

**Australian Senate's  
Inquiry into Australians Expatriates**

**A personal submission  
To  
The Australian Senate  
Legal and Constitutional References Committee**

*By: Dr Massimo-F. Buonaiuto*

**Greater Bangkok,  
Thailand.  
20th of February 2004.**

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## **Inquiry into Australians Expatriates**

### **A personal submission**

By: *Dr Massimo-F. Buonaiuto*  
Thailand.  
Date: 20th of February 2004.

#### **0. Preamble**

**0.1.** The writer respectfully submits that what follows is the synthesis of actual experiences he had undergone and had witnessed in Australia since his arrival in 1973 and throughout the 1980s and until the end of 1991 in Western Australia.

The members of this honourable Committee may find this submission too hard. The writer respectfully points out that he does not care a whit: they may accept or reject the submission as they may choose, but the facts and opinions reported in it are not subject to change: they are based on actual direct and witnessed experience and accurately reported to the best of the writer's knowledge, analysis and belief.

**0.2.** It should be said that, when the writer received the circular email on the Australian Diaspora from the Embassy, he was not surprised. As far as he knows, from the mid-1980s to 1991 – when he escaped from Western Australia as an economic refugee – migrant professionals had regularly warned State and Federal politicians of the brains and skills drain that the employers' practices and government's policies were going to cause.

Of course, the said Australian politicians and bureaucrats of that time knew better than '*ignorant migrants*', whose countries had experienced similar situations a number of times in their long history. Therefore, their warnings were ignored and dismissed.

To exacerbate the plight of unemployed migrant professionals, their families found extreme difficulty in understanding the sophisticated reasoning of the Australian public services and private sector in preferring semi-illiterate school leavers and newly graduates over applicants with skills, experience and maturity. For instance, an Asian PhD would occupy an important position in his/her own country and have his/her career already mapped. In Europe, he or she would just be snapped up.

Many families of European professionals were, and they are still to date, baffled. Parents, relatives and spouses, mostly wives, very frequently belong to the established intelligentsia of very old civilized countries. Therefore, they could not and cannot understand the subtle reasoning and '*the advanced requirements of modern dynamic societies such as Australia*' and, even less, the stance of the Australian Public Services of preferring 3-year-old mental idiots over PhDs for appointments<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> This was admitted to the writer in a telephone conversation by an officer of the then WA Public Service Commission in the late 1980s. In the mid 1990s, a similar statement was reported in one of the two English newspapers in Bangkok by a letter of an expatriate from the Eastern States.

This may suggest that such an employment policy was then widespread in the various Public Services. The writer also suspects that, like in his case, the officers never realized how such statements reflect upon themselves and their colleagues.

Furthermore, in fighting his own case against the WA Public Service Commission, the writer came across a paper by the said Commission on the so much touted role of *merit* in appointments and careers. Such a paper makes a very interesting reading since it shows how *merit* becomes a very relative concept liable to be twisted and used at the Public Service's convenience to preserve its "system". That is, *merit is only what constitutes merit in the eyes of the beholder*: such *merit* does not stem from proven achievements. Therefore,

One should though understand: according to the average Australian, Asia and Europe are not as civilized as ‘Downunder’ is, are they?

After he read the announcement, the writer’s first reaction was to dismiss it: the approach inferred by the Committee’s Terms of References and by the watered down statistics given are very suggestive of yet another lukewarm cosmetic action by bureaucrats and politicians that refuse to acknowledge a crisis, pretend to remedy it without finding and resolving its causes, and try to hide reality covering it with false rosy pictures.

The writer is however, always thorough in all things: in checking the websites threads dealing with the diaspora, he found several racist comments and letters in the “blaming-the-victim” and “blaming-the-neutral” style from expatriates who try to relieve their frustrations by accusing migrants to be somehow at the roots of the diaspora – which is clearly as fallacious as it is full of prejudices.

Therefore, he decided to present a submission to this honourable Committee so that there would be at least one voice breaking a lance or two in the defence of professionals, both migrant and Anglo-Celtic, since both are the common targets of the rooted anti-intellectual prejudices of both bureaucrats and politicians.

## **1. The writer’s professional career in Australia: a brief history.**

**1.1.** The writer arrived in 1973 in Australia to undertake palaeontological research as PhD candidate at Adelaide University holding already a *Laurea* in Geological Sciences (equivalent in content to a Master) of the University of Studies in Milan and the Italian Ministry of Education equivalent of a Diploma of Education.

During his PhD research, the writer published three papers and produced two internal reports for the SA Department of Mines: all on very poorly known topics and throwing light on geological puzzles.

He got his PhD diploma in 1981. As an additional reward, he was not burned at the stake for finding and proving what local palaeontologists were unsuccessfully trying to determine with other fossils groups.

In his brief career in Mineral Exploration, he also achieved a record of finding anomalies of economic importance and in clarifying knotty geological problems with strong economic implications.

At the closure of all mineral exploration, unwittingly following a trend among European palaeontologists, he worked in the mid-1980s under the then WA Department of Conservation and Environment on the geological environmental aspects<sup>2</sup> of a 300km long tract of the Darling Scarp (WA) along the Swan Plains, with the usual knack of finding things. One of his supervisors charged him with efficiency and with the intention to do “a perfect job”. The writer’s reply was that in Geology there is not such a thing as a perfect job but only a good one since it greatly depends upon field data that always yield or represent partial information.

In 1993, in his short visit to Perth to see his children, he was told that five technical WA Departments and a special unit on Watershed Protection still used his report as *the* reference work.

After a long spell of unemployment, he found a job in “*The*” – later ‘conveniently’ downgraded to a mere “*a*” by the then WA Public Service Commission – *Special Land Tax Project* group under the WA Valuer General’s Office, where the group had the task to clear up maps and records of all subdivided land in WA and to update their taxable value.

Also in this job, the writer was accused of efficiency: because of his skills with maps, he found a very large number of errors in the Valuer General’s maps that had accumulated through the years. He answered to such complaints ironically that he had many years of experience in optical and electronic microscopy. But then he added seriously – to defuse the attempt to a misplaced defence, the real reason behind such complaints – that the revision of map errors was one of his group’s

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it became obvious why, in the Australian Public Services’ eyes, an idiot with the mind of a 3-year-old is invested with a merit greater by far than that conceded to a PhD.

<sup>2</sup> The investigation was part of a multidisciplinary study and the writer was the senior scientist of the team.

tasks and it did not matter the originator or the why of such errors: what did matter was to have all errors corrected.<sup>3</sup>

The group's work resulted in a revenue bumper crop of AUD 46m in the first year, just right in time and amount to plug the financial hole of the WA Teachers' Credit Society, the first published scandal of the WA Inc.

The initial annual increase in State revenue at the end of the two-year project was of AUD 5.75m. Subdividing equally the merit of the latter figure among the group, the writer's share of the increase was of about AUD 250,000.

All members of the group received their immediate reward: unemployment benefits from Social Security and no work references. Some were slowly re-employed: the few school-leavers and the women first. The writer, by far the most qualified of the group, remained unemployed.

In addition, the writer had his first annual report carefully 'revised' with liquid paper and with negative comments such as "obstructionism"<sup>4</sup>, as it results from his successive complaint with the WA Public Service.

That is apparently an old practice to stunt the careers of ethnic officers in most Public Services in Australia: one that the writer had come to know in SA in someone else's cases and had triggered his suspicions in WA leading to the discovery that he received the same treatment.

**1.2.** For the purposes of this submission, it necessary now to underline that, during his unemployment spells, the writer, always community minded, served also as contract interpreter under the TIS for medical, social security and legal cases until he left Australia.

## **2. The writer's reasons and time of escape from Australia.**

### **2.1. Conditions leading to the writer's escape**

In the last quarter of the 1980s, the writer found himself falling into the categories (the infamous deadly 6 *O*'s) held then as terminal handicaps in getting a job:

- a) *O*ver-qualified (read: newly graduates and school-leavers, only, please);
- b) *O*ver-experienced (read: no or less than six month experience preferred);
- c) *O*ver 35 years (read: mature unemployed are too old to stand the work pressure of the Public Service – published statement in the WA Public Service newsletter, about '86 or '87<sup>5</sup>).
- d) *O*f the *O*ther sex (in that period, the WA Sunday Mail revealed that of 11,000 jobs advertised in the month before, 10,500 (95.5%) went to women. The very next day, a Monday, the West Australian announced that the then Minister of Employment was opening an office "to assist women" to get a job.
- e) *O*verseas origin; and, therefore,
- f) *O*ver the hill.

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<sup>3</sup> The charges of perfect job and efficiency were of course not formalized but, of course, were in practice held against the writer under various labels and comments. Naturally, his were not the only cases but the only ones of which the writer has direct knowledge.

<sup>4</sup> For a period, the group received a lot of duplicated data that had been already processed. There were complaints from the supervisors that team did not processed them again, pretending that they were new data. As the team was then mostly formed by mature unemployed professionals, very precise in their work, they saw it as a useless time-wasting exercise. Further, the work entailed checking on the active, updated data and maps in the hands of the valuers. Therefore, there were complaints from some valuers that the team was interfering with their work. As the most qualified of the group, the writer ended to be the scapegoat.

<sup>5</sup> After so many years, the writer does not recollect the exact title and date of the publication but he knows the author of the statement. In the case of the Land Tax Project, conforming to the appointment policy of the times, two groups of school leavers and young unemployed were first appointed. As the Project was under firm time restraints and deadline, they were soon reshuffled to some other position. At the end of the first week, a surprised supervisor noted that the team, of which the writer was part, had a total output individually higher than that of the two previous teams all together.

Handicaps (a) and (b) are today considered the most short-sighted and obtuse managerial fallacies as they are destructive of those human reserves that create, not just make, work and that are necessary to a country to survive in the present economic climate.

Handicap (c) prevents any on-the-job transfer of skills to the younger working generations.

Handicap (d) would not be so if fairly and equitably applied. Unfortunately, not only it has created a state of reverse discrimination but it has also led to the disintegration of many families through economic stresses: divorces from working wives unwilling to support unemployed husbands (from a 1980s transaction psychology research in WA promptly ignored by the high ranks of the C'wealth Department of Employment) or just from economic distress, with loss of homes under mortgage, leaving the adult children bewildered and the young ones headed for the streets.

Handicap (e) is highlighted by an interesting picture. By 1991, migrants and ethnics represented 95% of the unemployed professionals. To remedy the situation, the C'wealth Department of Employment renamed the Professional Employment Service (PES) as Migrant Special Services (MSS) and transferred the residual 5% of Anglo-Celtic unemployed to the CES, which was not equipped to handle them properly<sup>6</sup>.

It should be underlined that at that time the only difference between Anglo-Celtic and migrant professionals was a damning extra *O*, the (e) one, for the latter.

## 2.2. Time of escape from Australia

As:

- a) He had long realized that all the above handicaps placed him squarely in the category 'over the hill' [(f) above],
- b) The WA Public Service Commission persistently refused to redress his case in order to protect the senior officers involved,
- c) He had become a Social Security statistic and had therefore been dubbed one of those many "ethnic dole bludgers exploiting Australia's generosity,"
- d) He could not get any job whatsoever even as a cleaner in a butcher shop because the owner wanted only teenagers,
- e) Politicians kept accusing ethnics to be responsible for the high rates of unemployment in order to divert the public attention from their failure in economic and employment policies and from the scandals of the various *Inc's* that plagued many States at that time<sup>7</sup>.
- f) Late in 1991, he was forced to sell his house,

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<sup>6</sup> Characteristic of those times was the fact that, when the writer rang the relevant Minister's electoral office in Fremantle to protest because the change was discriminatory and liable to create strife, the Minister (ALP) told him that he should contact Social Security, being it a matter relevant to migrants. When the writer pointed out that, until that morning, the MSS officers were the same PES officers of the day before and that all of them believed to be still under him, there was only silence on the other end of the line.

It should also be added that, in early 1992, in Bangkok's English newspapers, a 'visa service company' advertised daily that Australia needed professionals. The writer rang the Embassy and pointed out that advertisement was misleading and he would have informed the parliamentarians he was in contact with about it. The advertisement disappeared the day after the writer's phone call and never reappeared for long time. As overseas professionals bring into Australia their own money and receive higher wages, that episode gave further support to the then widespread suspicion among migrant professionals that such attempts to recruit them were only to feed business to such as real estate agents and to such as domestic appliance and car salesmen, since there was only a poor chance for newly arrived professionals to get actually a proper job.

<sup>7</sup> Politicians at that time wore so many different shoes on the same foot with different groups of voters that reduced *coturnus* (Latin: a shoe that fit on either foot), a timeless term of contempt, to a mere euphemism. Such behaviour increased the danger of intercommunity strife and, in effect, encouraged an increased activity of the Anglo-Celtic racist fringe, particularly in WA. Consistently, when the WA Inc. scandals were exposed, a certain WA ALP senator tried to throw the fault on the ethnics until it was pointed out to him that, of all names floating around, none of them suggested non-Anglo-Celtic origins. Then, he started to call 'spivs' those whom he had hailed as folk heroes until the day before.

It is to point out that the so-called anti-discrimination laws in WA were introduced in the late 1980s only in order to appease Asian investors who were not impressed by the wave of racist violence there. The laws however were designed to be just a Mickey-Mouse token and to target only a particularly obnoxious racist group that until then had been allowed to operate undisturbed.

the writer escaped to Thailand, his wife's country, as one of the many economic refugees, at the end of the same year (1991).

### **2.3. Background of the decision: discrimination<sup>8</sup>**

The decision to escape Australia was not taken in the spur of the moment but as the outcome of other negative experiences and of a general climate persistently hostile to mature unemployed.

It should be pointed out that in the writer's rare job interviews, the interviewers purposefully shifted the overall weight of the job specifications on those of minor importance and, particularly, on those the writer had less experience, or introduced new ones to the same effect<sup>9</sup>.

In the Public Service, another trick was that a department declared its own contract employees as 'indispensable' so that they had no chances to be appointed to permanent positions in another department: at the end of the contract, such employees were of course dumped.

A third trick, common to all sectors, was to select the 'overqualified' – among which the writer – and the 'under-qualified' applicants for job interviews so that the choice of the appointee already pre-selected could be and appeared to be justified.

The limits of effrontery were reached during a job interview when the writer's PhD qualifications were rejected because they were from Adelaide and not from a WA university.

In another, employment in a University was reportedly refused on the grounds that the writer "would change things".

"Things" was a course that had remained the same for forty years, notwithstanding several fundamental advances in its field – an attitude common to other specializations in WA and elsewhere in Australia.

Furthermore, any significant "change" could have been introduced only after a few years (3 or 4) and in consultation with the other lecturers to maintain consistency with the general program and to integrate such changes with related courses.

Both as unemployed and as Italian-English interpreter for social security cases, the writer had also observed the gradual deterioration of DSS services directed to unemployed and invalidity cases throughout the end of the 1980s in contrast with the increasing disappearance of the chronic "dole-bludgers" into the mass of unemployed professionals. Such deterioration took many forms, of which, in this opinion, five were the worst:

- 1- Transferring unemployed into different categories on specious grounds by orders from the above "to improve unemployment figures" then considered politically too high.
- 2- Writing distorted versions of statements of unemployed and of applicants to invalidity pensions.
- 3- Lack of transparency and blurring DSS decisional processes.
- 4- Increased stropy and unhelpful behaviour of some DSS counter staff toward their "clients".
- 5- Imposing requirements very difficult or impossible to fulfil or creating further hardships to unemployed just when unemployment was at its peak in the late 1980s.

Forms (1) and (5) were clearly politically imposed by the very highest level. About (1), when queried by the writer in his interpreter's role, some of the DSS staff expressed fear of punishment if they did not succeed in bringing about such category transfers. In form (4), for instance, an officer

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<sup>8</sup> An interesting pamphlet by the Catholic Church in SE Asia places racism as a synonym of discrimination in that racism is one of the many fallacious grounds on which discrimination operates. Considering that the Australian State and Federal parliaments have been prevaricating about such grounds and that many Australians like to create confusion between the positive/neutral and the negative meanings of the word, *discrimination* is here used in the defined negative meaning of: *the practice or an instance of making fallacious, unjust and prejudicial distinctions against people on grounds of race, colour, sex, social status, age, etc.; an unjust or prejudicial distinction* (Oxford English Dictionary). It should be underlined that the list of said grounds is *exemplary* and *not exhaustive*. See also **Appendix D** for further refinement of the concepts of prejudices and discrimination. It is to note that some letters from expatriates from Eastern Australia, published in Bangkok during the Hanson and 'Hanson Man' Debates, suggest that racism may now be part of the Australian Anglo-Celtic genetic makeup.

<sup>9</sup> Such practices have also arrived to Thailand, through Anglo-American influence – see: published letter in **Appendix A**, which gives a perspicacious description of them.

tried to shift her failure to find the writer's file on the writer himself, although the file was held and handled by DSS officers exclusively.

Forms (2), (3) and (4) are closely linked and associated with increasing deterioration in staff quality and ability as suggested by inferior literacy. The writer experienced and witnessed forms (2) and (3) in the following instances:

- i- a DSS officer trying to force an Italian linesman, just invalidated, to resume work as linesman notwithstanding medical reports to the contrary, notwithstanding the support and presence of a Telecom Union representative, and notwithstanding the protests of the invalid through the interpreter (the writer). The interpreter pointed out several damaging inconsistencies in the officer's transcription of the invalid linesman's verbal statement. Both the Unionist and the interpreter had to insist upon a proper revision.
- ii- An officer at DSS counter, a subordinate of the above officer, attempted to do the same to the writer a few weeks later<sup>10</sup>. Both that officer and his superior were extremely upset when the writer took the statement and corrected it until the text reflected his verbal deposition correctly<sup>11</sup>.
- iii- Following a road accident in which the writer was knocked down and injured by a car while crossing a street on foot, the writer declared to DSS to have received an agreed sum *in reparation* of the injuries he had suffered. The DSS tried to pass the sum as *compensation* although there is a very clear distinction between the two in Australian Law. Further, the writer's deposition was critically and systematically misrepresented by the DSS panel in its report. His was not the only case but a very common one.
- iv- Very recently, the writer sent an email inquiry to Centrelink about an invalidity pension after he had a cerebral stroke in September 2001 as a consequence of a series of continuous stresses that have their direct ultimate roots in the discrimination suffered in WA. On the first attempt two years ago, an officer replied that he could not understand what the inquiry was about. Last year, on the second attempt based on the same initial email, Centrelink rejected it basing its decision on poorly defined grounds, bypassing completely a number of points the writer had raised, in particular: that the *present regulations create a state of discrimination between (a) Australians citizens living in Australia, (b) Australian citizens living in countries with which Australia has bilateral agreements on Social Security, and (c) Australian citizens living in countries without bilateral agreements*. Such regulations exclude, for instance, all the many Australian living in SE Asia. To confuse the grounds of the writer's inquiry, they made a big play on the state of his citizenship, although they had received the data and the scanned copy in standard *jpg* format of the relevant certificate, among other identification documents and scanned copy of his passport – claiming that they could not open its attachment. However, as they had retrieved the exact dates of the writer's 1993 visit to Perth, they had enough data to verify also the writer's citizenship. The documentation received throughout the entire process shows that: (i) their decision making was a circular exercise lacking transparency; (ii) no breaking grounds were attempted to eliminate serious inconsistencies; (iii) incorrect information was transmitted to the applicant, denying him the right of legal assistance; and (iv) the entire process is a bureaucratic passing-the-buck upward, with the higher level confirming the lower level's decision. After 12 years of absence, the writer may rightfully state that nothing in DSS is changed or improved.

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<sup>10</sup> The writer interpreted for Italian migrants in many occasions at the same DSS branch where he was registered as unemployed. The staff dealing with him as unemployed never recognized him as the Italian TIS interpreter even of the day before – which gave a very illuminating insight on the behaviour of several DSS officers and on the reasons for it.

<sup>11</sup> That episode is still fresh in the writer's mind: in that occasion, he was carrying on his shoulders his son Marco, who was then 6- or 7-month old. Already the people queuing around were in such an ugly mood that made many, and the writer, nervous. When the officer at the counter was at his stroppiest, Marco on his own bat blew such a loud raspberry at him that he froze behind the counter. The writer promptly followed immediately with a loud wisecrack: "*Marco, in this place, you may not express an honest opinion.*" At that, the people queuing around them burst into laughs and a potential riot was defused.



The end of the 1980s and the earliest 1990s saw two absurd developments in DSS officers' behaviour.

The first was a blend of forms (4) and (5), almost as DSS was trying to prevent unemployed to seek jobs interstate or overseas and to punish those who 'escaped' unemployment by getting a job, as highlighted in the following episode.

*In 1991, the writer got a contract job as a Geologist in a drilling program in the Gnangara Forest star dune, just in the northern outskirts of Perth, and advised DSS of it as required. The job entailed his presence in the field 7-days/week, 10 hours/day plus travel and routine office work. One evening, he was contacted at home by an upset DSS officer, who demanded that the writer present himself at his DSS branch during office hours for an interview.*

*The writer replied that his contract kept him constantly in the field from early morning to late evening and the officer could find him in Gnangara Forest where the drilling rig was but that he could not indicate its precise spot as the rig moved four or more times a day in different locations. Alternatively, he could see the writer very late in the evening at home. The officer rejected both alternatives and, the day after, rang the writer's employer, who must have had other cases like that, as he defeated the arguments of the officer, whatever they were. What he told the writer about that conversation was enough to have jeopardized anyone's job with a less sympathetic and less smart employer. Still to date, the writer does not understand why the DSS was so upset in losing a "dole bludger".*

The second development consisted in trying to invalidate all applications for jobs in other states and overseas just when available jobs in WA were at their most scarce – which constantly placed in jeopardy the unemployment benefits, sorry, the dole of applicants fortnightly.

### **3. The writer's objectives since his arrival in Thailand**

The primary objective of leaving was to escape from Australia and to make a new life there. The writer for economic reasons and lack of job opportunities in his specializations has returned to teaching, has become a journalist – free lancing since the 1997 crisis, reaching the rank of editor. He has also published research papers on waste and resource management – and associated environmental aspects – and has extended geological models of classification and allocation to biomass and human resources and reserves. The paper in **Appendix C** is an extension of a research on natural resources<sup>12</sup> that goes back to the mid-1980s in the WA period but that could not be published then, primarily because it questioned and refuted the official practices and ideology of the times.

At present, there are only two compelling reasons, both personal, for returning to Australia but only for brief visits.

### **4. The writer's Family situation**

The writer's two children reside somewhere in Australia with his divorced wife.

Their current address is unknown thanks to the failure of the WA Family Court to enforce its own orders and to a rather incredible sentence of the Australian Family Court of Parramatta<sup>13</sup> (NSW).

The cause of divorce was essentially a long separation due to economic reasons, since the writer send back his children to Australia for both education and health reasons.

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<sup>12</sup> The writer was asked by the Environmental Geology Section of the WA Department of Mines to look into the issues of Natural Resources and Reserves since the initial concepts and thinking had been expanded from Mining Geology to other areas. Such developments have also brought about a sharp distinction between their inventory, allocation and management and they had to take into account waste management, utilization and recycling and all dynamic factors due to advances in technology.

<sup>13</sup> The writer does not know what to make of it: apart the absurdity of a comment at the foot of the sentence, his name was misspelled in three different instances. If the misspellings were not intended to show the real degree of attention given by the Court to men, they are enough to query the levels of literacy in such a Court.

Both his children are Australian citizens by birth and have the right to Italian citizenship: if they take it up, they will have the right to study, move and work freely throughout the European Union. His ex-wife, Thai by birth, has assumed Australian citizenship after the birth of the writer's daughter sometimes in the mid 1990s.

While the writer has no opinion of the two Family Courts, he would like to point out that whatever costs the Government may incur in the upbringing of the writer's children, it will be a minimal fraction of the direct and indirect revenues it derived and still derives from the writer's work in WA and elsewhere and an infinitesimal fraction of the damage inflicted to the writer and his family by not respecting and protecting his rights.

The Committee may laugh at this statement and consider it preposterous: in fact, it is expected that it will be as it was by their colleagues of both parties in WA<sup>14</sup>.

Considering however the general situation in WA in the 1980s, the writer is however very likely to be one of the many that would be fully justified in making such a claim<sup>15</sup>.

Of course, behind such claims, there is the very trifling issue of negligence in the general and specific duties of care by State and Commonwealth Governments and politicians: but that is only just one of the common rules at the foundation of any civilized society. So, why there should any ado be made in Australia for it?

## **5. Impact of anti-intellectual policies and practices in Australia.**

Practically since his arrival in Australia, the writer has noticed how anti-intellectual attitudes<sup>16</sup> are deeply rooted in the Australian psyche, intimately associated as they are with an equally deep inverted snobbery against the intelligentsia.

As the writer's background is of a society that encourages the most capable and the most intelligent, he was – and he is still – amazed to see a nation with such resources and potential to relegate its best talents at the fringe of the private and public sectors and to uphold its most regressive and misonicist elements, just when Europe – and the UK in particular, whose failed policies seem to represent the eternal model Australian governments adopt for theirs – had started to realize the need of higher and higher technical skills and literacy to combat economic downturns, unemployment and international market competition. Although disrupted by a series of political interferences and by the present global recession, the trend is still identifiable.

But, education policies in Australia and around the world from the 1960s to the 1990s have created a time lag and a gap in training human reserves at the needed levels. Thus, UK companies were forced a few years ago into re-employing the same mature employees they had retrenched since the new generations were inadequate to cope with the productivity demanded by the new global market. Thus, they basically ended in creating a bank of 'grey power' brains. For similar reasons, Thailand has followed suit very recently. Automatically, all positions that local talents could not fill were and are covered by imported skills, such as those from Australia.

In Australia, the current anti-intellectual drive started with the 1976 Anderson Report – prepared and compiled to support and force the contraction of Universities for the following thirty years or so – and with the first, failed, attempt to impose tuition fees gradually at all Tertiary levels. The second attempt was partly successful under the last Fraser Government. All other changes for the worse were successfully implemented by the following ALP governments and boosted by a later

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<sup>14</sup> Actually, it was phenomenal the constant impression received by the writer that he and his team-mates should not have expected any other reward but a bent-penny handshake and unemployment benefits after the completion of their work in the Special Land Tax Project, the only government initiative in those years that was completed within its deadline and ensured extra revenue to the WA State coffers instead of throwing it out the window by the millions.

<sup>15</sup> However, one should not be overly critical of the Australian governments of the last quarter of a century. Not all of their community programs were failures. On the contrary, two of their initiatives did achieve great success indeed: *the unemployment drive* and *the equal distribution of poverty*.

<sup>16</sup> Such attitudes do not stand alone but are part of a set of prejudices common to minds of poor or no education, flexibility, tolerance and vision. See: **Allport, G.W.** (1958). *The Nature of Prejudice*. (Doubleday Anchor: New York), 496 pp. – a classic study, old but still valid particularly for Australia. See also:

**Appendix D.**

Wren Report on Tertiary Education that was drafted in such a way to support its fallacious working hypotheses<sup>17</sup>. Neither report took into consideration the trends toward a much better educated workforce of higher skills that were already perceived around the world. For instance – one of the many, India has today become foremost in software design and programming and many US companies from Silicon Valley are now moving there. Thailand shows a similar trend by trying to import Indian specialists to bridge the present know-how gap. China is again rising as intellectual powerhouse.

As the range of fiscal impositions on the Tertiary system widened and tuition fees increased, the number of brains and skills escaping from Australia increased and accelerated in the mid-1980s under the present economic recession, under the shortsighted employment practices allowed and fostered by the policies of then State and Federal Governments. The writer's and other cases described herein closely reflect those times.

To understand the drain, it is respectfully suggested that this Committee should take into consideration the nature of a researcher and of his professional equivalent. If to achieve a basic academic degree is reason of personal pride, it is more so in those who have qualified for higher degrees as they identify themselves not with the degree *per se* but with the skills achieved with their research work and with their research itself, which they carry out frequently beyond their degree.

Because of inverted snobbism and prejudices, they are often dubbed by many Australians as '*academically arrogant backroom bosses*'. However, that is not arrogance. It is pride stemming from the sense of what they have actually achieved: a pride that give them confidence in undertaking more difficult research work, in completing new tasks and in their ability to reach quickly valid conclusions and solve problems.

True arrogance is in claiming undeserved merit and status from achievements that have been inflated or never made.<sup>18</sup>

Furthermore, many researchers give a higher priority to their studies over their earnings: up to a certain point of course, that is, when family pressures and survival become telling factors.

Thus, by the late 1970s, Social Security unemployment benefits became increasingly a major source of funds for advanced research by those '*dole bludgers*', while universities and other institutions faced an increasing freezing of staff positions with consequent reduction of activities<sup>19</sup>.

Eventually, the worsening of job opportunities forced unemployed researchers to look for a job overseas, where they were simply snapped up. Of course, their expertise and advanced knowledge went with them.

The general disinclination of entrepreneurs and financing bodies to develop new industries and their strong penchant for a '*fast buck*', sorry, for the highest return for their very short term investments, contributed not little to that form of brain drain.

Similar fate occurred to a lot of advanced intellectual property: fully developed in Australia but never exploited for lack of interest in establishing new permanent industries, it was sold overseas to benefit foreign industries and to allow them to develop their markets and sell Australian technologies back to Australia: at much higher price, of course.

These facts are not new and should be very well known to this Committee: it is proper however to remind it of them since they are integral part of the background causes leading to the diaspora.

It should also be mentioned for a more complete picture that a Flinders University's study in the mid- 1980s<sup>20</sup> revealed a general deterioration of the state of health in the long term unemployed,

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<sup>17</sup> When the writer read the Wren Report, he judged the working hypotheses and the rest of the paper as an appalling circular exercise in obtuse prejudices, closely reflecting the Government's drive to the cretinization (dumbing down) of the working class and of the general population and to the extinction of the Australian middle class and intelligentsia. Now, this Senate Committee is actually looking at the outcomes of that drive.

<sup>18</sup> The current social practices in inverted snobbism fit into the Japanese historians' word *gekokuujō*, which can be translated into Australian terms, and not just for the purposes of this inquiry, as "the *intellectual* low oppress the high," that is, in all Australian heavens, arrogant mediocrity is the virtue to be exalted. Yet, such practices are more savage and destructive of a society than simple assassinations (see also footnote 21 here below).

<sup>19</sup> By 1978-79, Adelaide University alone suffered a freeze in staff equivalent to AUD 1million p.a. in salaries.

professional and not, stuck in Australia. At the same time, the Government was putting pressure on the doctors not to “over-service” patients to contain the rising costs of Medicare.

In substance, *Government policies and practices of the Public and Private Sectors concurred synergistically against mature professionals to create that climate of systemic and psychological hostility that was already defined by European and British jurists as leading to “human degradation”*<sup>21</sup>.

It should be underlined to this Committee that the intelligentsia and the professional classes can be easily destroyed in much less than one or two decades but it takes 150-200 years and the right conditions to rebuild them (see Appendix D, footnote 33, p. 30).

## **6. Overseas professionals in Australia**

### **6.1. Australian perceptions and attitudes toward foreign professionals**

The issue of foreign skills is frequently coloured by racist or, at best, xenophobic overtones in the importing countries, even when they are necessary to sustain the economy and to develop the country’s scientific, industrial and organizational know-how and technology and when the local human reserves are insufficient and inadequate to the needs of the day.

Thus, highly skilled professionals are viewed as gate-crashing intruders and receive a treatment akin to that meted out to the imported skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workforce in both the social and working spheres, that is, treated no better than scab labour or glorified company fodder to be sacked, sorry, rationalized at the first hint of a downturn and to be re-employed as late as possible.

### **6.2. Australian attitudes to overseas degrees**

One of the immediate problems a professional faces is the issue of recognition of overseas degrees – especially those from without the Anglo-Saxon sphere.

The competent academic authorities are both misinformed and disinclined to give a proper evaluation and weight to such degrees<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> In this, like in other instances, the writer cannot supply precise bibliographic references, which mostly have remained in Perth libraries but he strives to give enough indications so that they can be retrieved fairly easily.

<sup>21</sup> The relevant book was found and should still be in the Law Library of the University of Western Australia. It should be noted also that systemic psychological violence, such as racism and discrimination, is more harmful to targeted individuals than a physical one because it is mostly indirect and at a safe distance: therefore, there is little individual defence against it. The writer noted several instances of migrant professionals under constant mental stress from cumulative frustrations due solely to a hostile working environment.

<sup>22</sup> The writer served an academic year (1975-76) on the Board of Research Studies, the Adelaide University’s committee in charge of PhD candidates. During that period, two cases occurred in which the officer in charge of foreign degrees’ recognition committed two highly embarrassing misvaluations.

The former was to downgrade a Diploma in Chemistry from the University in Zurich (Switzerland), one of the world top five in Chemistry, to a high school certificate just because the German name of the Institute translated literally into English as *High School*. The Vice-Chancellor of that time was a chemist himself and the spouse of the Diploma holder, a PhD from the same Institute, was doing research at Adelaide University under a fellowship (exchange?) scheme. Metaphorically speaking, at hearing of it, the president of the Swiss Graduates Association left a hole in the ceiling of his office and the Vice-Chancellor sunk through three floors.

The latter, at one sitting of the Board, the same officer presented insufficient documentation on a *Laurea* (equivalent in content to a Master Degree) from Bologna, the oldest University in Europe (800-1000AD to date) and other Continental European degrees, already verified by the Australian Embassies in the countries of origin of the candidates. Some members the Board, all Australian professors, queried such degrees and showed that they did not know anything about them although they had visited departments and kept regular correspondence with lecturers and researchers of the very same Universities that had issued them.

Such mistakes could have been easily avoided if the officer had bothered to do his own homework and to consult or to make available to the Board the directory of the world Tertiary Institutions, then at its 25<sup>th</sup> edition [*The World of Learning*, 2 vols, (Europa Publ.: London)].

Of course, Australian degrees are recognized throughout the Anglo-Saxon sphere of influence. Outside it, if they are not legally recognized, they are at least acknowledged by courtesy because of the widespread custom to look at what their content and substance, not their names, indicate. Such a custom and such an elementary courtesy are however generally absent in Australia<sup>23</sup>.

### **6.3. Reasons for professionals to move to another country.**

The reasons why professionals, scientists and scholars move to other countries than their own are more complex than just economic migration.

In periods of economic downturn, high unemployment and oversupply of skills or in countries where anti-intellectual attitudes prevail – Australian is not the only case – they may be forced to emigrate [see section (5) above] but it is the continuation of a very old instinctive pattern that dictates their choice of a new country, particularly if it is one that wants or needs them.

Some of them keep moving from one country to another until they chose a permanent base or return home. Some remain in the new country and establish new careers and lives there.

Personal and economic factors play an important role in their choices, of course: their families have to live too on something more solid than air. They however follow the natural impulses of their profession and work: either to hone further their skills through different experiences; or, to seek new knowledge through exchange of ideas; or, in the style of the scholars errant of old, to seek places and positions to continue studies and research beyond those started in their own countries and thus to gain new knowledge. The last was the writer's initial motive.

### **6.4. Benefits to a country from foreign professionals.**

**6.4.1** This section is perforce qualitative: it takes the resources and the tools available to a government to give it concreteness by quantification in terms of numbers, skills and monetary value.

It would in effect represent a good exercise for this Committee and for the Federal and State Governments to do so starting from the 1960s' process of dismantlement of the Australian secondary sector, a major source of employment and of development of domestic and export markets<sup>24</sup>: particularly since there have already been some investigative analyses by the Australian media.

Therefore, this section is based on the writer's experience and has only the aim to indicate areas which this Committee might feel the need to investigate and quantify them in terms of cost, benefits and losses of intellectual skills and of intellectual property, their main product - expertise, know-how, and technology:

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<sup>23</sup> However, it seems that the Australian Government is actually the one that does not recognize PhD degrees from Australian institutions. When the writer made his first passport, as he envisaged going to Philippines for a mineral exploration project, he asked the Australian Consulate in Perth to note in it that he was a PhD in Geology, to abide by Philippines' regulations regarding his profession. Although the diploma was presented in original, the officer at the Consulate replied that *no foreign words* (PhD) and no titles were allowed in Australian passports. Such a practice still continues today. For the WA rejection of degrees from other Australian states, please see: (2.3.), p. 7, 5th paragraph.

It should be added that for those who come from countries in which all degrees have a legal status and automatically confer professional and academic titles, such an attitude and such a lack of courtesy carry very strong insulting overtones.

<sup>24</sup> The writer noticed that, still in the late 1970s, there was a one-way colonial economic mentality pervasive in both Public and Private Sectors. According to it and some post-WWII economy textbooks supporting it, it was cheaper for colonies (i.e.: Australia) to provide raw materials to the colonizing country so that the colonizing country could, and should, provide its colonies with finished products. Such a mentality has contributed not little to the present economic downturn, as imported goods became much cheaper, of better quality and of larger range than those made in Australia. The much feared entrance of China into today's world scene has thus found an Australia totally unprepared to compete with her both in the domestic and world markets, because *Australia has not* the industrial capability, the infrastructures and *the human reserves* necessary to cope with China's competition, in stark contrast to those that such as Europe, India, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the US have.

- i – (a) to outline the benefits that Australia could have gained through full utilization of imported skills, and (b) to indicate automatically the present benefits from the Australian brain drain accrued by other countries;
- ii – to define some of the basic areas that should be looked into .

**6.4.2.** The benefits to have professionals from other countries appear of little monetary value – the Australian standard measure for everything – only at the first glance.

Initially, they may be intangible when they introduce ideas, know-how and approaches to problem solving new to Australia at a conceptual level.

They may also have a seminal role by triggering new ideas through the integration and elaboration of their know-how with the existing Australian one.

However, such intangible benefits become a source of work and revenue as soon they start to be translated into practical and technological applications.

Another set of benefits comes from the linguistic skills that such professionals possess and that allow obtaining important information from a greater number of sources: high quality and critical information is not published solely in English. The literature in certain fields may be almost exclusively in any other European or Asian languages. Given that today's it touted as the Age of Information, the benefits of knowing more than one language have become more and more obvious.

*In this particular aspect, the writer's experience may be indicative. His linguistic skills reflect those of his generation: bilingual in Italian and English, he can read French and Spanish and he is further helped by a solid Grammar School background in Greek and Latin.*

*During his PhD, he had about ten times the sources available to his Australian monolingual colleagues and he often helped them and other postgraduates from other departments by translating foreign scientific articles. In one occasion, he was asked to translate a paper in a very puzzling romance language. Reacting to the many question marks put by the writer during its translation, his colleague told him that he thought it was in Portuguese: it was in Rumanian.*

A third set of benefits comes from the professionals' network of contacts in their home country and in the countries of common language and culture. The advantages are again obvious in the development of cooperation projects and in the facilitation of business ventures (see **Appendix B**).

**6.4.3.** There is another issue that should be considered: the long-term repercussions of the peddling – there is no other word for it – of Australian education in Asia.

Australia has never had a good name for hospitality among Asian and other overseas students. Further, the Australian Governments of the 1980s were fully aware that the families of 90% of students from the Third World had very poor financial resources. However, they decided to jump onto the bandwagon of the education peddlers in the most exploitative ways possible. There should be no need to remind this Committee of the scandalous collapses of so many “international schools” in the late 1980s around Australia.

High-pressure promotion by the Government and close location of Australia may still encourage Asian students to go there. Since the 1997 Asian Crisis, families have however started to look at the worth of the returns for every dollar to be spent in educating their children overseas. Further, in Thailand, there is a growing trend in establishing schools and University branches from overseas but, as they are still very expensive for the present state of family pockets [Thai average for Primary and Secondary schools: >1m Baht/yr/student – c. AUD 33,000 (Jan. 2004)], not all are thriving.

Further, there is also a growing conviction that the education that many of such institutions offer is not up to the same standards of that in their home countries and that those branches serve only as recruitment posts to encourage students to “finish” their education at the mother institutions.

Finally, in the case of Australia, the writer has encountered many returned students who had undergone very unhappy experiences there and, once scratched the surface of social politeness, they reveal a strong antagonism toward Australians.

The writer respectfully points out that those very same students are likely to reach key positions in the private and public sector and, *at parity of other conditions*, they are not likely to bend backward to favour any Australian venture or initiative.

In the writer's experience, these considerations fall outside the Australian *System's* interests and one-way understanding of things. Therefore, the writer leaves things at that and let the Australian Government carry on its own usual ways, which coincide with that of Pauline Hanson's.

## **7. The quality of Australian and other advice on Thailand**

With the benefit of direct experience, the writer may state that the advice on Thailand was and it still very poor and any that is available is still full of gaps and, therefore, essentially misleading.

In this, one cannot blame the Government of the time, apart the serious fact that it has always been inward looking and, until recently, very little interested in Asian and SE Asian countries *per se*, regarding them through stereotyping glasses and as colonial-like markets to exploit.

*No-one may accuse Anglo-Celtic Australians, in government or not, and the Australian System to be culturally sensitive or to have a trans-cultural outlook.*

General and cultural information is still essentially at tourist level. Even so, one had to look at several foreign and Thai sources to compile a reasonable information guide: the ins and outs of Thai society are too complex to reduce them into a digestible pill format. There are old hands here that, after 30 years, still get surprised at what Thai may say, do and think.

Much more serious is the problem of information on business practices: Thai are neither open nor helpful in assisting a foreigner to set up a business and they are very indirect in all transactions, delaying negotiations and their finalizations as long as possible: most still consider a signed contract only as a step to further negotiations. To give the Committee a measure of their indirectness, Singaporean Chinese find great difficulties in doing business with Thai Chinese, even when both are from the same ethnic group.

The country guides of international accounting and law firms also promote business ventures only in pink colours and do not give sufficient warnings about the many traps in which an investor may fall. They may do so to ensure that they do not jeopardize a continuing demand of their services. In practice, be those ventures serviced by them successful or not, they never lose money.

Therefore, a responsible foreign Government should bridge the gap with better and more complete information to assist its own expatriates in settling in the new country, particularly in the case of small and medium enterprise (SME) ventures<sup>25</sup>.

It is very difficult to gauge the present quality of the services of the Australian embassies and consulates abroad: the email circular system is too recent to assess and, at the moment, it serves only the Australian expatriates registered with the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (FAT). Thus, very many of the unregistered expatriates living here did not know about the establishment of this Committee and its request for submissions.

However, in the recent SARS epidemic, the initial information did not give adequate warning of the dangers of contagion as already perceived in SE Asia. Correct SARS warnings were issued only later in accidental coincidence of a trip overseas by Mr Howard.

A point of general gripe is the recent excessive increase in user's fees for the issue and the certification of documents by the consulates.

For general services and relations with expatriates and locals, the Australian Embassy is considered second only to the American one – which is not a compliment here.

For instance, no diplomatic intervention by the Embassy is known about the fiscality and restrictions imposed recently by the new Thai visa regulations, which have a definite xenophobic and exploitative quality.

Cultural contributions are worse than negligible. In three different and separate known occasions, artists under the sponsorship of the Embassy were definitively substandard. It is a big mistake: Bangkok audiences are cosmopolitan in character and, as they are used to top talents, they are much more sophisticated than the Australian Government may think.

The other Embassies do their best to divert their top artists touring Asia to Bangkok and the local private organizers looks only to the very best or, in the case of pop music, to the most popular.

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<sup>25</sup> See article in **Appendix B** on Foreign Direct Investors (FDIs) and Foreign Expatriate Operators (FEOs). The article was accepted but remained unpublished because of the closure of the magazine to which it was submitted.

## **8. Advantages of dual or multiple citizenship.**

In today's globalized society, the benefits of two or more citizenships become more and more evident because of trends toward regional common markets on the European model such as Mercosur in South America and the coming AFTA in SE Asia and toward a general strengthening of bilateral cultural and trade agreements in response to the re-appearance of China on the world scene.

Dual and multiple citizenships allow professionals and entrepreneurs to enjoy equal status with the locals in the country of their naturalization. Consequently, they may act as bridges between countries and may operate freely as facilitators, representatives and business partners of firms and organizations from other countries of which they are also citizens (see **Appendix B**, p.19).

Myopically, nationalistic prejudices still raise the issue of loyalty of citizens with two or more citizenships. Until the XVIII century, people moved and lived across borders freely even in the case of neighbouring nations at war. Wars were then seasonal and essentially considered a confrontation just between rulers and armies. Outside the areas surrounding battlefields, civilians of both nations could carry on with their daily activities and trade exchanges practically undisturbed. Conditions drastically changed with the modern development of total war.

Today, apart a few disordered, rogue and imperialistic nations, trends are toward a much greater mobility of people around the world and between countries (see the EU drive to integration), toward a general normalization in international relations and toward a greater openness between most countries.

Such trends make any, let it be said, chauvinistic attitude obsolete and an obstacle to the progress of nations as it closes doors to business opportunities and to potential social and technological advancements. Today, in normal situations, attachment and loyalty to a country, especially to that of birth, belong more and more to the realm of cultural and sentimental affections. Contracted obligations at the base of a new citizenship are generally, carefully respected. In situations of conflict, the choice has obviously to be determined by the individual on the merits of the case and of each country.

## **9. Legal position of expatriates in Thailand.**

Thai immigration regulations are as always very restrictive in respect of granting permanent residence and citizenship to foreigners. Only very wealthy people may in effect apply for them.

Working permits procedures are very cumbersome, farraginous, fiscal and, therefore, very expensive in relation to local wages. Therefore, many employers of foreigners avoid lodging applications for such permits.

After 12 years here, the writer has not encountered a naturalized foreigner and knows only of one who has received permanent residence.

Thus, most expatriates, married to Thai and not, can work and reside here only by renewing their temporary visa, thanks to the Thais' practical *laisser-faire*.

However, the excessive fiscality and the greater restrictions of the new regulations under the present government violate a number of human rights and have created great uncertainty, if not havoc, in all expatriate communities here.

The silence of the Australian Embassy on the issue does not bring any comfort to the average Australian expatriate.

## **10. Other countries' attitudes toward their own expatriates.**

In Thailand, once born a Thai, he or she is a Thai forever.

In Europe, attitudes are historically diverse. However, there is a uniform trend now toward a strengthening of cultural bonds and of electoral rights and toward a full reintegration of expatriates into their countries of birth and the extension of the right to citizenship to their descendants (in Italy: up to the third generation), independently from the sex of their parents, grand parents and great-grand parents and theirs.



Italy has also reached a step further introducing the election of six expatriate representatives, at present, to the Italian Parliament.

Further, Italian expatriates may return without paying any tax or without having to satisfy any other special fiscal requirement: thus, pensioners are not double-taxed and penalized in other ways as they are in Australia. The general reasoning is that they inject money into the economy of their place of residence.

Therefore, the only reasons they may keep residing abroad are: (a) work; and (b) social and family bonds, which are a measure of their adjustment to the new country.

## **11. Assessing losses in human reserves from the diaspora**

### **11.1. Quality of published statistics.**

The official statistics published by the Government in announcing the inquiry on the diaspora are very simplistic, based on the total population and, therefore, watered down to lessen the import of the phenomenon. **Appendix C** (p. 20) offers two models in the human ecosystem.

The former, in a synoptic table format, defines the different classes of resources needed and created by modern man and their interactions.

The second leads to a better quantification and allocation of the current human reserves available and needed in any country – in this case, Australia – and to a better assessment and quantification of the current brain drain. The application and quantification of the Greek concept of *areté* (ἀρετή), described in **Appendix C** (Pt II, p. 23), should allow:

- a - Expressing in more precise monetary terms the value of the past, present and future Australia-grown and imported human reserves (human capitals);
- b - Evaluating the human reserves necessary to a viable Australian economy.

### **11.2. Diaspora: the need of a more detailed and better statistical breakdown.**

#### ***Statistics published***

1,000,000 Australians Abroad

20,000,000 Total population

#### ***Statistical breakdown needed***

Working age segment:

Total N°: x,xxx,xxx

Percentage of total population : xx.xx%

Professional Cadres:

Employed at present N°: x,xxx,xxx

Percentage of working segment: xx.xx%

Needed to sustain economy N°: x,xxx,xxx *(further breakdown for each of the categories below*

Percentage : xx.xx% *suggested)*

Differential N° : x,xxx,xxx

Differential (%): xx.xx%

Diaspora:

Permanent Departures N°: x,xxx,xxx

Yearly drain N°: x,xxx,xxx

Percentage (tot.): xx.xx% of total population

Percentage: xx.xx% of total population

Permanent Departures N°: x,xxx,xxx of working age segment

Percentage : xx.xx% of total working age segment

Permanent Departures N°: x,xxx,xxx of the professionals' segment

Percentage : xx.xx% of the total professionals' cadres.

Permanent Departures N°: x,xxx,xxx of the scientists' segment

Percentage : xx.xx% of the total scientists' cadres.

Permanent Departures N°: x,xxx,xxx of the technicians' segment

Percentage : xx.xx% of the total technicians' cadres.

Such statistics and more detailed ones should offer a much clearer picture of the present and future impact of the diaspora to Governments, politicians, bureaucrats and to the public, for the first time ever.

## **12. Suggestions**

The writer respectfully puts to this Committee that there are no immediate or short-term solutions to the problem of the diaspora.

Australian society, Public Services, politicians and private sectors must undergo an attitudinal U-turn change toward a cosmopolitan outlook and toward culture and intelligentsia from the present money-grubbing orientation.

To offer one-year fellowships to expatriates through schemes such as *Return Fellowships* and the Victorian *VESKI* is a band-aid solution available only to those whose work contract allows them sabbaticals or to those who are in between jobs: therefore, they are palliatives and very poor substitutes to permanent full-time positions.

Although very effective and efficient, the old idea that the Public Services should absorb highly qualified people in times of recession to use their skills to the benefit of the Nation and release them as the economy picks up and as the private sector needs them, will never work because of the hostility of the system operating across all Public Services [see (0.2), and footnote 1, p. 3].

In addition, the current employment policies in the Private Sector do not offer any job security as in effect they allow employers any arbitrary decision they choose to take.

Further, it will take a systematic, far-reaching re-education campaign to change the way the ‘System’, the general public and all special segments of the population regard intellectual achievements and intelligentsia.

In regard of turning into advantage the presence of Australian expatriates overseas, it is respectfully suggested that the Committee must first consider, face and accept the real reasons that had induced them to leave and the reasons that induce them to stay abroad.

The Committee may even find useful to hold public meetings with expatriates in countries where most of them are known to be unregistered.

Then, the Committee may have solid grounds to draw effective recommendations: not, though, under the present toothless terms of references.

The last obstacle is however practically insurmountable: the Australian Parliament must pass and enforce an intelligent and far-seeing legislation and other appropriate measures – an event for which the writer and many other expatriates will not hold their breath.



## **APPENDIX A**

### **Three managerial fallacies plague the selection of qualified foreign teachers**

*The Nation*, Letters, Nov 26, 2003.

Regarding “PhD seeks a job that will pay Bt60,000” (November 17): The letter underlines Thai malpractice in employing highly qualified foreigners (master’s and above), which have not been considered by the new visa regulations. Thai employers select by stereotype: if applicants seem to fit perfectly with them, they are accepted without checking whether they are genuine or not. Thus, a few years ago, a PhD was rejected by a university because he did not have a BSc as a first degree but another, higher one. Further, job opportunities seem to run inversely to the genuineness and the level of qualifications. It is very difficult to estimate the plague of fake qualifications in Thailand,

but if an employer holds one of them, it will be an obvious no-no for him to have a truly qualified employee.

As a rule, the higher the applicant's qualifications the higher their wages: most employers choose less qualified, and cheaper, applicants so that they can skimp on wages without thinking that, in doing so, they only get costlier inferior work.

In conclusion, three major interacting managerial fallacies plague the Kingdom: the first is the "over-qualification" pseudo-concept that prevents the utilisation of much needed higher skills; the second, by stereotype, is to consider minor, if not irrelevant, background differences as critical to the job, which only narrows the skills potentially available; the third is the interview style of applicants – to exclude and reject and not to select, by which minor weaknesses are also conveniently over-emphasised over capabilities. Such practices cause only an obtuse waste of utilisable talent to the damage of the Kingdom.

Krabong Kuverakorn  
Bangkok



## **APPENDIX B**

### **Legal rights and obligations vs laws and practical wisdom: Foreign Direct Investors and Expatriate Operators**

*Dr Massimo-F. Buonaiuto*

The benefits of Foreign Direct Investors (FDIs), particularly SME entrepreneurs, bring to any countries are well defined in terms of input of fresh forex capital, technological transfer, local employment, modern manpower training, creation of new industries and stimulation of economic development.

Most SE Asian countries however consider more than sufficient the granting of fiscal and other business facilitations such as BoI privileges and they treat them as synonyms of legal protection.

Yet, it is not so. Nor legal protection is limited to just intellectual property. A comparison with legislation and regulations of Western countries such as EU ones and Switzerland show that there is a distinct and significant difference.

For example, Thailand, the most dynamic and cosmopolitan nation of the region, has not yet grasped that facilitations are not prevention, not redress and certainly not compensation in cases of illegal or improper behaviour of one of the local parties, particularly if a FDI intend to establish a small or medium enterprise (SME).

An upgrade of the law on FDIs to equality in rights and a tight enforcement of it cannot but benefit all parties, locals included. If an AFTA is going eventually to be established, such law measures must already be in place anyhow at domestic level.

Less perceived is the impact of Foreign Expatriate Operators (FEOs) in a host country – be they import-export traders, representatives and local managers of overseas companies and firms, consultants, teachers and so on.

They have no factories but they have a very great impact at a capillary level, as they are, in essence, the carriers of new ideas and practices: their presence ensure much needed shortcuts to new technologies, specialized and general knowledge and higher skills, without involving "Big Brothers".

All serious business and professional FEOs have many important aspects in common: their presence confers a cosmopolitan outlook and international relevance to the country where they are based, to Thailand and Bangkok in particular; each of them are the local neuron of an international network of contacts; therefore, they act as communication and information clearing houses and as

negotiation channels; and, therefore, stimulate interactions and exchanges between Thai and overseas operators.

In a nutshell, they break isolation and parochial barriers between societies belonging to very different cultural and language areas. That is, they act as two-way interpreters and bridges of culture and customs and practices and two-way facilitators of international business: their role is critical in establishing that atmosphere of good will so much needed in any venture.

The size and the diversification of their segment are therefore key indexes of the state of economic health and of the international importance of the country in which they operate.

Both FDIs and FEOs have one common disadvantage throughout South East Asia, particularly in countries where government structures are weak or inward looking: although they have general, specific and moral obligations to abide by the laws of the country where they are based, they do not enjoy the same legal rights as the locals and are subject to stricter controls, as they are looked upon suspicion and diffidence. Because they are foreigners, they often are made easy targets.

Their plight is even worse when local wrong-doers are citizens in one Asian country and represent juristic entities in another one. It is unfortunate but FEOs' rights are generally given less weight even when they are obviously damaged by locals' actions. In some other instances, institutional controls go overboard and cause serious havoc to the businesses of FEOs and their associates.

The latter case has just happened in a major manufacturing and trade sector in Bangkok. There was, and perhaps still is, a systematic campaign of controls that has been going for a number of months.

Such campaign results the more disrupting and the more frustrating to both Thai and FEO business because it is taking place in a moment in which the government is introducing policies of full liberalization by eliminating unnecessary outdated tariffs and excises on imported intermediate and semi-finished products used in the export sector, and by negotiating removal of barriers with importing countries.

It is also taking place in a very delicate moment in which the manufacturing and the trading segments need to ensure the import of all needed supplies and to maintain general goodwill abroad.

History teaches that, when FEOs are made too uncomfortable in their host country in which they operate, they move somewhere else. FEOs may then suffer a degree of discomfort until they adjust to the new situation but the real, permanent loss in terms of economy and goodwill is of their former host country.

FDIs then avoid such countries as untrustworthy and unsafe. In the present climate of global economy, the choices of investment offered are indeed very ample. This simple fact seems to have not reached yet many of the leaders of the systems SE Asian and Thai institutions operate under.

Therefore, one can only hope that, in this case, practical wisdom and reason will prevail over bureaucratic mentality and red tape to the benefit of the Thai economy and of the SE Asian one in general.



## **APPENDIX C**

**Business in Thailand Magazine (August 2002), 33(8), pp. 49-52.**  
*Published with many editorial and layout errors.*

### **THE HUMAN ECOSYSTEM. Pt I – HUMAN RESOURCES: MISCONCEPTIONS and IRRATIONALITIES**

By: *Massimo-F. Buonaiuto Ph.D.*

A recent international conference in Bangkok (Opportunity: Thailand – November 1999) has stressed the great changes in human resources management and utilization that have taken place amongst major European organizations. Paramount importance is now attached to build up a very versatile and adaptable, highly skilled workforce: they see such a workforce is now as essential to cope and overcome most socio-economic pressures and the market competition generated by the present globalization. Perceptions and attitudes to human resources however, still vary around the world and particularly affect developing countries.

Many countries in South-East Asia, for instance, have still education systems that need complete overhauls and deep reforms and that they give the young generations a preparation inadequate for today's working world, which demands very high skills and knowledge. In addition, the recent case of two poliomyelitic lawyers that have been denied a judicial career highlights the irrationality to demand as compulsory fit brawn over intelligence, competence and learned judgment in essentially sedentary jobs. Such preconception is not peculiar to Thailand but lingers all around the world and wastes useful skills – apart the fact it pays no thoughts to the issue of human dignity.

While that case brings one of the several misconceptions about human resources to the fore, the dynamics of human resources are essentially chaotic in nature by themselves and are therefore difficult to plan and develop organically and utilize at their best at a national scale. There are too many centrifugal factors that introduce inherent irrationalities into any attempt to organize them at such a scale: they are a confusing, often contradictory plethora of choices by individual persons and organizations and by political pressures by special interests lobbies. Their overall effect is what the American economist Otto Khan calls *the tyranny of small* (i.e.: individual) *decisions* extended at various levels.

At the level of individual persons, inborn talent or social preferences govern the choice of a career and its progress. This should depend exclusively on the degree of abilities shown by the individuals themselves but, as it is increasingly the case, it is not. In term of social choices, the individual tends to prefer whichever jobs are secure or in high demand: fortunately, the human mind, once trained, is adaptable enough to perform them competently.

Since freedom of choice is an inherent right of the individual, predictions on human reserves are always liable to be very imprecise and can only be assessed stage by stage from the beginning of each phase of training.

The main concern of individual organizations is to have a steady supply of the semi-trained and fully trained skills it needs from a reserve constantly available. The major problem most of them have is however in the full and proper utilization of their staff after hiring.

The latter depends upon: its selection procedures, the organization's philosophy toward its personnel, the organization's working environment, the quality and competence of its managers at each level, and upon the degree of allowance and freedom granted by the organization leadership to creativity and difference of ideas.

Organizations that foster a philosophy of conformity and mistake it for work discipline, quickly develop senile traits and a managerial momentum that impede their ability to renew themselves and cripple them in times of changes. The *Peter Principle* rules in these organizations, rigidly hierarchical (top to bottom): the competent, the innovator, the creative and the doer are weeded out, while the Yes-men and all the rest of the corporate zoo are promoted to or above their levels of incompetence and remain to preside over the knell of the organization.

Pressure groups with political, social and other agendas and industrial and financial lobbies can create further imbalances in current and developing human reserves through artificial polarization of choices, through wastage of active skilled reserves and through manipulations triggering economic downturns and contractions in industrial sectors.

The 1997 Asian crisis is a good example of economic and financial manipulation at supranational scale. Nationally, manipulated contractions are as wasteful at sector or employment policy level: a country not far away from here<sup>26</sup> offers a series of illuminating examples.

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<sup>26</sup> Writer's Note: Australia.

In the early '80s, the leaders of a primary industry sector in that country were aware that very shortly there would have been a closure of their research and development activities by decision of the government of that time. That did not stop them to lobby for more graduates.

After having fired their most experienced staff, they indeed kept hiring – and firing after 6-12 months – new graduates every year, thus creating a false demand. In the late '80, all sectors hired – and still hire – school leavers over experienced and qualified unemployed under the fallacy of over-qualifications as a negative factor and the pretext that a 17- or 18-old could have the same competence and ability of mature employees. Both policies brought the other meaning of cheap to new depths.

In the same period, two government policies gradually added their deleterious effect on the pools of skills and brains.

The first one, an affirmative action for women, went overboard by the late '80 and men had very little chance to get a job. An instance will suffice: on a Sunday, a weekly revealed that out of 11,000 jobs advertised 10,500 (95.5%) in that month went to women; on the day after, the companion daily announced that the Minister of Employment had just opened a special office to assist women in getting a job.

The second one is the increasing contraction imposed on all academic institutions since the late 1970s: first, by freezing academic positions and funds, then by the imposition of tuition fees; and, third, by closing down courses with a number of enrolments deemed insufficient, regardless of their level of specialization – the higher the level, the fewer the students.

As one would have expected, the health of the pools of skills and brains and the intelligentsia of that country is increasingly degraded – a major factor in impeding economic recovery. But that country is not the only case. In the last few years, other Western nations have finally realized that systemic neglect of their education system has created a generation of under-skilled workforce incapable to cope with the productivity levels demanded today.

They have also come to perceive that the systematic retrenchment of the older employees in favour of young recruits has prevented the essential transfer of skills and know-how on-the-job. Now their private sectors are resorting to recruit back the employees they previously enticed into retirement.

Table I shows the complex ecosystem that Man has developed around himself and his activities: some, entirely artificial, self-sustaining; many supported from external resources; but all depending upon Man as *Man himself is his own first and foremost resource, without which nothing else has either meaning or use to Man.*

Therefore, His activities are interwoven so closely to His ecosystem that they must function at the best of His abilities to keep it as healthy and as lasting as possible. Not only recent events but also history of any society have recorded how any perturbation and unbalance may lead to disastrous consequences and how only the pool of skills and knowledge may lead to recovery.

Furthermore, case studies reaffirm that only the wise use of human resources and of all other resources needed to support them, allows such a recovery. Any wastage or misemployment only delay and even prevent it at any level: from a single organization up to a nation.

***Inset:***

*In each action, we must look beyond the action at our past, present and future state, and then at others whom it affects and see the relations of all things. And then shall be cautious.*

**Blaise Pascal, *Pensées*, 1670.**

***Table I:***

Main resources in the human ecosystem.

\* \* \* \* \*

## THE HUMAN ECOSYSTEM. Pt II – RESOURCES vs RESERVES

By: *Massimo-F. Buonaiuto Ph.D.*

When the word *resource(s)* is mentioned, it is very often in the meaning of *reserve(s)*, that is, the quantifiable part of utilizable and utilized resources, which is less than the absolute total of the resource available in a given area for a given use (*Resource Base*), as loss, wastes and export to other areas must be taken into account. The total of the reserves utilized and utilizable at present and at future times is termed ***Reserve Base***.

*Reserves* of any resource are always *finite* and can be assessed at any given time and *at any level of utilization, present or future*.

The distinction between reserve and resource is critical to their management. Resource always implies to the mind of its users something that will be always available in unlimited amounts.

This is not so: both with natural and with human resources. Stock resources (mineral and fossil) are finite and their duration mainly depends upon their utilization rates and the methods used in their extraction and processing and then upon economic and technological factors.

Flow (renewable) resources such as water, soil, air, etc. and the entire biotic (living) sphere offer security of supply insofar there are no causes that stress them to extinction or to exhaustion either by degradation or by excessive exploitation that prevents their renewal.

Man, as part of the biotic sphere, has made himself very sensitive to environmental pressures on his own set of individual niches by generating repeatedly stresses that impair all the resources he needs and relies upon, particularly his first and foremost one without which nothing else has a meaning or use: *Man Himself*.

An aspect of resources, which is not fully understood, is their multiform and dynamic nature: what is *neutral stuff* and *waste today*, it may become *useful and valuable tomorrow*. A third misunderstanding is that in the public's mind resources are practically synonym of physical commodities to be bought and sold, readily expended or thrown away as soon as they are thought to hold no further use or value: thus, *human resources* are equated to *raw and processed materials* in phrases such as *cannon* and *factory fodder*.

Today, when higher and higher manual and intellectual skills are required, organizations that consciously or subconsciously still base their decision-making on the latter misconception are begging their own end, as they are unable to retain competent human reserves (*human capital*), able to answer to the challenges the organization must face today.

Human reserves have never been assessed properly as organizations' assets. When discussing human capital, personnel management experts stop short of estimating its value.

Yet, its appraisal, individual by individual, should be relatively easy, as most of the figures are available.

The *value* of a unit (an employee) of a given human capital is equal to its *costs* + its *areté*. Costs are of course those of *education* + *training* + *salary* + *benefits*. *Areté* (virtue) is the Greek word that indicates the sum of all positive qualities that have been shown by that individual such as competence, experience, efficiency, effectiveness, intellectual abilities, manual dexterity, etc. – which are normally lumped together under the depersonalizing term *productivity* and which therefore bear a degree of quantification too. The intangible components of *areté* such as loyalty, honesty, commitment, etc., which all organizations should cultivate in their staff, however remain critical to the overall assessment.

It is then clear that the total productivity, profitability and, therefore, the viability of any organization is directly related to the aggregate *areté* of its staff.

Flow-chart I is a synoptic picture of the main streams of development and events that the human reserves of a nation go through.

The flow chart is based of the 1980 UN Standard Mineral Resources Classification designed by J.J. Shanz. Shanz' dendrogram, generalized by the writer (1986, 1995) and extended to natural and human resources. The flow chart is an operational tool of great flexibility: it can be broken down into great detail in each stream in terms of sectors, organizations and specializations; and, it offers

the possibility both to quantify each steps in equal detail and to give their totals at each head of the segment considered.

Another important advantage is in that it presents a reliable overview of the reserves and their utilization at each interval of time and area or stream considered while it retains their dynamic nature.

That is, Shanz's model shows immediately at each given stage:

- what is available, what is recoverable and what is actually recovered;
- what can be utilized and what is actually utilized;
- what is the residual surplus and, by difference, what is lost and wasted; and,
- in case of deficits and gaps, what substitute reserves should be imported and for how long.

The ultimate advantage of Shanz' model, and of complementary models such as the inventorial US McKelvey's Box, is in that it systematizes and synthesizes a vast collection of data on the state and on the health of the human resources of a country at any level and in that it allows to monitor the development of trends and to take counter-measures to offset gaps or unnecessary waste due chaotic variables introduced by the tyranny of small decisions which have been taken by individual persons and organizations in isolation from the overall picture.

***Inset 1:***

*Resources are not, they become.*

**E.W. Zimmerman**, *World Resources and Industries*, 1951

***Inset 2:***

*The first and foremost resource of Man is Man himself.*

***Illustrations***

- Flow chart of human reserves.



## **APPENDIX D**

**Excerpted draft from:**

**M.-F. Buonaiuto (in prep.) – *Western reasoning: A Primer for Thai and Asian students.***

**Ch 8**

### **Doxastic Logic (Logic of Beliefs): The Black Sheep of reasoning**

The doxastic<sup>27</sup> modality or logic of beliefs is either the black sheep or, at its best, the “peculiar” sibling of all other special types of logic in that the latter strive to develop their own particular aspects consistently with all the other forms and thus to build up an integrated system of universal, objective criteria of reasoning. Doxastic logic does not really so and at its worst bend all other modalities to suit the speaker's beliefs or suspend them completely. At its best, it influences the speaker's approach to reasoning.

Many logicians doubt that the doxastic modality is in effect a proper type of logic. However, there is no doubt that it affects to varying degrees all other modalities. To add to the awkwardness of its status, the concepts of fuzziness and probability in the truth/false two-value system (Jeffrey, 1995-2002; Roorda, 1995) reopens the debate on whether it is a valid form of logic or not.

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<sup>27</sup> From the Greek *doxasticós, -ḗ, -ón adj.* **1** that forms conjectures, opinions; conjectural; that gives advice. **2.** (*positive sense*) sagacious, of sound judgement, intellectual.



The probability however that a doxastic statement is true depends entirely on the hard evidence on which it is based and on the validity of immediate assumptions on which the case rests. For example, assumptions are more likely to be irrelevant and invalid in the extreme oligothetic and monothetic levels of discourse (*see below*) if it is against an excluded idea or against a deviant or rebel member. It should further be noted that at those two levels, evidence is frequently bent or fabricated to fit the assumptions and the conclusions they support, while the assumptions are dictated by emotive factors characterizing the discourse level of the speaker (writer) and the audience (readers) and aim to stir up emotions of both.

Doxastic logic leads to ambiguities and, in its extreme forms, to tunnelled and rationalized subjective conclusions characterized by a varying degree of bias: from just a different approach and methods to thinking and reasoning, to an insignificant to a more and more value-loaded<sup>28</sup> polarization (see Table, section below). That is, beliefs confine reasoning within their special restrictions across different levels of discourse.

For sake of clarity, the different levels of discourse, which may be or not affected by beliefs, could be defined as follows: top to bottom, the top encompassing the lower levels.

**Universe of discourse**, which embraces all spoken and unspoken assumptions and meanings and a background knowledge commonly understood by a group of cultures and to all or to the majority of participants to a debate: speakers and listeners, writers and readers.

**Sphere of ~**, which embraces a narrower area of knowledge (e.g.: sciences, art, religion, language, national culture, etc.) with its own well defined and consistent special assumptions and meanings.

**Dominion of ~**, which embraces a special segment of knowledge and culture with its own terminology and criteria (e.g.: in natural sciences, geology, botany, zoology, biology; in exact sciences, mathematics, geometry, physics, chemistry; in art, literature, sculpture, painting, philosophy; the *summa theologica* (*summa rerum*) of each major religion; etc.)

**Field of ~**, the narrowest area of discourse, which embraces specialized knowledge, subcultures, sects, ideologies, etc.

**Oligothetic**<sup>29</sup> ~, the second smallest unit of discourse, based on few assumptions, very narrow meanings, limited background knowledge confined within a particular sub-culture and social and religious milieu, characterized by narrow, restrictive criteria of reasoning.

**Monothetic** ~, the smallest unit of discourse, confined to sectarian segments and cliques within a community belonging to the same subculture, every aspect of which is uncritically governed by very narrow tenets and by one or a few referent authorities (cf.: the *ipse dixit* fallacy).

From this classification, the holistic reasoning and logic of the *universe of discourse* is increasingly narrowed to merothetic<sup>30</sup> to oligothetic and monothetic exclusivism. The influence of beliefs is correspondingly the stronger the lower the level.

Individuals grow up with their own sets of beliefs that are learned from their own family and community milieus and modified, revised or confirmed by their life experiences. Therefore, such set of beliefs become ingrained traits of each individual personality that bear on every daily decision and action both consciously and unconsciously (after: Allport, 1958, ch. 5, p. 71).

Such sets of beliefs cleave closely to the most familiar of everyday realities and influence the mind of the individuals vis-à-vis the world around them in patterning thoughts, reasoning and interpretation of actions and events that, in their views, may affect them: that is, beliefs constantly affect, even dominate the individual's inner life (Allport, *ibid.*).

"To some people, life is very simple . . . no shadings and grays, all blacks and whites. . . Now, others of us find that good, bad, right, wrong, are many-sided, complex things. We try to see every side; but the more we see, the less sure we are." [Sir John Talbot, *The Wolf Man* (Universal Pictures, 1941)].

By their own nature, beliefs are ambiguous and are reflected by the individual's outlook that may vary from close-minded, narrow, exclusivist and therefore rigidly misoneistic to its daring opposite, open and broad minded, and therefore flexible. In the former opposite, beliefs act as binding laws and as filters and polarizing glasses for any new perception; in the latter, they act

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<sup>28</sup> **value-laden, value-loaded** *adjs.* weighted or biased in favour of certain values, which are dictated by individual and social beliefs, generally classified as prejudices (see further discussion in the text).

<sup>29</sup> **oligothetic, monothetic** *a.* [from Gk, *oligo-*, few, and *mono-*, one, + *thetic a.* from Gk *thetikos*, such as is (fit to be) placed, positive, affirmative, from *thetos* placed] Involving few (a single) set of direct or positive statements; (of a proposition, thesis, etc.) that has been laid down or stated; dogmatic; arbitrary.

<sup>30</sup> **merothetic**, of a class or discourse, such as **sphere, dominion** and **field**, which is broader than **oligothetic** and which encompasses narrower levels of discourse governed by special assumptions that are dictated by particular areas of knowledge, often but not always marked by their specialized context and by the use of associated terminology. It also apply in cases in which oligothetic and monothetic beliefs influence the higher levels of discourse

as a guide and point of reference. Most of the words denoting concepts and actions pertinent to them carry opposite connotations, positive and negative (derogatory), favourable (pro) and hostile (con).

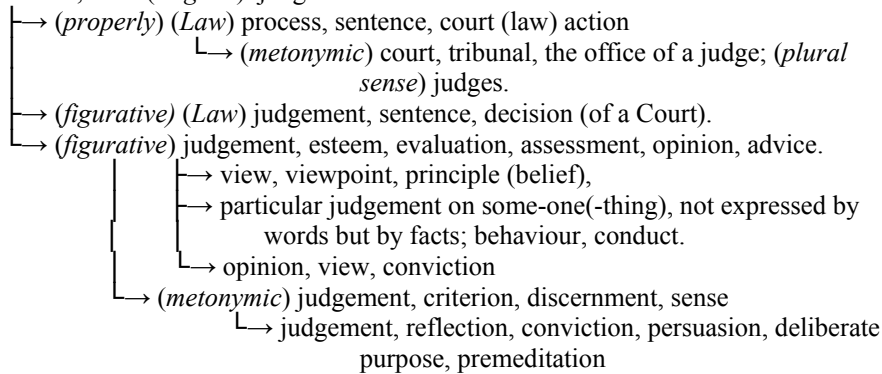
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***Judgement on facts vs prejudgement, value-judgement and prejudice.***

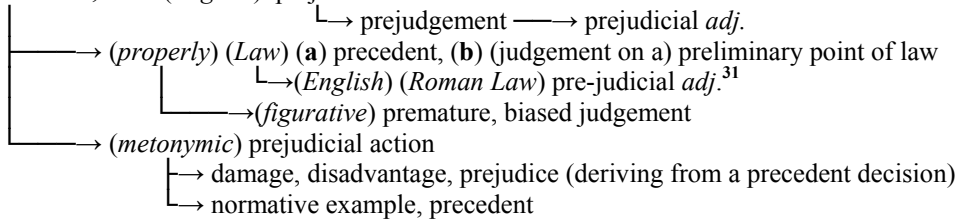
The overlap, the ambiguity and the graduality, inherent to these terms and to their synonyms and other associated concepts, between their opposite connotations (see Appendix, under values: *scale of values*) show a considerable semantic overlap created by the long history of their use already present in their words of origin.

Therefore, it is always wise to look into the meanings of the original Latin words from which **judgement, prejudgement, prejudice** and **opinion** stem from, and to compare them with their contemporary Greek equivalents, the product of an already very sophisticated thought, in order to understand their distinctions in their present meanings and in which context they are and should be used (see: Appendix under Latin and Greek).

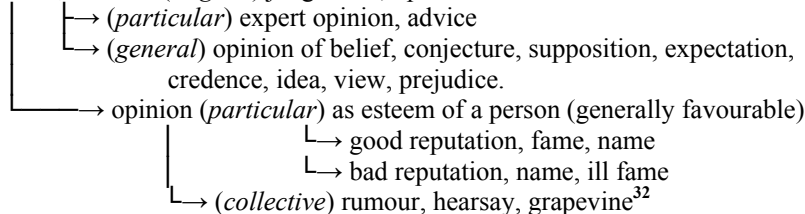
***Judicium, -i*** → (English) judgement



***praeiudicium, -i*** → (English) prejudice



***opinion, -onis*** → (English) judgement, opinion



<sup>31</sup> Note the distinction between the two English adjectives: the hyphenated one retains the original proper Latin legal meaning.

<sup>32</sup> **grapevine** an unofficial means of transmission of information (often of a secret or private nature) or rumour. Originally (US colloquial) as *grapevine telegraph*. **hearsay** *n.* [Orig. in phr. *by hear say*, tr. OFr. *par ouïr dire* (now *ouï-dire*), i.e. *par* by, *ouïr* hear, *dire* say.] That which one hears or has heard someone say; report, rumour, common talk. Also (archaic.), an instance of this, a piece of gossip. **rumour** [OFr. *rumor*, -*or* (mod. -*eur*), from L. *rumor*, -*oris*] a general talk

While prejudice and prejudgement have rapidly assumed the present negative meanings since ancient times, judgement and opinion have remained substantially neutral and interchangeable since Latin and have required modifiers and specifiers, frequently common to both, to assume either connotation or any intermediate one (see also: Appendix). E.g.:

*optimum iudicium*, high esteem; *iudicium erroris*, wrong erroneous judgement; *iudicium intelligens*, intelligent, acute judgement; *integrum iudicium*, unbiased, impartial judgement; *temerarium (temere) iudicium*, rash, foolish, nonsensical, ill considered judgement; etc.

*opinio vulgi (vulgata)*, popular opinion; *omnium opinio*, general opinion; *opinio publica*, public opinion; *opinio falsa*, false opinion; *magna opinio*, great, high esteem; *opinio malignitatis (perversa)*, malign opinion; *divulgata opinio*, rumour, hearsay; etc.

Naturally, *iudicium* and *opinio* have their own Latin synonyms with mutually overlapping meanings (*mens, mentis*, mind; *sensus, -us*, sense; *ratio, -onis*, reasoning; *consilium, -ii*, counsel; *persuasio, -onis*, persuasion, conviction; *fides, -ei*, belief, etc.).

Greek expresses even a greater range of connotations with a combination of one or more prefixes (see Appendix - Greek) and reveals very refined distinctions of actions, approaches, mental processes, attitudes, perceptions and predispositions connected to beliefs, judgement and opinion.

In synthesis, opinion and judgement tend to be: objective and impartial if based on facts and factual evidence (value-neutral); subjective if based on beliefs (value-oriented, value-loaded); and, arbitrary if based on false grounds, invalid assumptions, rash conclusions and superficial impressions. The limit of negative connotations is of course represented by the present term prejudice.

#### **The Path to Prejudice – Step by Step.**

┆ Unfounded, false, superficial invalid assumptions → overgeneralization → stereotype building →  
→ opinion forming → emotive categorization and labelling →  
→ rationalization of stereotypes and opinions →  
→ consolidation →  
→ sweeping conclusions → implementations of conclusions →  
→ defensive fence building →  
→ rationalization of actions → exclusivism → victimization and scapegoatism →  
→ rationalization of conduct after the fact or statement

It should be noted that from the consolidation stage onward, prejudice develops a fourfold path: defence of the position representing one's own prejudices and one's own group (passive); verbal (written) expression of prejudice (active); exclusivist social behaviour (passive); mild to violent physical aggression (active).

The branches of this fourfold path intertwine and interact according to situations resulting into a scale of conduct (bottom to top, after Allport, 1958):

1. Verbal rejection (antilocution);
2. Avoidance;
3. Discrimination;
4. Physical attack of living beings, censorship/suppression of ideas, defacement of images and symbols;
5. Extermination of living beings, expurgation/deletion of ideas, destruction of images and symbols.

In respect of prejudice, stereotypes belong to post-consolidation assumptions. As such, they are exaggerated beliefs (prejudices) associated with a category (group) of entities such as people, ideas, animals or things. *A category* is defined in this case as *a cluster of associated ideas which as whole has the property of guiding daily adjustments* [of behaviour, decision-making and choices] (Allport, 1958). The function of a stereotype is to justify (rationalize) one's conduct and reasoning in relation

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or hearsay not based on definite knowledge. **b** An unverified or unconfirmed statement or report circulating in a community.

*Grapevine*, as an information source, however differs from its synonyms in that, today, it is frequently found to be based on fact and more truthful, particularly when contrasted with public service or company statements. When contrasted with government statements, it has frequently been proven a more reliable source.

to that category. In practice, it is a mental or actual picture: the visualization of the complex of thinking and categorization processes leading to the formation of a prejudice. Labelling (tagging) is just putting a name, frequently emotive, to such picture. Once formed, stereotypes may grow in defiance of all evidence to the contrary and fade periodically – they never disappear completely – when changes in society make the stereotyped category accepted.

Labelling however tends to mislead both speaker and audience even in the best put cases as they divert attention to the brief information they carry from the substance they designate.

In comparing the Humanistic-Renaissance comparative classification of men’s nature with the Buddhist one, a Thai student did not realize that the two hierarchical classifications are clearly correlatable. The Renaissance one compares human natures to representatives of the animal, vegetal and mineral kingdoms; the Buddhist to the position of a lotus flower in a water column (highest to lowest):

<i>Renaissance</i>	<b>compared to:</b>	<i>Buddhism</i>
<b>Man’s nature</b>	The human ideal, <i>Homo studiosus</i> , the studious man	<b>Lotus flower’s Water column depth</b>
<i>Virtuous (scholar)</i>		<i>Floating on and above the surface.</i>
<i>Rational (doer)</i>		<i>Just above the surface to just below it.</i>
<i>Luxurist (hedonist)</i>	Horse ( <i>governed by senses</i> )	<i>Below the surface.</i>
<i>Glutton</i>	Tree	<i>Mid-depth to just above the bottom.</i>
<i>Accidious (slothful)</i>	Rock (Stone)	<i>Buried in the mud of the bottom.</i>

That is, labels may lead to superficial or inexistent differences that tend to separate rather than correlate ways of reasoning belonging to different cultures and universes of discourse.

***Prejudices vs Reality: bypassing mental conflicts arising from hard evidence***

Mental conflicts in the prejudiced individual arise when negative and hostile prejudices and stereotypes clash with hard evidence to the contrary.

*Defensive fence building* (and *re-fencing*) refers to when the speaker (writer) finds his mental and ideological stance conflicting with the reality of facts. Fences are built by admitting exceptions to the general category: that is, “*contrary evidence is not admitted and allowed to modify the generalization; rather it is perfunctorily acknowledged and excluded.*” (Allport, 1958). There are four main methods of fencing. While the first may mildly be illustrated by the following reported anecdote, the other three are by introducing emotionally charged grounds into the discussion. .

During a field trip, a geologist described a deposit to other scientists as continental eolian (build up by winds) sediments. After he finished his speech, one of the scientists drew his attention to a small marine shell embedded into one of its layers. At that, the geologist replied in frustration “Any time I bring visitors here, there is always a marine bug peeping out.” By that, he admitted the contrary evidence but dismissed it as irrelevant to his interpretation.

In this case, the geologist was not wrong. The deposit was not that far from its coeval sea, the weight of other, not so obvious evidence supported his interpretation: Marine shells from the beach could have been blown by the wind or accidentally transported by birds there. However, their presence, albeit infrequent, contradicted his conclusions at a cursory look.

The second method, which is an extension of the first, is summed up by a classic not so mild posit in which ‘X’ stand for the stereotyped group.

“I admit: there are nice and intelligent Xs, but would you want your sister to marry one of them?”

A third method is by *bifurcation*, that is, by creating distinctions within a category by admitting as acceptable individual exceptions or a large subgroup of them from the mass represented by that category, which allows to resolve mental conflicts between prejudices and proven reality, when exceptions become too large to ignore.

“I am not prejudiced against Xs. Some are good. It is only bad Xs that I dislike.”

This method, Allport's *group fallacy* (1958), confuses the qualities of an individual (entity) in isolation from the qualities of the same individual when indistinct part of the mass forming the category X

A fourth method is the *tu quoque*, that is, by retorts to the effect that if speaker A sustains that speaker B is wrong, speaker B replies that Speaker A is wrong too on the same or different grounds. That is, the *tu quoque* is B's easy defence by dismissing conflicts arising from A's evidence by charging A with the same or a different error. In the former case, grimly:

When, after WWII, the Allies charged top Nazi leaders of crimes against humanity, they retorted that the Allies were guilty of the same as they had repeatedly carpet-bombed German cities (e.g.: Dresden, Cologne) killing women and children.

The latter case see the dismissal of the criticism by a rebuttal on different, irrelevant grounds, as this often quoted anecdote shows.

An American was visiting Moscow and his Russian guide proudly brought him to see the city's subway system. After admiring the station and the tracks, the American, probably with the intention of teasing, remarked: "But where are the trains? I see no trains running." The guide retorted: "And what about your lynchings in the Southern States?"

In the first anecdote, the geologist had reached his conclusions after careful study of that deposit and after equally careful analysis of all data he could get from it: that is his conclusions are based on solid evidence that goes beyond the first impression. By contrast, the above posit is based on generalizations stemming from stereotypes for which the speaker has no relevant evidence to bring to bear on his case. The writer once encountered such posit in an aptitude test. The posit had nothing to do with work abilities, ethics or behaviour but the answer to it was a pointer for the employer to the selection of applicants that showed to conform to the company's mentality: White Anglo-Saxon Protestant in that instance. Of course, it was also a pointer to opportunist shrewd applicants on how to answer that and other less obvious questions.

The third and fourth methods are classical fallacies, which are dealt separately.

Almost all cases in which an individual has been seen to abandon stereotypes and prejudices – always a drastic personal about-turn – can be traced back to self-interest, group identification and protection (pack instinct) or self-preservation. Cases due to a spiritual crisis, usually through a shattering experience, are very rare and must trigger a profound self-re-examination through a reassessment of the beliefs hitherto held as true and an intellectual and emotional cathartic process to bring about such a change.

However, the reverse is very frequent: stereotypes and prejudices are also espoused for the same identical motives in any class of individuals under the most opportunist rationalizations or as result of a bad experience.

Prejudices are difficult to eradicate even through long experience contrary to them. Conflicts seem to be tackled in four different modes that could also represent stages in thinking attitudes (Allport, 1958):

1. *Repression* (complete denial)
2. *Defence* (rationalization)
3. *Compromise* (defensive fencing and re-fencing though partial admission and resolution)
4. *Integration* (true resolution)

As it has been noted above, the fourth step is the most difficult to achieve as prejudices, as like as the better beliefs, are finely interwoven in the mental fabric that characterizes the identity of the individual. "*Defeated intellectually, prejudice lingers emotionally*", as illustrated by the following excerpt from an essay by a US college student (*in*: Allport, 1958).

"Every rational voice within me says that the X is as good, as decent, sincere and manly as the white, but I cannot help noticing a split between my reason and prejudice.

I try to see only the good points in Y people, but even though I try hard to overcome my prejudice, I know it will always be there – thanks to my parents' early influence.

Although prejudice is unethical, I know I shall always have prejudices. I believe in goodwill toward X, but I shall never invite [one of them] to my house for dinner. Yes, I know I am an hypocrite.

Intellectually, I am firmly convinced that this prejudice against Zs is unjustified. And in my present behaviour to Z friends I try to lean over backwards to counteract the attitude. But it is remarkable how strong a hold it has on me,

These prejudices make me feel narrow minded and intolerant and therefore I try to be as pleasant as possible. I get so angry with myself for having such feelings but somehow I do not seem to be able to quench them.”

*“My experience with, and attitudes toward, minorities groups in America.”*

In the excerpt and above, X, Y and Z stand for three distinctive ethnic minorities in the US. The letters have been used here not to avoid criticism but to generalize the instances as each nation and culture has their own pet likes and dislikes. Such a generalization is not applicable only to people per se, but also to the social behaviour, ideas, cultures and ways of thinking of which they are carriers. Such type of prejudices are not limited to different races and nations but are also directed against different social castes and classes<sup>33</sup> belonging to the same nation and community.

When a minority holds lasting negative and hostile prejudices against others from different cultures and nationality or, within the same nationality, from different subcultures, such prejudices can be attenuated only through trans-cultural training and education which bring mutual understanding between minorities – and a better understanding of why modern science offers strong support to moral and ethical teachings by showing that such prejudices are completely unjustified, particularly in respect of racial prejudices.

Since early 1800s, under the pressures of European colonization of the other continents, the modern concepts and ideology of racism took hold of the colonizing powers. Discussions of race were not based on strict scientific principles but concepts and opinions on race, culture, language, nationality and civilization were brought together in a confusing intellectual *mélange* by the most respected scientists and scholars, who even denied history such in the case of the Mediterranean nations, India and China in order to justify the exploitative nature of their countries’ colonizing drive and conquests.

Such confusing *mélange* was codified by the conservative Joseph Arthur, Comte de **Gobineau** (1816-82), French writer and anthropologist, whose book *“Essay on the Inequality of Human Races”* made him rightly or wrongly the *“father of racism”*. Gobineau is best known for his theories of racial superiority; he claimed the existence of a hierarchy of races, at the top of which was the ‘Aryan race’ and noted that Aryan civilization and culture degenerated when its members interbred with the so-called black and yellow races, which he considered inferior. Gobineau cited ‘Aryan’ Germans as the sole remaining ideal of racial purity (his own family was from Alsatia, the region at the border between Germany and France and possessed in turn by either: therefore, he could define himself as an Aryan and claimed semi-seriously to descend from the Teutonic God Odin). His theories anticipated the ‘master-class’ philosophy of Nietzsche and, later, influenced the ideology and policies of the Nazis and influence Neo-Nazis and other ultra-right racist groups still today. Such ideas gave the moral justification of the exploitative colonization of those times expressed in France by the slogan *“La mission civilisatrice”* while the British and the Americans justified themselves under buzz-phrases as *“the white man’s burden”* and white man’s *“manifest destiny.”* Today, science has debunked Gobineau’s theories and racism in general by showing that:

- races are nothing but phenotypes (variations) of equal standing within the human species;

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<sup>33</sup> From a sociological viewpoint, two broad types of social status are distinguished: *caste*, which is *ascribed* (inherited) to the individual by birth and, therefore, is mostly fixed; *class*, which is *achieved* by the individual and, therefore, is mobile, usually upward. *Class* does not coincide with *income bracket*, the distinction between social levels in such countries as Australia.

In older societies, class may change into caste within a few generations, e.g.: lower → middle → upper class → aristocracy. In younger societies, caste and class are confused with each other and the membership to one of the classes/castes is determined by the bracket of the individual’s income: low, middle, upper or top. The most distinguishing element between the two societies is the nature of the middle class: driven by its intelligentsia in the older societies; defined simply by income and led by its brasher members in the younger ones.

This observation is neither harsh nor snobbish: it is dictated by the fact that the higher the class the more the generations it requires to assume its distinguishing character. In the older societies’ understanding, the middle class takes at least 150-200 years to become truly so since, in ordinary circumstances, the money factor has less weight than the intellectual one. Then, the jump from there to the upper class and to the aristocracy is relatively simpler and quicker. Although money opens many doors, the higher the class they aim to, the harder the task individuals face to enter into it and meet with full acceptance even in an open society unless, of course, they show exceptional qualities.

Rough flawless diamonds become beautiful only after they undergo a lengthy process of cutting for the best and most fitting shape and only after careful polishing. If the class of new entrance is already established, a similar process ordinarily takes at least three to four generations for a family to become assimilated.

- intelligence is partly inborn and at least 40% of it is due to environmental (social, education and economic) conditions and it is influenced positively or negatively by them;
- culture is an outcome of the social and physical environment in which a particular people lives;
- the off-springs of intermarriages are not only fertile (the criterion on which identification to the same species is based) but also genetically sounder as they enjoy the benefits from the diversity of two different genetic pools;
- most of the racist beliefs are ethnocentric and dictated by self-interest, greedy exploitation;
- and so on.

Palaeontology had also its own go at racism by discovering that the human species originates from Africa and not from Caucasus or a convenient elsewhere, as racists went to claim.

Allport's study, frequently quoted above and below, offers a comprehensive discussion on all aspects of prejudice and it is a classic in the field for its intellectual honesty. It is a highly recommended reading. Although Allport's study is half a century old, it is still valid today since a comparison with Australia and New Zealand a quarter of a century later confirms it by the striking parallels between Allport's findings and observations on past (and still current) American perceptions and attitudes then and today's Australian and New Zealand ones.

### ***Conformism: the stifler of thought***

It is possible to distinguish two types of conformism: one positive and negative the other. Positive conformism regulates the conduct and manners of individuals in such ways that: (a) it respects that set of general rules that are key to a smooth functioning of a society; and, (b) it facilitates coexistence within communities and groups of people with a minimum of fuss or with no friction at all.

That is, any belief, tenet or social rule develops through a process of learning and adjustment to the diverse social milieu in which the individual grows, lives and operates, i.e., family, school, church, work, social and political circles.

A community and groups within that community very often form through the development of sets of common customs and beliefs which act either as the matrix or the cement<sup>34</sup> which binds together that community and those groups as distinct social units.

If customs and beliefs act as matrix, communities and groups sharing them tend to be open, flexible, adaptable and capable to adjust to changes. If they act as cement, communities and groups tend to be self-centred, exclusivist and to impose extreme adherence to its peculiar beliefs and rules of conduct and, therefore, conformity of thought on all their members. At group level, the more hierarchical and defined the power system structure (the pecking order) is, the stricter the conformity demanded.

Thus, an individual that identifies himself with one particular group and community or want to belong to them and to be accepted, tends to conform to their tenets, rules and prejudices as most significant means and signs of seeking membership. Seeking membership to a group is for survival, pack protection, or opportunism, has however less impact on thinking than the degree to which the individual becomes identified with that particular group and surrender his mind to that of the group.

The actual conduct of the individual in behaviour and thought could thus vary from simply passive lip service ("*I do not believe in any of this. But why should I be the one going against the system?*") to a complete espousal and active enforcement of the group's tenets and prejudices in order to preserve the group's cultural pattern.

The most extreme instance of conformism, in which thought, behaviour and action were one, was in Nazi Germany, which led to appalling extreme conclusions. Unfortunately, there were other cases later, but the Nazi was well reported in the Nuremberg Trials records.

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<sup>34</sup> The terms *matrix* and *cement* are here borrowed from sedimentary geology. *Cement* designates a chemically precipitated material – i.e., calcium carbonate or silica – that fills all empty spaces among adjacent grains of a consolidated rock and binds them into a rigid coherent mass liable to undergo fragmentation under violent or constant stresses. *Matrix* is formed by frequently heterogeneous material – i.e., sands, silts and clays – but finer than the clasts (constituents) that characterize a rock, which could then undergo compaction and become consolidated. It is however less rigid than a cemented one and it can even be plastic: thus, it can absorb stresses more easily and it can undergo reshaping without losing its identifying characteristics. In human society's terms, today's Californians may be considered as an example of matrix-bonded society, while the communities of the US Bible Belt would be one of a cement-bonded society.

Between 1941 and 1945, in the Auschwitz Concentration Camp two and a half million men, women and children were murdered there. The gas chambers and ovens, working 24 hours a day, exterminated daily as many as 10,000 human beings, mostly Jews. The deliberate genocide represented what Hitler had called the *final solution* of the Jewish problem. Gold from their teeth, rings was melted down and [together with gems found hidden in clothes] was sent to the Reichsbank. Hair from women's heads was salvaged for commercial purposes. [*Herein*: Soap bars made from human fat and lampshades made with human skin still turned out in shops as Nazi souvenirs.<sup>35</sup>].

Col. Rudolf Hoess, then commandant of Auschwitz, testifying at the Nuremberg Trials, readily admitted these facts. He had received orders in the summer of 1941 when Himmler called him and explained: "The Führer has ordered the final solution of the Jewish question – and we have to carry out this task. For reasons of transportation and isolation, I have picked Auschwitz for this. You have the hard job of carrying this out."

Asked how he felt when receiving such grim orders, Hoess denied any feeling. He answered "Jawhol." (Yes) to Himmler and obediently carried out them, just because two superior officers, first Hitler and then Himmler had told him to do so.

When pressed to say whether the Jews deserved such fate, he complained that such questions didn't mean anything. "Don't you see, we SS were not supposed to think about these things; it never occurred to us." Besides, it was something already taken for granted, he said "We never heard anything else... It was not only newspapers like the *Stürmer*, but it was everything we heard. Even our military and ideological training took for granted that we had to protect Germany from the Jews... It only started to occur to me after the collapse that maybe it was not quite right, after I heard what everybody was saying."

Hoess had put obedience to his superior officer above everything else, above religion, above sympathy [human feelings], above logic. "You can be sure that it was not always a pleasure to see those mountain of corpses and smell the continual burning. But Himmler had ordered it and had even explained the necessity and I really never gave much thought to whether it was wrong. It just seemed a necessity."

[Blind] loyalty and obedience [suppressed] every rational and human impulse. The frenzy of conformity to a Nazi folk-belief and to the Führer's order was a vital factor in Hoess' personality: a compulsive obedience. One cannot suppose Hoess to be a madman. We can only learn from this case that a fanatic ideology may engender conformity of incredible tenacity.

[Quoted by Allport, 1958 ex: G.M. Gilbert, 1947, *Nuremberg Diary*, (Farrar, Strauss: New York), pp 250 and 259 ff.]

The case of Hoess exemplifies to what extreme point conformism may control individuals' thinking, particularly when they grow up in a homogeneous tightly conformist environment where all its voices inculcate the same set of beliefs in all individuals living in it.

However, extreme conformity is not engendered by fanaticism from brainwashing alone but also by opportunism in individuals whose personal ethics is very weak or non-existent. A third case is when identification with the pack is total in individuals whose character is very insecure. A fourth case is when the adult could not help himself because he has learned his views since childhood not only from his family but also from the group he grew up with.

In this learning process, social researchers found the source of conflict within the younger individuals, who are more and more frequently in daily contact with different groups in a playing environment and in school and social life, and between the younger generations and the older, who lived and live in a more homogeneous and more structured social and working milieu (Allport, 1958, ch. 17 and ff.).

It should be stressed: both positive beliefs and negative prejudices, the two facets of *conformism*, are *learned* not inherited but, except in the case of opportunism, they involve an emotional merging of the individual with his family and his group to the same extent of his identification with them. Therefore, *conformist reasoning overlaps or coincides with affective (emotional) reasoning to the degree in which prejudices are held and emotional group bonds prevail over logical reasoning.*

That is, conformist reasoning stems from the few, narrow assumptions of oligothetic or monothetic discourse and, therefore, it must bend logical reasoning to them and force them through a filter of prejudices. Hence, the conflict between factual evidence and prejudice is the source of the frequent contradictions and ambiguities in conformist utterances.

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<sup>35</sup> One of such incidents was widely reported by Italian newspapers in the 1960s.



### **Demagoguery as source of negative exclusivist conformism**

Demagogues are individuals that have the ability to manipulate the emotions of the average person in negative, aggressive and exclusivist directions. They are mostly found in politics. In business they are a blend between the grey eminence, gamesman, jungle fighter and the blusterer personalities (see: Ch 4). In religion, they are found among the so called “crusaders”, “messiahs” and fire-and-brimstone preachers.

Intelligent or not, they have in common a high degree of cunning and opportunism and, frequently, very narrow views derived from limited knowledge and from an even more limited perception of the gamut of human interactions and thought and a very little understanding of today’s world.

They project all situations in black and white, where the black is “the others” and the white is “us”, i.e., them and their followers: there is no gradation in between. They all claim to possess special knowledge or powers or both. In politics and religion, they speak like they are the voice of God to the point that they are able, through Pavlovian emotional conditioning, to subjugate the will and thoughts of their followers to theirs until they promote themselves into an omnipotent god-like figure. Hitler was a good example of this, the Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic was another: both masters at fanning flames of ethnic hatred and uniting his followers behind a banner of resentments, fears, and rage (Goleman *et al.*, 2003).

Their solutions of the problems of the day are very simplistic: scapegoatism. It is a particular someone else’s fault; someone else is our deadly enemy, eternally at work to ruin “us”. In business, the “someone else” may be a competitor, or a group or an individual in the same company. In politics and religion, the “someone else” would be the traditional scapegoats or other despised minorities, sects or religions. Their followers would have success in business and social life and will be saved if they purify themselves of all heterodox thoughts and behaviour and of all outsiders (non believers).

Many ships of the US Navy Indian Fleet regularly berth in Fremantle (Australia) to carry out routine maintenance and re-supply and to give shore leave to their sailors. During one of these visits, a local woman, belonging to one of the fundamentalist evangelist sects, remarked to a colleague of her husband’s: “You would not believe this. Two US sailors came to our church. After the service, they told us that there are only five Christians in the entire fleet.” The man, an agnostic, corrected her: “Since the majority of sailors are downright religious, if not superstitious, your American sailors meant that there are only five members of your sect in the entire fleet.”

Such demagogues may obtain success through a range of cheap psychological tricks but in the short term only and at the expenses of the majority of the scapegoats and, after their inevitable fall, also of their followers. Since they all strive to (absolute) dominance, in religion and politics, they are the major triggers of social strife.

To bring a minor example of demagogues’ tricks: A certain ultra-conservative historian in a country not far away from Thailand, kept prophesizing ethnic strife at any drop of the hat, purporting that the dominant minority was constantly under such a threat from the other minorities. It was obvious to anyone but to him and his party that the major social threat was himself and his party and his prophesies, which stirred up further tensions, were only a blame-the-victim cover-up for the gamut of discriminations that the other minorities were suffering and still suffer.

Because of their need of controlling everything and everyone around them (the so-called control freaks), demagogues instil emotions of fear, anger and distrust of anything and anyone different into their followers and subordinates. But, as such emotions are normally sustainable only in short burst, the resulting environment is formed by exhausted, burnout personalities, watching suspiciously each other and cold, resentful if not openly hostile to all outsiders (Goleman *et al.*, 2003).

Demagogues can be easily picked up by an observer: they are the leaders in a toxic, aggressive, neurotic environment, where there is no hope, no optimism, no creative imagination, no innovation, no free thought and no initiative (Goleman *et al.*, 2003). In any organization, a main indicator of the presence of a demagogue in position of power would be a very high rate of staff turnover among the people who he is in major contact with: superiors, colleagues and subordinates.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> Of course, the manipulations of a demagogue are not the only cause of high staff turnover: poor working conditions and wages; poor working environment and, most of all, poor and incompetent management are the general causes. The distinguishing element is perhaps the turnover of colleagues and immediate superiors, as the poisoning of the working environment by the demagogue affects as many organizational levels he can reach.

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**Major Mental Variables, Factors,  
Attitudes and Actions that govern Reasoning  
under  
Value-neutral, Value-loaded Beliefs,  
Prejudices and other Influences  
- An Essential Glossary -**

**English**

**angle n.** the point or direction from which something is viewed or approached (*literal & figurative*); a standpoint. Cf.: *bias, perspective, standpoint, viewpoint*.

**axiom n.** a rule or principle that is generally considered to be true. Cf.: *belief, conviction, credence, dogma, faith, tenet*.

**belief n.** the feeling that something is definitely true or definitely exists. Cf.: *axiom, conviction, credence, dogma, faith, tenet*.

**bias n. a** an inclination, a propensity, a predisposition (*towards*), cf.: *angle, perspective, standpoint, viewpoint*; prejudice. **b** a directing influence. **Synonyms:** tendency, inclination, leaning, bent, partiality, penchant, predisposition, propensity, proclivity, proneness, predilection, prejudice, bigotry, intolerance, narrow-mindedness, one-sidedness.

**characterization n.** Also **-isation**. The action or result of characterizing; *esp. (a)* portrayal in words etc., description; *(b)* the (effective) creation of a fictitious character or fictitious characters. By extension, *(c)* the way in which someone makes a fictitious person in a book, film, or play seem like a real person; *(d)* the way in which the character of a real person, group or thing is described to highlight real or preconceived favourable or unfavourable traits.

**categorization n.** the action or an act of placing something in a category, classification. *Especially*, to put people or things into groups according to the type of person or thing they are or are preconceived to be.

**conformism n.** thinking and behaving in agreement to the tenets and the norms of the majority or of the group in power to avoid appearing to be different, or forcing people to do this - often used to show disapproval. **Antonym:** nonconformism.

**conviction n.** the condition of being convinced; strong belief on the ground of satisfactory reasons or evidence; convincing quality of expression; a settled belief or opinion. Cf.: *axiom, belief, credence, dogma, faith, tenet*.

**credence n.** the acceptance of something as true [From Late Latin *credentia*, things that are taken as true]

**dogma n.** a set of firm beliefs held by a group of people who expect other people to accept these beliefs without thinking about them. Cf.: *axiom, belief, conviction, credence, faith, tenet*.

**emotion n.** Any of the natural instinctive affections of the mind (e.g. love, horror, pity) which come and go according to one's personality, experiences, and bodily state; a mental feeling. Also, mental feeling as distinguished from knowledge and from will.

**faith n.. a** a strong feeling of trust or confidence in someone or something, e.g.: in a person, organization, or idea. **b** belief and trust in a religion. Cf.: *axiom, belief, conviction, credence, dogma, tenet*.

**frame of reference phrase** a set of standards governing perceptual or logical evaluation or social behaviour. Cf. *values, public opinion*.

**ideology n.** a system of ideas or way of thinking pertaining to a class or individual, especially: as a basis of some economic or political theory or system, regarded as justifying actions; and, to be maintained irrespective of events.

**influence n. 1 a** the power to affect the way someone or something develops, behaves, or thinks without using direct force or orders. **b** ascendancy, moral or political power (*over* or *with* a person or group). **2** An action exerted, imperceptibly or by indirect means, by one person or thing on another so as to cause changes in thinking, conduct, development, conditions, etc. (Followed by *in, on, upon*). **3** a person or thing exercising such action or power.

**judgemented a.** having judgement or discernment of a specified kind.

**judging p.pl. a.** That has the function of judging, judicial; *especially*, able to judge, judicious, discerning. Also, censorious.

**judicious a. 1** Of a person, the faculties etc.: having or exercising sound judgement; discreet, wise, sensible. Now *especially (a)* sensible in relation to practical matters; wise in adapting means to ends; capable and careful in action, prudent; *(b)* sensible in intellectual matters; sound in discernment. **2** Of action, thought, etc.: proceeding from or showing sound judgement (*especially* in practical matters); marked by discretion, wisdom, or good sense.

**Synonyms.** (*adjective*) a judicious course of action wise, prudent, politic, sagacious, shrewd, astute, sensible, common-sense, sound, well-advised, well-considered, well-judged, considered, thoughtful, expedient, practical, discerning, discriminating, informed, intelligent, smart, clever, enlightened, logical, rational, discreet, careful, cautious, circumspect, diplomatic.

**label** *n.* a word or phrase which is used to describe a person, group, or thing, but which is unfair or not correct. In the latter case, labels carry a variable degree of emotivity.

**nonconformism** *n.* thinking and behaving against or differently from the tenets and the norms accepted by the majority in their society or of the group in power. **Antonym:** conformism.

**opinion** *n.* **a** one's ideas or beliefs about a particular subject. **b** judgement or advice from a professional person about something. Cf.: *view(s)*.

**perspective** *n.* (*figurative*) A mental view of the relative importance of the relationships or aspects of a subject or matter; a point of view, a way of regarding a matter. Cf.: *angle, bias, slant, stand point, viewpoint*.

**philosophy** (*of life*) *n.* a set or system of ideas, convictions, opinions, beliefs, or principles of behaviour based on an overall understanding of existence and the universe; a philosophical system or theory; *gen.* a view, an outlook.

**polarization** *n.* (*figurative*) The interpretation of a word etc. in a particular way (*rare*); the accentuation of a difference between two things or groups; the process or state of division into two groups representing extremes of opinion, of social and economic status, etc.; the process of forming an extreme opinion or reaching a judgement governed by it.

**position** *n.* (*Logic & Philosophy*) **1 a** the action of positing; the putting forward of a proposition; affirmation, postulation. **b** A proposition laid down or stated; something posited; an assertion, a tenet. **Synonym:** *positio* [L.]. **2** The situation which a person metaphorically occupies in relation to others, to circumstances, etc.; condition, a state of affairs; a point of view. Cf.: *stand point, viewpoint*.

**preconception** *n.* a conception, opinion or belief that is formed prior to actual knowledge or experience before the facts and that may be wrong; a prepossession, a prejudice.

**prejudge** *v.t.* **1** Affect adversely or unjustly; prejudice, harm, injure (*Scottish*). **2** Pass judgement or pronounce sentence on before trial or without proper inquiry; form a judgement on (a person, opinion, action, etc.) prematurely and without due consideration. **3** Anticipate (another) in judging.

**prejudgement** *n.* Also **-dgm-**. The action or fact of prejudging someone or something; a conclusion formed before examination of the facts; prejudice.

**prejudicate** *v.* Now *rare* or *obs.* Pa. t. & pple **-ated, -ate**. **1 v.t.** = prejudice *v.* 1. **2 a v.t.** = prejudge 1. **b v.i. & t.** Form (a judgement) prematurely or without due consideration. **3 v.t.** = prejudice *v.* 3.

**prejudicately** *adv.* in a prejudiced manner; with prejudice.

**prejudication** *n.* (a) prejudgement.

**prejudicative** *a.* characterized by prejudgement.

**prejudice** *n.* **I 1 a** Harm or injury to a person or that results may result from a judgement or action, esp. one in which his or her rights are disregarded. **b general** Injury, damage, harm. **II 2 a** A prior judgement; *esp.* a judgement formed hastily or before due consideration. **b** The action of judging an event beforehand; prognostication. *rare*. **3** Preconceived opinion not based on actual experience; bias, partiality. Also, an instance of this; an unreasoning preference or objection; a bias. *Usu. derogative*. **4** A preliminary or anticipatory judgement; a preconceived idea of what will happen; an anticipation.

**Synonyms:** *noun* **1.** *have a prejudice against young people*|*forget his prejudices against people from other countries* bias, partiality, jaundiced eye, preconceived idea, preconceived notion, preconception, prejudgement, predetermination. **2.** *employers showing prejudice towards older people*|*found guilty of racial prejudice* bias, discrimination, partisanship, partiality, preference, one-sidedness, chauvinism, bigotry, narrow-mindedness, intolerance, unfairness, unjustness, racism, sexism, ageism, heterosexism. **3.** *without prejudice to any future judgement*|*without prejudice to his claim* detriment, disadvantage, damage, injury, harm, hurt, loss.

**prejudice** *v.t.* **I 1 a** Affect adversely or unfavourably; injure or impair the validity of (a right, claim, etc.). **b** Injure materially; damage. Now *rare*. **II 2** Judge beforehand; *esp.* prejudge unfavourably. *rare*. **3** Affect or fill with a prejudice; give a bias to, influence the mind or judgement of beforehand and often unfairly (Followed by *against, in favour of.*) (Earlier as *prejudiced.*)

**Synonyms:** *verb* **1.** *wonder whether newspaper articles had prejudiced the attitude of the jury* bias, make partial, make partisan, colour, poison, jaundice, influence, sway, predispose. **2.** *his conviction may prejudice his chances* be prejudicial to, be detrimental to, be deleterious, be disadvantageous to, damage, injure, harm, hurt, mar, spoil, impair, undermine. See: *prejudicial*.

**prejudiced** *ppl a.* Affected or influenced by prejudice; biased beforehand (Followed by *against, in favour of*).

**prejudicial** *a.* **1** Causing prejudice; of a harmful tendency; detrimental or damaging to rights, interests, etc. **2** Of the nature of prejudice; prejudiced, unfavourably prepossessed.

**pre-judicial** *a.* *Roman Law.* Designating an action to determine preliminary questions, e.g. as to status, which may affect the outcome of a suit.

**prejudicious** *a.* **1** Harmful, detrimental; **Synonym:** *prejudicial* 1. **2** Full of prejudice; **Synonym:** *prejudiced*.

**prepossession** *n.* a preconceived opinion which tends to bias the mind; unfavourable or (now chiefly) favourable predisposition.

**presumption** *n.* **1** something that is thought to be true because it is very likely. **2** the act of thinking something is true, bad, or good until it is shown to not be true, bad, or good. **3** behaviour that seems rude and too confident.

**public opinion** *phrase* the set of opinions or beliefs that ordinary people have about a particular subject. Cf. *values, frame of reference, hearsay.*

**ratiocination** *n.* Now *literary.* **1 a** The action or process of reasoning, especially. by using syllogisms. **b** An instance of this; a conclusion arrived at by reasoning. **2** The power of reasoning. *rare.* **Opposite:** *rationalization.*

**rationalization** *n.* **1 a** the action of explaining on a rational basis, of making rational and consistent, of explaining away rationally. **b** *Psychology* the action of explaining or justifying (one's behaviour, attitude, opinion, actions) with plausible but specious reasons, usually unwittingly. **Opposite:** *ratiocination.*

**slant** *n.* a way of regarding a thing, a point of view; an interpretation; a bias. Cf.: *angle, bias, perspective, standpoint, viewpoint.*

**standpoint** *n.* **a** a particular way of thinking about or judging a situation. **b** the position from which a person views an object, scene, etc.; a point of view. **c** A mental point of view; a person's attitude in relation to an object of mental contemplation. Cf.: *angle, bias, perspective, viewpoint.*

**stereotype** *n.* A preconceived, standardized, and oversimplified impression, often unfair and untrue, of the characteristics which typify a person, situation, etc., often shared by all members of a society or certain social groups; an attitude based on such a preconception: also, a person or thing appearing to conform closely to such a standardized impression.

**supposition** *n.* something thought as true, even though it is not certain and it cannot be proved

**tag** *n.* a word or phrase which is used to describe a person, group, or thing, but which is often unfair or not correct.

**tenet** *n.* a principle or belief, especially one that is part of a larger system of beliefs, e.g.: a doctrine, dogma, principle, or opinion, in religion, philosophy, politics, etc., held by a group or person. Cf.: *axiom, belief, conviction, credence, dogma, faith.*

**value**<sup>37</sup> *n.* The worth, usefulness, or importance of a thing; relative merit or status according to the estimated desirability or utility of a thing. **b** Estimate or opinion *of*, regard or liking *for*, a person or thing.

**scale of values** a graded classification of values which is arranged from top to bottom by the conscience of the individual person and which serves as point of reference in personal conduct and in formulating personal judgements.

**value judgement** a judgement predicating merit or demerit of its subject;

**value-laden, value-loaded** *adjs.* weighted or biased in favour of certain values;

**value-neutral** *a.* involving no value judgements, value-free;

**value-orientation** the direction given to a person's attitudes and thinking by his or her beliefs or standards;

**value-system** any set of connected or interdependent values.

**values** *n.* **a** the principles or moral standards of a person or social group; the generally accepted or personally held judgement of what is valuable and important in life. Cf. *public opinion, frame of reference.* **b** One's ideas about what is right and wrong, or what is important in life.

**view** *n.* **a** a particular manner of considering or regarding something; a mental attitude; an opinion, idea, or belief concerning a particular subject or thing. Frequently in *plural.* **b** An aspect or light in which something is regarded or considered. Cf.: *opinion.*

**viewpoint** *n., point of view* *phrase:* a mental standpoint from which a matter is considered; that is, the position from which a thing is viewed or regarded; a way of thinking, frame of reference, perspective, angle, slant.



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<sup>37</sup> **value** and **values** are, through the French verb *valoir* (to be worth) – noun *valeur*, from the late Latin administrative terms *ad valorem* and *valorē* from the verb *valere*, a Latin verb already with many meanings that survive in its modern derivatives. The plural, **values**, is after a general confluence of figurative meanings, also present in the other languages, leading to that of “what is true, beautiful or good according to a personal judgement more or less in agreement with that of the society of the time.” E.g.: ethical, moral, social, aesthetic, etc. values.  
**ad valorem** *adv. & a. phr.* [L = according to the value.] is still in current use as a taxation term: in proportion to the estimated value of goods.