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1 Climate change propaganda scrutinized

Alarmism vs relativism

As probably most (if not all) of us who are interested in current matters know, the climate change debate comprises one of the most reluctantly accepted set of scientific ideas in recent decades. Here a number of issues seem striking. Firstly, when examining this debate from a distance, it is not completely sure that any warming still takes place, as recently colder temperatures have been recorded. Second, at any rate, the possible warming is not only contributed to CO₂ emissions, or even green-house gasses in total, but because of the activity of the sun. Thirdly, while this topic is still debated, critical papers do not pass the referee process of any scientific top journals, because the referees are always seconded from the IPCC favourable side – often members of IPCC themselves. This brings – or should bring – obvious credibility problems.

At the time of writing this, the *climate alarmism* has taken hysteric proportions for a few years. No, I am not only referring to academia, where these thoughts have been tossed around since 1980s, but actual real life processes underpinning business and politics. Climate activism has taken over all tiers of society and it is only extremely stubborn and brave naysayers who can show some scepticism. One feels that, despite the seeming consensus, this is still not an issue where the final word has been written. In this essay I summarise the reason why I think this is the case.

To give an example of a prominent climate change critic, Judith Curry (2019) argues for *climate relativism*. In her conclusions she distinguishes ‘... between the conceivable worst case, the possible worst case and the plausible worst case, each of which plays different roles in scientific research versus risk management.’ To give another example in this vein, a study by scientists Kauppinen and Malmi (2019) the increase in temperature is estimated to only 0.1% in hundred years, with only one tenth of that being caused by humans – so the increase in greenhouse gasses (see also Ollila, 2019). Here two viewpoints become legitimate. Evidently, climate resilience requires at least 20 years’ time scale and global cooperation; besides, the increase in greenhouse gasses is mainly accelerated by deforestation (e.g. Petrișor, 2015). So one could argue that this is not an urban issue to prioritise. As it is not caused within the urban realm, it logically cannot be efficiently fought from there either. Nevertheless, even so, the effect is harmful, and coordination between countries globally is required to abate this issue. So climate change both *is* and *is not* a serious problem to combat.

As it stands, IPCC have set their range of increase in temperature as high as 2-5 degrees C, whereas Kauppinen and Malmi estimate the same range as 0.15-0.24. This is a twenty-fold difference – both cannot be correct. The study by Kauppinen and Malmi has indeed a compelling argument: changes in the sun activity reduce the cloud coverage, which in turn reduces the greenhouse effect, and subsequently, via feedback loops, leads to smaller increases in temperature than what IPCC has predicted. And human influence (deforestation, traffic, urbanisation etc) here is minuscule. At the same time, we know that IPCC is political, representing a green and left of centre view. It may be possible that majority of IPCC researchers even know that their estimates are exaggerated, but they are too scared to raise

their voice in fear of losing lucrative funding. In fact, reliable evidence shows the discrepancy between forecasted and actual temperatures (see Clutz, 2015).

The discrepancy between what IPCC claims and reality (i.e. what science knows) really is incredible. Especially, the role of CO₂ seems the source of most of the controversy here. At any rate, the contribution of water vapour exceeds that of CO₂ considerably. The biggest misconception concerns the premises of IPCC computations with respect to the length of the residency time of CO₂: according to IPCC it is at least one hundred years, whereas in reality, this period is 5 to 7 years only, after which it is cycled back through natural routes. (See Watts, 2019).

Here is also another, more overlooked issue involved. Given the strong track record of fossil fuels in being trigger of huge leaps in human developments, how wise can it be to begin a massive transition away from this energy source? Is it sensible to give up on something that has worked for 200-300 years, in lieu of something we have not tested yet? So indeed it can be argued that the replacement of fossil fuels with renewals is unwise. (White 2014)

The overall problem here is nevertheless overpopulation, in particular in Third World cities. That, however, is a *tabu* subject these days. *Woke* establishments are too scared of recognising that kind of truly ‘inconvenient truth’ considering the favourable stance towards mass immigration. The *woke* left need voters and the neoliberal centre-right elite need cheap labour. And, in the name of intersectionality and white privilege, feminists need the white middle aged working class or lower middle class normal male to blame. The key arguments below can be fleshed out so as to make the connection of what actually is going on in this dystopic hegemony called climate change. The discussion will reiterate the points above carefully beginning with the natural logic and moving to the human agency issues after that. We humans, we are fallible.

Propaganda vs. reality

So the evidence above is sufficient to establish that, depending on the selected timescale, the climate is indeed getting warmer, although a smaller figure than what is officially given by IPCC and related cast. Every summer ice melts around the poles, and every winter it increases and spreads again. Every year is different. There are cycles of warm periods and cycles of ice ages. To give an example, in Chaucer’s *Canterbury Tales*, 17th century England was suitable for wine making. And only a few centuries before that we had a minor ice age in Europe. The Earth has existed for millions of years and the climate temperatures have always varied drastically. This is long before humans invented coal burning.

We cannot say that the last 250 years have changed the results of what has happened before that in the few billion years, the Earth has existed. That really is naïve. Nevertheless, this has been now the climate religion since around late 90s in *woke* circles, and since last ten years even in relatively ‘normie’ circles. As already noted, humans have the means to do some alterations in the process, in particular, through deforestation, but that is all a minuscule effect, considering the total picture. (cf. Ollila, 2019)

However, lots of vested interests are at stake here.¹ Most (if not all) western academic institutions, European Union, United Nations led IPCC, US Democratic party, Hollywood (apart from a small number of exceptions), and other *woke* left leaning mega actors such as

¹ This is indeed true on both sides of the debate, but let us focus here on the alarmist side, as the opposite viewpoint is already well covered.

Facebook, Google and Starbucks believe in this dogma. This is something that never is criticized or questioned; it truly is comparable with a religion. In particular, it would be unwise for academic researchers to apply for funding these days without making at link to this necessary belief system.²

The human fallibility involved can, however, be explained by experimental setups where anchorage effects and conforming to the majority viewpoint is being targeted. It is, in fact, pure social psychology that this supposed consensus of the alarmists dominates – it is propagated more, and people do not want to be different. That 97% of scientists are said to support the consensus does not mean that (a) this high share of them actually support it, or that (b) the alleged natural processes actually even occur. This is just a way of framing the view in such a way that it maximises the lay support. The infamous Solomon Asch experiment in early 1950s USA serves here as a warning: the finding being that people want to conform to the most widespread views, in order to feel included in the formally necessary social circles: in 1950s USA anti-communist McCarthyism, and now it is leftist *wokeness* (McLeod, 2018). Nobody with career, income and social networks to lose ever wants to risk being subject of a witch-hunt. (Or some actually do, but it takes massive courage.)

In this case, the overall story of discovery of the few sensible ones also comes with a personal anecdote. This I discovered this myself when working at a university with teaching position (this was in Norway). Namely, I noticed that some of my colleges, who were post structural human geographers, and incapable of counting to ten, pretended to be experts. After being asked about my own stance, I decided to ‘spill the beans’. So I said that I am a lay person, and hence, on the fence here in these religion-like disputes, but, the more I hear, the more I begin rooting for the underdog. Needless to say, from that moment onwards I was being ridiculed by colleagues left, right and centre. However, one should not give up that easily, if you feel you are right. So the fight continues.

As I am writing this, the Corona virus rolls over Europe and large swaths of the rest of the world. This puts things in perspective.³ In contrast to the alleged climate change processes which would take several decades, the virus spreads rapidly – each day new cases of contamination being discovered. In this horrible situation, what is interesting is the relative disappearance of the climate change debate now that a real problem knocks on our door. Unfortunately, it might need a serious crisis such as the Corona virus epidemy to arrive at a moment of truth. We are suddenly confronted with a new reality.

What it means is a need to prioritize things. What are the real problems and what would an urgent response be? A virus can kill people quickly – climate change does not have such an effect. At that point then ‘talking heads’ tend to forget about issues they were so concerned about only a short time ago. Was posing as expert justifiable to gain publicity and power, rather than having any solid knowledge of the situation? The current dogma of climate change demonstrates this perfectly. Fortunately, individual people and private sector alike are still capable of acting rationally when it really matters.

References

² I should know as an experienced academic researcher myself.

³ My mum is 80 years old, but she is not worried: after all, she survived the war. Mum is tough. In general, *wokeness* Millennial snowflakes are not.

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