschap en bewaard door Allard Pierson, De Collecties van de Universiteit van Amsterdam).

Daarnaast bevat de website een [Multatuli Encyclopedie](#), een [Multatuli Atlas](#), een [Multatuli Lexicon](#) en toegang tot een ruime hoeveelheid [secundaire literatuur](#). Waar mogelijk wordt gewezen naar eerder gedigitaliseerde werken en documentatie, zoals te vinden bij de Koninklijke Bibliotheek (de Digitale Bibliotheek voor de Nederlandse Letteren en Delpher) en het Huygens Instituut.

Het [colofon](#) vermeldt alle personen en instellingen die tot nu toe een bijdrage hebben geleverd. Om een zo compleet mogelijk beeld van Multatuli's werk en levensloop tot stand te brengen kunnen we de hulp van kenners en geïnteresseerden gebruiken. Wie over documenten - brieven, beeldmateriaal of secundaire literatuur - beschikt die hier niet mogen ontbreken of wie anderszins een bijdrage wil leveren aan multatuli.online (financieel of in natura), wordt van harte uitgenodigd om zich te melden bij de [redactie van de website](#). Ook onjuistheden of suggesties voor verbetering kunnen aan [de redactie](#) worden doorgegeven.

Deze website is een initiatief van het Multatuli Genootschap en de Stichting Multatuli Huis. Door (fiscaal vriendelijk) [donateur](#) te worden ondersteunt u het werk van het genootschap en de stichting en verzekert u de instandhouding van deze website.

Bovenaan iedere pagina van deze website worden delen van de [Multatuli](#)

[Collectie](#) getoond - brieven, documenten, manuscripten, foto's, afbeeldingen en meer - om een indruk te geven van de rijkdom en de verscheidenheid van die collectie.

Bezoek de site: <https://multatuli.online/home>

Does the UK Need the EU? An Interview With Malcolm Sawyer



Malcolm Sawyer, Emeritus Professor of Economics at Leeds University

What was Brexit all about? What will its most likely consequences for UK, EU, and the world economy at large? Renowned British economist Malcolm Sawyer, Emeritus Professor of Economics at Leeds University, UK, discusses these and other related issues in an exclusive interview below with C. J. Polychroniou.

C. J. Polychroniou: Brexit has happened. The UK has gotten a divorce from the European Union (EU), after being a member for 47 years. Is this a cultural and political revolution?

Malcolm Sawyer: As of 11pm. (UK time) on 31st January 2020, the UK is no longer a member of the EU, and as such does not participate in the political deliberations of the EU (e.g. no longer any UK members of the European

Parliament, UK government ministers do not attend meetings of council of ministers). However, during what is termed a transition period, intended to be completed by 31st December this year, very little has changed in the economic and social relationships between the UK and the EU. Trade continues to take place on the same terms as before, the free movement of labour between countries continues, etc. etc.. The economic effects of UK's leaving of the EU are yet to be felt, e.g. those from changes in the trading arrangements. To date, there have been effects of the prospects of Brexit: the sterling exchange rate declined sharply shortly after the referendum from which it has not yet fully recovered, and investment has been subdued through uncertainty of the future relationships.

The referendum result was 52/48 in favour of leave over remain, and opinion polls since the referendum have tended to find some, albeit small, movement in opinion towards remain. The general election result of December 2019 resulted in a large Parliamentary majority for the Conservative government with Boris Johnson as Prime Minister, but based on a 43 per cent share of the national vote. The main political parties against Brexit without a further referendum, and against what is often termed a 'hard Brexit' (which is now the probable outcome) secured 52 per cent of the national vote.

At the present time, very little has changed in the day-to-day relationships between the UK and the EU. Trade relationships, movement of peoples etc will be decided upon over the next few months. It remains to be seen how co-operative will be the future relationships between the UK and the EU - much of the Brexit campaign has been based on hostility and suspicion of the EU, which undermine future co-operation. Brexit and the campaigns surrounding it have shown up deep divisions within British society.

C. J. Polychroniou: What are the implications of Brexit for the future of Great Britain, the EU, and the world economy at large?

Malcolm Sawyer: Future of UK. The result of the referendum (2016 on remain or leave the EU) revealed significant differences between age groups (old more likely to vote leave than the young), and geographical (cities more likely to vote remain than towns and rural areas). There were also differences between the constituent nations of the UK - England and Wales both voted to leave, and Scotland and Northern Ireland to remain.

There are forces which could propel a break-up of the United Kingdom with Scotland becoming an independent nation and Northern Ireland re-unified with Ireland. The pressures for independence in Scotland are enhanced by the UK leaving the EU, with a Scottish National Party (SNP) in power in Scotland (albeit as a minority government) continuing to push for a second referendum on Scottish independence. A majority of members of the Scottish Parliament favour independence (SNP plus Scottish Green Party) and recent opinion polls put support for independence slightly in the lead.

The post-Brexit trading relations between the UK and the EU could well interact with political and demographic changes to bring Irish re-unification to the fore. In the UK general election in December 2019, the number of Unionist members of parliament elected in Northern Ireland did not form a majority for the first time ever. As I write this, in the general election in Ireland, Sinn Féin recorded its highest share of the vote ever by far, with 24 ½ per cent, with the two parties (Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael) which had dominated Irish politics since independence at a combined vote share of 43 per cent. This may well help to put Irish unification on the agenda.

The border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic is the land border between the UK and the EU. Having a completely open border has been an important feature of the Good Friday Agreement (GFA) of 1998 and the peace process. To facilitate trade across the Irish border (including the maintenance of supply chains which straddle the border) and to minimize border checks would require a close trading relationship. There have been proposals for Northern Ireland to be in a closer relationship with the EU than the rest of the UK, and in effect for a form of border to run down the Irish Sea.

EU: The major challenges facing the EU remain largely as before, and the UK's exit may now enable the EU to focus on those challenges. As the UK has been a net contributor to the EU budget, there will need to be some adjustments with losses of funds for a number of countries. The UK leaving does not significantly change the nature of the major challenges for the EU. These include relatively poor economic performance and a dysfunctional single currency, meeting the climate emergency, and the rise of the authoritarian right and presence in government in a number of cases.

World economy: The UK is of course a small player in the world economy. There will no doubt be changes in the patterns of trade and foreign direct investment, but unlikely to be quantitative significant.

A significant detrimental effect comes from policy actions on climate change and the environment. The Conservative government returned with a large Parliamentary majority in the December general election have a lack of commitment to climate change action. The policies in their general election manifesto were notably less ambitious than those of the other major parties: for example, carbon-neutral by 2050 (which itself does not correspond to current government measures 2099) rather than in the 2030s. The UK's withdrawal from the EU undermines co-operation over environmental policies and the development of Europe wide environmental standards.

C. J. Polychroniou: Does the UK need an EU trade deal? If so, what is the likelihood that Boris Johnson will agree to EU rules on trade? If not, what does the UK want?

Malcolm Sawyer: A strong element of the leave campaign (reinforced since then) was 'take back control', which in the area of trade spills over into 'make our own regulations' and not be in any way bound by the regulations of the EU. A close trade deal between the UK and the EU would involve mutual recognition of regulations and more, and that would most likely mean the UK accepting most if not all of the rules and regulations of the EU single market. This could come close to the arrangements between Norway and the EU, which entails free movement of labour, and a contribution by Norway to the EU budget. The closer the trade deal, the lower are barriers to trade, and higher the degree of trade.

There are estimates of the losses to national income which would result from a 'no deal' outcome is of the order of 5 per cent over a 10 year period. 'The UK in a changing Europe' research group estimates that leaving with a 'no deal' on WTO rules may result in per capita income being 3.3 per cent lower as compared with UK remaining in the EU, and up to 8.1 per cent lower if productivity treated as impacted by the increased impediments to trade. What was termed Johnson's proposals were estimated to result in a 2.5 per cent (and 6.4 per cent in the productivity harmed by trade impediments case).

Although there has at various times been talk of 'no deal' and 'trading on WTO

terms', I find it difficult to think that such an outcome would be at all desirable (though it may well occur by accident as a result of a form of prisoners' dilemma). A 'no deal' situation would not only involve tariffs on trade between the UK and the EU, but significant border checks which would have disruptive effects on the supply chains which cross international borders, not to mention the effects on the land-border between Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic. The declared position of the UK government appears [check] to be what is often referred to as a Canada style agreement by reference to the Comprehensive Economic Trade Agreement (CETA) between the EU and Canada. This trade deal is said to cover 98 per cent of the goods traded between EU and Canada on a no tariff, no quota basis, but does not cover services, and this little by way of regulatory alignment CHECK.

It appears that the current UK government would not be looking to have a close trading relationship with the EU - at most a comprehensive free trade agreement on goods, but not on services. Fears of having to accept any regulatory controls from the EU combined with a drive to agree a trade deal with the USA push the government that way. But many others would prefer much closer trading relationships between the UK and the EU. The preference for such a relationship range from the ways in which trade (particularly for supply chains) would be facilitated with what is UK's largest trading partner by far through to fears of what a trade deal with the USA in the Trump era would entail.

C. J. Polychroniou: Some on the left have argued that Brexit was a struggle against neoliberalism. But wasn't Boris Johnsons' Brexit plan neoliberal at its very core, a free-market dream for reducing government programs, regulations, directives and acts coming from Brussels?

Malcolm Sawyer: There are many elements within the policy frameworks of the EU which can be viewed as neo-liberal, though for a number of them (particular in respect of macroeconomic policies including monetary policy conducted by an 'independent' central bank and numerical limits on budget deficits and debts) may be viewed more as ordo-liberalism. There are, though, areas of economic and social policy, employment where the EU approach does not readily fit into the neo-liberal mould. Many would argue that the UK policy approach has often been more neo-liberal than the EU and where the UK has been pushing the EU agenda in the neo-liberal direction. An example of the latter being the promotion of market liberalization in the area of utilities. Limits on State Aid to industry have

been taken as a sign of a neo-liberal agenda, but it appears that the UK has made much less use of State Aid than many other EU countries.

The EU, particularly in the context of the single market, has promoted strong regulation applicable across the whole of the EU on the grounds of safeguarding health and safety, environmental protection etc. and also to help promote market integration. A good produced in one EU country would have to meet the same standards a similar good produced in another EU country. Many, particularly on the right of the Tory Party, are market liberalisers and de-regulationist at heart. The book *Britannia Unchained*, published in 2012, authors include present Foreign Secretary, Home Secretary and International Trade Secretary promoted a Thatcherite agenda with fewer employment laws and de-regulation. And in UK leaving the EU means that the hated 'hand' of Brussels can be lifted and de-regulation pushed forward. For many within the government, leaving the EU enables a combination of shifting from regulations from the EU to regulations designed within the UK ('taking back control') and slackening of regulations. And, it could be anticipated that the de-regulation agenda will be pursued in the employment laws and environmental protection.

*C. J. Polychroniou is a political scientist/political economist who has taught at numerous universities in Europe and the United States and has also worked at various research centers. He holds a PhD in Political Science from the University of Delaware and is author/editor of several books, including *Marxist Perspectives on Imperialism* (1991), *Perspectives and Issues in International Political Economy* (1992), *Socialism: Crisis and Renewal* (1993), *Discourse on Globalization and Democracy: Conversations With Leading Scholars of Our Time* (in Greek, 2001) and hundreds of articles and essays, many of which have been translated into scores of foreign languages. His latest book is a collection of interviews with Noam Chomsky titled [Optimism Over Despair: On Capitalism, Empire, and Social Change](#) (Haymarket Books, 2017).*