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UKRAINIAN EDUCATION IN AUSTRALIA

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This paper provides a concise overview of Ukrainian school education in Australia (its focus is confined principally to school education at the primary and secondary levels). It traces its historical development, reviews its current state of affairs, describes the nature and significance of its contributions and outlines its key challenges and future prospects. These issues are anchored in a brief overview of Australia and of Ukrainian settlement in Australia which follow.

Key words: Ukrainian settlement in Australia, Ukrainian school education in Australia, school education, primary and secondary levels.

Стаття містить стислий огляд української шкільної освіти в Австралії (основна увага зосереджена лише на шкільній освіті початкового та середнього рівнів). Автор простежує історичний розвиток, аналізує поточний стан справ, описує характер і значення здобутків, окреслює основні проблеми українського шкільництва в Австралії та його перспективи. Висновки підкріплені коротким оглядом історії Австралії та історії українських поселень на цьому материку.

Ключові слова: українські поселення в Австралії, українська шкільна освіта в Австралії, шкільна освіта, початковий та середній рівень.

The achievements of the Ukrainian community in Australia over the past seven decades are significant. Owing chiefly to the prescience and determination of its founding generation, Australia's Ukrainian community of today boasts an established, formidable organisation, one that is closely integrated with and that contributes meaningfully to broader Australian society, the global Ukrainian diaspora and, ultimately, the Ukrainian homeland. While the development and viability of any ethnic community typically depends on, inter alia, the existence of and cooperation amongst various institutions, the community's educational architecture assumes a uniquely important role. This is notably the case in respect of Ukrainian education in Australia.

From the moment they arrived in significant number on Australian shores in the years following the second world war, Ukrainians have understood the imperative of Ukrainian education, a recognition reflected both by the rapid emergence of Ukrainian schooling in Australia as well as its subsequent growth and rise in standing. Over many years, the educational infrastructure that Ukrainians assembled has performed a central role in arming many thousands of young Australians with a command of the Ukrainian language, strengthening their awareness and appreciation of Ukrainian history and traditions and, most fundamentally, reaffirming their Ukrainian identity.

Equally, its activities have assisted, both directly and indirectly, in familiarising everyday Australians, as well as successive Australian governments at all levels, of the history of the Ukrainian people and of their plight and aspirations. In doing so, the Ukrainian education system in Australia has, over the course of the past seven decades, contributed to the perpetuation of Ukrainian life, the sustenance of the Ukrainian language and the defence and assertion of the

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Ukrainian identity and independence, both at considerable distance from the Ukrainian homeland and at a critical period in Ukraine's proud and complex history.

The importance of these achievements notwithstanding, Ukrainian education in Australia today confronts a number of significant difficulties which challenge its management and fundamentally threaten its viability. These demographic, cultural, administrative, geographic and economic factors impact both demand and supply and warrant attention and careful analysis.

Profile of Australia

Commonly referred to as the fifth continent, Australia is a land like no other. It is not, however, among the first countries that typically come to mind for your average Ukrainian national when the topic of the diaspora casually crops up in conversation (at least not in the experience of this author). Australia comprises a vast mainland, the large and occasionally overlooked island state of Tasmania and more than eight thousand more minor islands within its maritime borders. Characterised by a notably varied and variable climate, from its tropical north to the temperate south, Australia is a land of extremes, one 'of droughts and flooding rains' [1]. Her wide, brown mainland, as much as seventy per cent of which is arid or semi-arid desert land, spans almost four thousand kilometres from her east coast to her west coast, more than twice the distance from Lviv to London, and has a corresponding flight time of around five hours (Australian Bureau of Statistics [ABS] 2006, p. 12, p. 20; Geoscience Australia 2016a; Taylor 2002, p. 4).

Encompassing territory of more than seven and one-half million square kilometres, Australia is the world's sixth largest nation, dwarfing Ukraine by a factor of more than twelve (Geoscience Australia 2016b; State Statistics Service of Ukraine [SSSU] 2014, pp. 19-20; United Nations [UN] 2015a, p. 63). This scale of disparity is comparable to that between the recently dwindling value of Ukraine's (officially reported and recorded) output and the size of the resource-rich, export-oriented Australian economy, the world's twelfth largest and one that has entered its twenty-fifth consecutive year of growth, the second-longest period of uninterrupted expansion of any advanced economy in modern times (International Monetary Fund 2016).

Yet the notably culturally diverse Australian population, a major fraction of which is foreign-born, is relatively modest in size and stands at twenty-four million, around one-half of that of Ukraine (ABS 2016a, p. 1; 2016b; SSSU 2015a, p. 11; UN 2015b, p. 22, p. 26, p. 83, p. 87) [2]. Thus while Ukraine has as many as seventy-five residents for each square kilometre of its territory, Australia boasts but three. Its exceptionally low general density notwithstanding, Australia's population exhibits a strikingly distinctive, highly concentrated spatial distribution, one that differs notably from that of Ukraine. Almost ninety per cent of Australian residents live in urban areas, as much as two-thirds of the population is concentrated in capital cities and more than eight out of ten inhabitants live within fifty kilometres of the country's vast coastline (ABS 2003, p. 1, p. 3; 2016c; Department of Infrastructure and Transport, Australia 2011, p. 5, p. 96; Hugo et al. 2015, pp. 25-26; National Sustainability Council 2013, p. 241). By contrast, Ukraine's level of urbanisation is just sixty-nine per cent, its administrative centres account for less than one-third of the national population and the overwhelming majority of the country's residents live inland (SSSU 2015a, p. 11; 2015b, pp. 36-108; UN 2015c, p. 199, p. 201).

Whereas the territory of Ukraine is divided into twenty-seven administrative regions, among them the twenty-four Ukrainian oblasts, the two Ukrainian cities with special status, namely Kyiv and Sevastopol, and the Ukrainian Autonomous Republic of Crimea (Ukrainska Avtonomna Respublika Krym), Australia consists of just six states and two major self-

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governing territories. Ukrainian education and the broader Ukrainian community are based in the city of Melbourne, the country's second most populated with four and one-half million residents and the capital of Victoria, itself the smallest of the mainland states by land mass (ABS 2016c). The distance from Lviv to Melbourne is more than fifteen thousand kilometres, the equivalent of around twenty-four hours of actual air travel (closer to thirty hours inclusive of traditional transit stops).

Australia was settled by Britain in the late eighteenth century with the establishment of a series of penal colonies. Over time its population increased steadily as free settlers arrived from Britain, gradually outnumbering the body of convicts. The first major, widely-telegraphed discovery of gold in the middle of the nineteenth century, a defining event in the nation's history, triggered a gold rush, attracting migrants to Australia from around the world in significant number and precipitating a twofold increase of the population within just five years [3]. A total of six separate self-governing colonies of Australia were eventually established. In 1901, the colonies united to form the federal Commonwealth of Australia.

Ukrainian settlement in Australia

While the arrival of the first individual Ukrainians on Australian shores dates back to the nineteenth century, the large-scale migration of Ukrainians to Australia began in earnest in the aftermath of the second world war, predominantly in the late nineteen forties and early nineteen fifties (Department of Immigration and Citizenship, Australia 2014, p. 1). The mass of Ukrainian migrants during these years comprised largely of young displaced persons who had been transported to Germany during the early nineteen forties for the purposes of labour and who had subsequently been accommodated in camps that were administered by the UN across Germany as well as in Austria and Italy. Their resettlement in Australia proceeded principally under the auspices of the International Refugee Organization (IRO; the precursor to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) with which the Australian government had fashioned an agreement in 1947 to select and admit individuals and families of various nationalities who had become displaced from their home countries during the war and who continued to be housed in the postwar refugee camps in Europe, either unable or unwilling to be repatriated.

The war in the Pacific had reaffirmed and elevated concern within Australia, then a nation of but seven million people, about its vulnerability to foreign military threat, namely its capacity to deter and repel enemy encroachment and invasion (Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics [CBCS] 1949, pp. 12-15). Its mainland had come under direct, deadly attack for the first time in its post-colonial history and the country had suffered notable casualties, both at home but in particular abroad. At the same time, preparation was being made for Australia's transition to a peacetime footing. Detailed policy planning, underway since the early nineteen forties, proceeded within a broader vision for Australia's postwar reconstruction that had been fashioned by prescient figures in government circles during the respective wartime and postwar administrations of prime ministers Curtin and Chifley, one that would set the nation on a path of long-term expansion and nation-building infrastructure development. Yet in the immediate aftermath of the war, the domestic economy was characterised by acute, widespread shortages in labour across key industries that threatened to undermine national reconstruction. More fundamentally, the architects of Australia's new postwar order apprehended that a country so scantily inhabited was inherently inhibited in its capacity to achieve the fuller employment and sustained, long-term growth and prosperity that they had envisioned.

The nation, resolved the Chifley government, confronted an unambiguous choice: either

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'populate or perish' [4]. It determined that Australia stood at somewhat of a crossroads whereby the large-scale expansion of its population represented a strategic imperative, one that was essential to strengthening the nation's industrial and military capabilities and vital to both its long-term economic and national security interests. Immigration would provide the principal source of the population growth to which the government had committed. Thus the IRO program, known as the mass resettlement scheme for displaced persons, represented a major component of the broader postwar immigration initiative upon which Australia had embarked [5].

Between 1947 and 1954, Australia accepted more than one hundred seventy thousand men, women and children under the IRO scheme (CBCS 1956, p. 614). Major fractions of this intake originated from Poland, Yugoslavia, Ukraine, Latvia, Hungary, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia and Estonia. The body of Ukrainians admitted to Australia during this period numbered approximately twenty-one thousand (Gorton 1966; Seneta 1986). The Australian census conducted at the end of June of 1954 captured most of this figure, recording some seventeen thousand Australian residents of Ukrainian nationality, more than ninety-nine per cent of whom reportedly arrived in Australia between the end of the war and the date of the census, with as many as eighty-three per cent having reached Australian shores during the two-year period of June 1948 to June 1950 alone (CBCS 1957, pp. 54-55, pp. 62-63). Males accounted for fifty-seven per cent of the recorded Ukrainian population and were generally older. The median male age was in the early thirties bracket, while the corresponding average female age range was late twenties (CBCS 1957, pp. 54-55, pp. 58-61) [6].

The same census recorded almost fifteen thousand Australian residents as having been born in Ukraine, a figure that, according to subsequent surveys, would steadily and naturally decline over time to barely nine thousand by the early nineteen nineties (ABS 2004a, p. 170; CBCS 1957, p. 22) [7]. However, Australia's Ukraine-born population would rise in number for the first time in decades following a second, smaller wave of Ukrainian migration to Australia that occurred following the declaration of Ukraine's independence in 1991 and an associated easing of cross-border travel restrictions. This body of migrants, a notable fraction of which had travelled to relatives already settled in Australia, numbered into the thousands. Recast census data indicate that by the late nineteen nineties the number of Australian residents who had been born in Ukraine had risen to more than eighteen thousand (ABS 2016b).

Like postwar migrants to Australia who originated from other countries, Ukrainians were initially housed and settled in migration facilities that had been established and administered by the government. These centres, camps and hostels, many of which were converted, refurbished military barracks, were located both in urban and rural areas across the country—in New South Wales (including in Bathurst, Chullora, Cowra, Greta, Parkes, Scheyville and Uranquinty), Victoria (including in Benalla, Bonegilla, Mildura, Rushworth and Somers), South Australia (including in Finsbury, which was subsequently renamed Pennington, and Woodside), Western Australia (including in Cunderdin, Graylands and Northam), Queensland (including in Cairns, Colmslie, Enoggera, Stuart and Wacol) and Tasmania (in Brighton). Men were required to complete two-year work industry contracts with the commonwealth in fields determined by the government, while separate camps were established for women and children. Only after successfully meeting their contractual obligations were men eligible for permanent residency and permitted to relocate to alternative places of residence with their families.

As the migrant camps gradually closed, relatively few Ukrainians remained in the vicinity of those sites. In pursuit of more favourable employment and living conditions, the significant majority of Ukrainians relocated to the suburban outskirts of Australia's chief industrial and population centres, namely Sydney, Melbourne, Adelaide, Brisbane and Perth. As

of the mid nineteen fifties, more than two-thirds of Ukrainians lived either in New South Wales (thirty-five per cent) or Victoria (thirty-three per cent), with notably smaller fractions of the population located in South Australia (fifteen per cent), Western Australia (eight per cent), Queensland (six per cent), Tasmania (two per cent), the Australian Capital Territory (one per cent) and the Northern Territory (less than one per cent) (CBCS 1957, pp. 184-185).

Within a relatively short space of time Ukrainians had adapted to Australian life and society. They had strengthened their command of English, adjusted to the local climate, developed their work skills and capacities and joined the ranks of the workforce, including as skilled and non-skilled factory workers and, to a much lesser extent, in the professional class. Like migrants from other countries, Ukrainians were granted the right to Australian citizenship after having successfully undertaken a naturalisation process over a period of five years which included English language testing. Along with a small number of other birthplace groups, Ukrainians exhibited the highest naturalisation rates. By the middle of the nineteen sixties, approximately eighty-five per cent of Ukrainians settled in Australia had naturalised and, within two decades, more than ninety-six per cent of migrants who had been born in Ukraine held Australian citizenship (ABS 1991, p. 8; Gorton 1966). This trend would continue with the post-independence wave of migration and by 2001, ninety-five per cent of foreign-born Australian residents identifying Ukrainian ancestry had secured Australian citizenship (ABS 2004b, p. 92).

The beginnings of organised Ukrainian community life and an institutional infrastructure emerged even within resettlement camps, as Ukrainians became actively engaged in political, cultural, educational and religious activities. Ukrainian schooling was offered within these camp settings, focusing in particular on Ukrainian language and religious education. The development of new and existing community organisations accelerated beyond the confines of the migrant camps, based predominantly in and around prominent cities. Various community organisations were formed, including general Ukrainian associations (hromady) and others for women (such as Soiuz Ukrainok) and youth (such as Plast and the Ukrainian Youth Association, SUM), as well as various compatriot associations, choirs, dance groups and sport teams. In earlier years, Ukrainians in Australia had begun building churches and Ukrainian community houses (domivky) for community social activity such as ceremonies, concerts, festivals and theatre performances. At least one Ukrainian community house, as well an orthodox and Greek-catholic church, was built in each major city across the country. In subsequent years, land was secured for youth camps, schooling, financial institutions (co-operatives), aged care facilities and ski clubs.

In an effort to manage and coordinate the activities of the growing number and size of secular organisations, a peak national umbrella body representing various community organisations was established in 1950. The Association of Ukrainians in Australia (Obiednannia Ukraintsiv Avstralii), as it was initially known, was within four years renamed the Australian Federation of Ukrainian Organisations (Soiuz Ukrainskykh Orhanizatsii Avstralii) which today represents more than twenty community organisations throughout the country.

The Ukrainian community in Australia, including individuals who had been born in Australia and Ukraine, as well as elsewhere, would expand notably over the decades. The 1986 census recorded more than twenty-nine thousand Australian residents stating either exclusive or partial Ukrainian ancestry, a community that continued to be notably concentrated in Victoria (thirty-four per cent), New South Wales (thirty-one per cent) and, to a lesser extent, South Australia (sixteen per cent) (ABS 2004b, p. 12; Seneta 1989, p. 89). By this time, the fraction of the Ukrainian community that had been born in Australia was approaching one-half, while a total of thirty-one per cent of residents stating Ukrainian ancestry had themselves been born in Ukraine with a further ten per cent born in either Germany or Austria and four per cent born in

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Poland (Seneta 1989, pp. 89-90).

At the most recent census, conducted in 2011, more than thirty-eight thousand Australian residents declared Ukrainian ancestry (Department of Immigration and Border Protection, Australia [DIBP] 2014, p. 61). According to that same survey, the number of Australian residents who were born in Ukraine today stands at approximately sixteen thousand, a figure which has remained largely unchanged since the early nineteen nineties (ABS 2016b). More than three-quarters of this community is located in either Victoria or New South Wales, overwhelmingly in Melbourne and Sydney (Victorian Multicultural Commission, Australia 2013, p. 1).

Ukrainian education in Australia

The development and viability of any diaspora community, as well as the practice and perpetuation of its culture, typically depend on the existence of and cooperation amongst various institutions and the performance of a number of activities. Language and education more broadly assume foremost importance and represent an essential, fundamental dimension of a robust community for which no substitute exists. Since arriving on Australian shores in the years following the second world war, Ukrainians have recognised this imperative, their predicament notwithstanding. This is reflected both by the relatively rapid emergence of Ukrainian schooling in Australia, even within the confines of resettlement camps, as well as the subsequent growth and rise in standing of the Ukrainian education program within broader Australian society over subsequent decades.

The emergence of early schools: the late forties and early fifties

Organised Ukrainian schooling in Australia initially proceeded within migrant camps in the late nineteen forties. Teaching in these schools focused on language and religious education and was conducted by those residents equipped with training experience and credentials that were both relevant and of at least a basic standard. While the extent of their training and experience was, in many cases, very basic indeed and despite the resident teachers being very modest in number (very few held a higher education credential), these schools made a valuable, lasting contribution, however limited, to the education of young Ukrainians, one that is all the more notable given the setting and availability of resources.

The years that followed the dispersal of Ukrainians among the broader Australian community represented a period of significant development for Ukrainian schooling. During the nineteen fifties and sixties, numerous schools were established by various organisations, typically at Ukrainian community houses but also in private homes in areas with a significant local concentration of Ukrainian families.

In the early nineteen fifties, Ukrainian schools in broader Australian society were guided and supported by newly formed parish administrations (bratstva). In 1951, the metropolitan Andrei Sheptytskyi Ukrainian school was established in Melbourne. Teaching commenced in July of that year with an initial cohort of thirty students divided between two classes (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 699). It remains to this day the oldest and largest Ukrainian school in Australia. Originally situated on Bourke street in Melbourne's central business district, the school relocated in the middle of the nineteen seventies to the inner city suburb of North Melbourne at the site of the Ukrainian Greek-catholic cathedral where some ten classrooms were built for the school as part of the parish hall building adjacent to the church itself (in the past decade, schooling has moved to refurbished classrooms beneath the cathedral).

At that time of its founding it was the sole Ukrainian school in Australia and was one of only three schools to have existed across the country in 1951 (Nytchenko 1960, pp. 211-212). Its

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counterparts were the Kniahynia Olha Ukrainian school in Sydney, where twenty students had initially enrolled, and the Ivan Franko Ukrainian school in Adelaide, which had a student body of eleven when teaching in its two classes commenced in November of that year (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 712, p. 718).

By as early as 1953, the number of Ukrainian schools around the country had begun to rise notably. Those that appeared in Victoria were heavily concentrated in the northern and western suburbs of Melbourne—areas with significant Ukrainian populations—including Broadmeadows, where schooling commenced in July 1952 with a cohort of twenty-three students, as well as Pascoe Vale (1952), Newport (November 1952), St. Albans (May 1953), Glenroy (June 1953) and Sunshine-Ardeer, where thirty-eight students attended when the school opened in July 1953 (Broznytskyi 1966, pp. 701-707). The emergence of these schools brought the size of the student body across the state to approximately two hundred fifty (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 698). In Sydney, a total of one hundred twenty-three students were enrolled in the six Ukrainian schools that had opened in that city by 1953, while a further sixty-seven students were by that time enrolled in Ukrainian schooling in South Australia (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 713, pp. 718-719). That same year saw the establishment of the first Ukrainian school in the nation's capital.

While activity in the east of the country was gathering momentum, Ukrainian schools were also being developed many thousands of kilometres away in Western Australia, both in the suburbs of the state's capital, Perth (including in Melville, Victoria Park and Inglewood in 1952 and in Highgate in 1953), as well as in Northam, the location of a migrant camp some one hundred kilometres north-east of Perth (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 722).

Schools around the country would be named in honour of various prominent Ukrainians including (in addition to those aforementioned) Volodymyr Velykyi, Taras Shevchenko and Markiian Shashkevych. In 1954, the Lesia Ukrainka Ukrainian community school was founded in Victoria with an initial cohort of eight students (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 704). The school continues to operate to this day in Noble Park in suburban Melbourne.

The peak of Ukrainian schooling activity: the mid-fifties to early sixties
The period from the middle of the nineteen fifties to the early nineteen sixties saw a rapid rise in Ukrainian schooling activity in Australia. By the end of 1955, the number of Ukrainian schools around the country had reached thirty-nine, as many as seventeen of which were located in Victoria, with more than seventy teachers and a national student body that had expanded to more than sixteen hundred (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 728; 1994, pp. 733-735; Slipetska 1993, p. 279; 1995, p. 243; 1998, p. 572). Moreover, one or more Ukrainian schools had by this time been established in all but one of Australia's eight states and major territories (the exception was the notably remote and sparsely populated Northern Territory).

Ukrainian schooling activity in Australia would peak during the late nineteen fifties and early nineteen sixties. During this period, there were more than fifty schools in operation across the country, while the number of teachers was around one hundred fifty and the number of students enrolled at Ukrainian schools across Australia stood at more than twenty-one hundred (Broznytskyi 1966, pp. 761-763; 1994, p. 735; Nytchenko 1960, pp. 211-212; Slipetska 1993, p. 279; 1995, p. 243; 1998, p. 572). Victoria alone accounted for more than one-half of the country's Ukrainian schools and almost one-half of the national Ukrainian student body (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 761; 1994, p. 733; Nytchenko 1960, p. 212).

Students during these early years were mainly the children of the first generation of postwar refugees to Australia. A number of these children were themselves immigrants who had arrived in Australia with their parents at a young age, in many cases having been born in

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Germany either while their parents were in forced labour settings or while they were living in temporary displaced persons camps in the years between the end of the war and their departure to Australia. In both cases, these children had a strong sense of Ukrainian identity, spoke Ukrainian at home and, by their very existence, spurred the demand for some form of organised Ukrainian schooling during this period.

A gradual decline: the late sixties to today

As of the middle of the nineteen sixties, the size of Ukrainian schooling in Australia remained formidable, with more than one hundred thirty teachers and almost eighteen hundred students enrolled in thirty-eight schools across the country (Broznytskyi 1966, p. 766). But by the end of the decade, demand had begun to notably curtail. A number of smaller schools in particular had by this time either closed or merged with their larger counterparts, as a number of inevitable realities began to set in and as various challenges, previously not encountered, began to emerge. These factors included: the natural demographic cycle of a slowing of the birth rates of Ukrainian families, a growth in the number of families of mixed heritage (intermarriages between people of Ukrainian and other origins) and an increasing sparseness of Ukrainian families. Moreover, not all young parents necessarily saw a compelling practical value in a Ukrainian education for their Australia-born children.

These and other factors meant that by the early nineteen seventies the number of schools had fallen to twenty-five with a student body of less than fourteen hundred (Slipetska 1998, p. 572). The decline would steadily continue. Within a decade less than twenty schools remained and by the middle of the nineteen eighties the size of the national student body was less than one thousand for the first time in more than three decades (Slipetska 1998, p. 572). The schools that continued to operate in Victoria (in North Melbourne, Noble Park, Sunshine, Essendon and Geelong) and New South Wales (in Sydney, Lidcombe, Cabramatta, Merrylands, Blacktown, Newcastle and Wollongong) accounted for around three-quarters of the national student body, with the remainder of students were enrolled in schools in Adelaide (seventeen per cent), Western Australia (three per cent), Canberra (two per cent) and Queensland (two per cent) (Broznytskyi 1994, p. 733; Kovalenko 1983, p. 38). At the time of Ukrainian independence only fifteen Ukrainian schools were in operation in Australia in which seven hundred sixty students were enrolled and by the late nineteen nineties, just twelve schools remained with four hundred fifty students and less than eighty teachers (Slipetska 1993, p. 279; 1995, p. 243; 1998, p. 572).

The trend of decline would inevitably continue following the turn of the century and within just one decade there were only eight schools in operation around the country (with three in Victoria, two in Sydney, two in Adelaide and one in Perth) while the number of teachers had fallen below fifty and the student body had contracted to less than three hundred, almost two-thirds of which was based in the three remaining Victorian schools with almost one-half enrolled at the Ukrainian parish school in North Melbourne alone (Ukrainian Education Council of Australia [UECA] 2009, p. 141; 2012, p. 23). Ukrainian schooling today continues to operate at similar, relatively modest levels (UECA 2015).

Structure and organisation of schools

Teaching at Ukrainian schools would typically occur each Saturday (when students were not attending regular Australian schooling) from nine o'clock in the morning to around one o'clock or two o'clock in the afternoon. In some instances it was conducted in the evenings during the Australian working week. During the nineteen fifties schooling generally began at the kindergarten level (from the age of three years) and continued from years one to seven. In 1960, the length of schooling was extended by two years to year nine and, thereafter, to year ten.

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Whereas Ukrainian schools were generally referred to as 'native schools' (ridni shkoly), schooling levels above year seven would be known as shkoly ukrainoznavstva. Over time, the alignment between Ukrainian and Australian schooling programs has strengthened in respect of curriculum, program length and scheduling.

Since the middle of the nineteen seventies, a number of Ukrainian schools in Australia, such as those based in North Melbourne and Noble Park in Melbourne, have also offered high-level, advanced courses at the year eleven and twelve levels, the final two years of secondary education in Australia. These are formal Ukrainian language subjects that are recognised by the Australian government education system. The assessment results obtained by students in these years, including those for government examinations, contribute to their overall outcomes for their year twelve education which in turn forms the basis for their subsequent admission to higher education at tertiary institutions. The Australian government, which pursues an inclusive policy of multiculturalism, awards an additional ten per cent in marking for students taking a foreign language such as Ukrainian. The rise in standing of Ukrainian language study that is associated with its inclusion at year eleven and twelve levels has, over the years, meant a general strengthening in demand for the courses.

A range of subjects has been taught at Ukrainian schools at various levels over the years, including language, history, geography, religion, literature and broader Ukrainian culture. In the early years of Ukrainian schooling in Australia, students relied on textbooks that had been prepared by individuals in other countries of Ukraine's western diaspora. By the nineteen sixties published material had emerged that had been prepared within Australia's Ukrainian community. The textbook authored in Australia by Mariia Deiko became widely adopted among Ukrainian primary-level classrooms both across Australia and abroad. More recently, students have increasingly drawn on textbooks that have been developed in Ukraine.

Many schools have also incorporated choirs, musical groups and, in some cases, dance classes into their curriculum. In addition to regular schooling and classes, students participate in concerts on occasions such as mother's day, father's day, easter, christmas and the end of the school year. Students and teachers also partake in various international festivals as well as community events on significant dates of the Ukrainian calendar, such as independence day, the two hundredth birthday of Taras Shevchenko in 2014, the one hundred seventy-fifth anniversary of Kobzar in 2015 and the eightieth anniversary commemoration of the holodomor. Moreover, Ukrainian students and schools have in recent years participated notably in the annual Petro Yatsyk international Ukrainian language competition.

Support, administration and teacher training

Ukrainian schools were initially supported primarily by the parents of students as well as by other private sponsors. This support covered a number of aspects of the operation of schools, including minimal teacher payments. In later years the inclusion of Ukrainian schooling in the federal government's multiculturalism program meant that it was eligible to receive government support. The Australian government encourages students to learn foreign languages and to retain and strengthen the languages associated with their heritage. To this end, it supports language schools, including Ukrainian schools, by providing assistance in the form of grants as well as courses for educators on language training methods in an effort to strengthen the quality and standard of schooling.

In previous years, the Ukrainian community had on its own initiative, in the absence of such government support, formed teacher training schools that prepared younger generations of teachers for roles in Ukrainian schools. The courses that were established in 1968 in Lidcombe, a suburb of Sydney with a notable Ukrainian community, served to train both existing and

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prospective teachers to teach at Ukrainian schools at both the primary and secondary levels. The syllabus included teaching methodology, educational psychology, language and literature. The courses were developed by members of the Ukrainian community who had gained teaching experience in Ukraine prior to their arrival in Australia. The inaugural cohort comprised six students, some of whom already held teaching roles at various Ukrainian schools (Koscharsky 1989, p. 39). While completion of the course did not involve the conferring of a qualification (since the course was formally recognised only within the Ukrainian community), it would equip a number of teachers with an essential and uniformly defined set of teaching skills.

The management of Ukrainian schools was initially taken on by various discrete bodies within each state, including churches as well as both community and youth organisations. While effective state-level education councils existed, national integration and coordination was notably lacking. This void was addressed in the middle of the nineteen fifties. In 1954, the Education Council of Victoria (Shkilna Rada Viktorii), which had itself come into existence two years earlier, became known as the Tsentralna Shkilna Rada and undertook to strengthen the coordination and management of Ukrainian schooling activity across the country. The inaugural national conference of Ukrainian school teachers (pershyi uchytelskyi zizd), held in 1956, formalised the establishment of a national governing body, the Ukrainian Education Council of Australia (Ukrainska Tsentralna Shkilna Rada), which would be headquartered in Melbourne. It continues to operate to this day in cooperation with the AFUO as well as with respective state government education bodies.

The council's role involves managing the teaching and training processes of the Ukrainian school system, reviewing and strengthening the schooling curriculum and teaching and learning materials and arranging courses, lectures and seminars for teachers. It represents the interests of Ukrainian education both among the wider Ukrainian community as well as within the broader Australian education system. The support arrangement between Ukrainian schooling and the government requires that Ukrainian schools be subjected both to government accreditation processes as well as to the requirements of the education department with respect to curriculum and teaching methods. The Ukrainian education council performs a central role in ensuring that the Ukrainian schooling system meets all of its obligations in this respect.

National teacher conferences are held every three years where agenda items include various aspects of the curriculum, teaching processes and methodologies, sundry academic issues, such as the adoption of competing spelling (pravopysni) systems and marketing, namely approaches to attracting prospective students. Learning materials have gradually been made available in electronic format and more modern multimedia learning resources are continually being developed by the Ukrainian community, such as interactive language-oriented games that are directed at children in younger years.

Tertiary education

In addition to the development of Ukrainian schools, a number of institutions exist within Australian universities. These were initially funded by the Ukrainian community through the Ukrainian Studies Foundation in Australia with a founding principal amount of capital provided by the Ukrainian community to secure management that was later sustained by university administrations. The first of these, the Ukrainian Studies Centre at Macquarie University in Sydney, was established in 1978. The program initially involved seminars and summer courses on Ukrainian studies. Six years later, a regular study program was offered within the School of Modern Languages which teaches Ukrainian language, literature and history. In 1983, the Mykola Zerov Centre for Ukrainian Studies was established in the Department of Slavic Languages at Monash University in Melbourne, once again with the

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support of Ukrainian community funds and initiative. It offers students study opportunities on the Ukrainian language and literature, prepares masters and doctoral students on topics in Ukrainian studies and conducts research on Ukrainian literature and linguistics.

Contributions of Ukrainian education in Australia

Over the course of the past seven decades, Ukrainian education in Australia has made an important contribution to the perpetuation of Ukrainian life, the sustenance of the Ukrainian language and the defence and assertion of the Ukrainian identity. Perhaps its most important specific contribution has been its central role in arming many thousands of young Ukrainians and Australians with a basic command of the Ukrainian language. The level of spoken Ukrainian within the diaspora is highly variable, including in Australia. While a number of students have an impressively strong command of the language, there are many more who do not. Ukrainian schools have strengthened the language skills of a good many students with an already highly developed Ukrainian language skill set. Equally, perhaps even more importantly, Ukrainian schooling has over many years helped vast numbers of students with notably less developed or basically domestic language skills at the very least secure a solid, lasting connection to the language, one that is sufficiently adequate as to permit them to revitalise and strengthen their Ukrainian language later in life with established foundations.

As a core component of overall Ukrainian community life, Ukrainian schools have also strengthened the awareness and understanding among many young people of Ukrainian identity, history and traditions. Even in cases where students have a relatively tenuous command of the language, they have at the very least been able to become acquainted with the basic aspects of Ukrainian history and literature: understanding the contributions of Shevchenko, Franko, Lesia Ukrainka, among others, and why they are important, as well as understanding Ukraine's history and its struggle for freedom and independence. More broadly, schools, amongst other organisations, have played a key role in underscoring and exploring the Ukrainian identity of students, with a notable resurgence in reaffirmation of this identity among australianised Ukrainians, for example, following the events of 2013 and 2014 in Ukraine.

The activities of the Ukrainian education organisation in Australia have also served, both directly and through other community organisations, to familiarise everyday Australians as well as successive Australian governments at all levels of the history of the Ukrainian state and of the plight and aspirations of the Ukrainian people.

The achievements of Ukrainian education in Australia are particularly notable for at least two distinct reasons. First, Ukrainians in Australia managed to do their part in preserving and sustaining the Ukrainian language at a time when its very existence was under notable pressure in Ukraine. Under the soviet regime, the language was relegated to a provincial status in favour of russification and champions of the Ukrainian language and identity were repressed as political prisoners. Perpetuating the Ukrainian language and Ukrainian values in a country as prominent as Australia and doing so at such a critical period in the history of both the language and nation has been a significant achievement.

Second, Ukrainians in Australia managed to develop a formidable educational infrastructure notwithstanding the challenges inherently associated with its operating environment. The Ukrainian education community has, particularly in the early years, overcome not only the cultural and administrative difficulties that are common to diaspora communities in Europe and the Americas, but also the unique 'tyranny of distance' that most other Ukrainian communities around the world may not have confronted to quite the same extent [8]. These management and logistical issues were particularly pronounced seven decades ago prior to the modernising forces of globalisation, namely advancements in infrastructure and

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communications technology, which have fundamentally reshaped the global environment.

Challenges and future prospects

Progress and achievement notwithstanding, Ukrainian schooling in Australia confronts a number of significant difficulties which challenge its management and threaten its viability. These demographic, cultural, administrative, geographic and economic issues merit discussion.

A number of factors have contributed to the decline in demand for Ukrainian schooling (and interest in Ukrainian life more broadly), particularly in recent years. As postwar immigration to Australia approaches its fourth generation, the rate of new immigration from Ukraine to Australia continues to be notably modest. Moreover, many individuals and families who have arrived from Ukraine over the past twenty-five years have tended to be professionally-oriented, purely economic migrants who place the highest priority on rapid integration within Australian society, including, of course, strengthening their English. Many families introduce English into the family home and strive to foster an environment of immersion, convinced that doing so is essential to the development of their children's command of the language. This focus often tends to come at the expense of a continued interest in perpetuating Ukrainian life and the Ukrainian language, as their own Ukrainian language skills and involvement in Ukrainian life in many cases diminishes. Moreover, since Ukraine's independence, the threat to the Ukrainian language and identity is no longer considered critical and both can be readily refreshed through visiting Ukraine which, while possible, was not a viable option until the early nineteen nineties.

These issues are reflected by the decline over time in the general usage of the Ukrainian language in Australia. The census of 1976 recorded almost eighteen thousand residents aged five or above who regularly used the Ukrainian language, about one-quarter of whom had been born in Australia and around three-quarters of whom were born overseas (ABS 1979, p. 4). By 1991, only twelve thousand Australian residents aged five or above indicated that they spoke Ukrainian at home (ABS 1993, p. 16). The most recent census, conducted in 2011, indicated that fewer than eight thousand Australian residents identified speaking Ukrainian at home, fourteen per cent fewer than the figure registered just five years earlier (DIBP 2014, p. 33).

The steady decline in demand for Ukrainian schooling has meant the closing of schools in cities with relatively smaller Ukrainian communities, including in Brisbane, Newcastle and Canberra. Consequently, less than ten Ukrainian schools remain in operation in Australia today. The diminished demand for schooling has also raised the threat level of a key administrative factor—the government minimum threshold requirement of student enrolment in order for year twelve courses to requalify for registration and to proceed. Furthermore on the supply side, there is a shortage of teachers to adequately meet the demand that continues to exist. A key underlying factor is the only very modest wage that teachers are offered. In addition to all of these challenges, the nature of Australia's geography, namely its territorial size and remoteness, presents unique management challenges. The Ukrainian school in Perth, for example, is located some two thousand kilometres from its nearest counterpart in Adelaide.

Ukrainians in Australia—a sustaining achievement

The generation of political refugees which migrated to Australia as displaced persons after the second world war achieved remarkable outcomes in securing and sustaining their identity for themselves and for their children. Their efforts were driven by their perception that their Ukrainian identity was under threat both from russification within the Soviet Union and the forces of assimilation in their new community. Despite a notably low quotient of secondary education among them, not only did they form community associations, youth organisations and many other specific interest institutions—they also physically established churches and

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community centres in all major population centres throughout the vast Australian continent. In order to ensure their children's awareness of their Ukrainian heritage and identity, they also established a broad, formidable educational architecture, one that addressed and served their requirements from the late nineteen forties right up to Ukrainian independence, which of course, in and of itself, has changed the paradigm.

Endnotes

[1] Dorothea Mackellar's enduring description of the 'wide brown land' of Australia as one 'of droughts and flooding rains' appears in the second stanza of her famed poem 'My country' which was first published in 1908 in The Spectator under the title 'Core of my heart'.

[2] The proportion of Australia's population that was foreign-born (that is, born in a country other than Australia) as of June 2015 was more than twenty-eight per cent, its highest level since the late nineteenth century and among the highest of any developed nation (ABS 2016b).

[3] In 1851, the year of the first major, widely-telegraphed discovery of gold in Australia, the country's population was four hundred thirty-seven thousand, a figure which by 1856 had soared to more than eight hundred seventy-six thousand, an increase of more than twofold (Commonwealth Bureau of Census and Statistics, Australia [CBCS] 1909, pp. 29-30).

[4] The construction 'populate or perish' was coined by former Australian prime minister Billy Hughes during the nineteen thirties while serving as health minister in the government of Joseph Lyons. Hughes, who led the nation during the first world war and its immediate aftermath, had expressed concern about the country's notably declining birth rate and its implications for Australia's national security and viability, admonishing the public's indifference, as he perceived it, to these issues. The rhetoric was revived in the middle of the nineteen forties by Australia's influential postwar (and inaugural) immigration minister, Arthur Calwell, who employed the term in an effort to marshal support within the country for the vigorous and sustained postwar immigration program upon which he and the Chifley government had embarked.

[5] In addition to the resettlement program fashioned with the IRO, Australia had negotiated a series of assisted migration agreements with a range of European nations in the quarter century following the end of the second world war. These included both direct, bilateral and plurilateral agreements as well as arrangements negotiated under the auspices of the Intergovernmental Committee for European Migration (ICEM; since renamed the International Organization for Migration).

During these years, Australia had operated schemes with: Britain (1947), Ireland (1948), Malta (1948; then a British colony), the Netherlands (1951), Italy (1951), West Germany (1952), Austria (1952), Greece (1952), the United States (1954), Switzerland (1954), Denmark (1954), Norway (1954), Sweden (1954), Finland (1954), Spain (1958), France (1960), Belgium (1961), Turkey (1967) and Yugoslavia (1970). Those conducted with Austria, Greece, Spain and Belgium were fashioned under the ICEM. Australia had also accepted notable numbers of refugees from Hungary in 1956 and Czechoslovakia in 1968.

[6] More than two-thirds of the Ukrainian male population was reportedly aged between twenty-five and forty-nine and as many as one-quarter of males were in their early thirties (CBCS 1957, pp. 58-61).

[7] The census of 1954 recorded fourteen thousand seven hundred fifty-seven Australian residents as having been born in Ukraine (CBCS 1957, p. 22). Subsequent census surveys indicate that, over time, this number steadily fell to thirteen thousand eight hundred seventy-three by 1961 (CBCS 1965, p. 27), twelve thousand four hundred fifty by 1971 (CBCS

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1973, p. 4), eleven thousand four hundred thirty-four by 1976 (ABS 1979, p. 2), ten thousand nine hundred forty-one by 1981 (ABS 1983, p. 8), ten thousand four hundred sixty-eight by 1986 and nine thousand fifty-three by 1991 (ABS 2004a, p. 170).

[8]   'The tyranny of distance' is a phrase that was popularised by Australian historian Geoffrey Blainey and was the book title of his landmark account of Australia's economic evolution that was published in 1966.

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УКРАЇНСЬКЕ ШКІЛЬНИЦТВО В АВСТРАЛІЇ

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Досягнення української громади в Австралії протягом останніх семи десятиліть є значними. В основному завдяки натхненню та рішучістю поколінь її засновників, українська громада Австралії сьогодні має сильну організацію, яка тісно інтегрована в австралійське суспільство, але яка зберігає міцні зв'язки з українською батьківщиною. Хоча розвиток і життєздатність будь-якої етнічної спільноти зазвичай залежить, зокрема, від існування та співпраці між різними установами, освітня структура громади набуває небувало важливої ролі. Особливо це стосується української освіти в Австралії.

З того моменту, коли вони прибули до берегів, українці зрозуміли необхідність української освіти, і це розуміння відобразилося у швидкому розвитку української школи в Австралії. Протягом багатьох років освітня інфраструктура, створена українцями, відіграла центральну роль у розвитку багатьох тисяч молодих австралійців, які володіють українською мовою, посилюючи їх обізнаність та вдячність українській історії та традиціям і, найголовніше, підтверджуючи свою українську ідентичність.

Крім того, діяльність українського шкільництва допомагала як прямо, так і опосередковано в ознайомленні пересічних австралійців, а також австралійських урядових інституцій усіх рівнів з історією українського народу та його становищем та прагненнями. При цьому українська система освіти в Австралії протягом останніх семи десятиліть сприяла збереженню українського життя, підтримці української мови та захисту та утвердженню української ідентичності та незалежності України.

Незважаючи на важливість досягнень, сьогодні українська освіта в Австралії має низку серйозних труднощів, які загрожують її життєздатності. Серед основних чинників є демографічні, культурні, адміністративні, географічні та економічні фактори, які впливають як на попит щодо української освіти, так і на пропозицію. Низка причин веде до зниження попиту на українську освіту (і зацікавленість в українському житті більш широко), особливо останніми роками. Темпи нової імміграції з України до Австралії є досить скромними. Професійна налаштованість іммігрантів з України за останні двадцять п'ять років є причиною того, що сучасні переселенці мають найвищий пріоритет швидкої інтеграції в суспільство Австралії, зокрема, посилюючи свою англійську мову. Багато сімей вводить англійську мову в сімейне спілкування і прагне якнайшвидшого занурення в англомовне середовище. Хоча зберігається постійний інтерес до українського життя, але не до української мови, то у багатьох випадках зменшується їхній власний рівень української мови, підтримання якогоо не є пріоритетом Усі ці фактори вимагають уваги та ретельного аналізу.

Ключові слова: українські поселення в Австралії, українська шкільна освіта в Австралії, шкільна освіта, початковий та середній рівень.