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# Slavonic Studies at Macquarie University 1983-1998: An Experiment in Migrant Language Maintenance

The Slavonic Studies programme at Macquarie University was one of the relatively few higher education programmes funded directly by the Commonwealth government to teach migrant community languages primarily to students from those communities. This paper will outline the main stages of its history from its inception in 1982 to its dissolution in 1998.

In 1981 the Commonwealth Tertiary Education Commission (CTEC), the federal government's advisory body on tertiary education, acting on the recommendations of the Commonwealth Australian Institute for Multicultural Affairs, proposed that the Commonwealth government fund 12 community languages at various tertiary education institutions throughout Australia including Colleges of Advanced Education (CAEs) (degree-granting institutions which did not have the status of universities). Accordingly, the CTEC invited proposals from these institutions for the establishment of academic programs in these languages.[1] This move was foreshadowed by the Galbally Report in 1978 and the election commitment of the Coalition government of Malcolm Fraser in 1980 to fund the teaching of migrant community languages at tertiary education institutions. Initially, the University of Sydney, the University of New South Wales and Macquarie University submitted proposals for the teaching of Slavonic community languages – Croatian, Macedonian, Serbian and Polish. The first two of these universities, however, agreed that Macquarie alone should develop this program.[2] At that stage only Macquarie had in place the facilities for teaching in the distance or correspondence mode. The Commonwealth government insisted that this program be accessible throughout Australia and, for that reason, be offered in a

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[1] Memo from B. J. Spencer to Professor B.E Mansfield, Deputy Vice Chancellor, 29 January 1982, Slavonic Studies file, Central Records, Macquarie University.
[2] See the letter from Professor D.N.F. Dunbar, Chairman of CTEC to the Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie University, Professor E.C. Webb, of 21 October 1981, and the reply of Acting Vice-Chancellor, Professor Bruce E. Mansfield of 3 November 1981. Slavonic Studies file.

distance teaching mode. On 23 December 1981 the CTEC informed Macquarie that it had been granted $200,000 for each of the next three years to support 'the introduction of a Slavonic Studies section in the School of Modern Languages offering, initially, Serbian, Croatian, Macedonian and Polish'.[3] Professor E. C. Webb, the Vice-Chancellor of Macquarie, in reply gracefully accepted the grant but requested 'some promise of continued financial support' beyond the three years and expressed a disappointment that Ukrainian was not included in the grant.[4] The University at this stage had already been negotiating for support from the Ukrainian Studies Foundation for the inclusion of Ukrainian in the Slavonic Studies programme, as Professor Webb noted in his letter.

The University initially planned to appoint a lecturer in comparative linguistics in the field of South Slavonic languages, primarily Serbian and Croatian, a lecturer in Polish and one tutor each for the Serbian, Croatian and Polish languages; Macedonian was to be developed later, as was Ukrainian, the latter's introduction being dependent on funding from the Ukrainian community in Australia.

## The establishment of the program: 1983-6

The program, offering Croatian, Polish and Serbian language courses as well as courses on comparative Slavonic linguistics, Slavonic societies and contemporary Polish politics, began in February 1983. The Macedonian and Ukrainian languages were added in 1984, and Bulgarian was initially advertised to start in 1984 but was never offered.[5] The program's migrant community orientation was perhaps most obvious in its offering of Serbian and Croatian as separate languages and as separate major areas of undergraduate study,[6] and in the absence of Russian. For the purposes of the program Russian

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[3] Letter from Professor P. Karmel, Chairman, TEC, to the Vice-Chancellor, Macquarie University, of 23 December 1981, Slavonic Studies file.

[4] Letter from Professor E. C. Webb to Professor Karmel, 2 March 1982, Slavonic Studies file.

[5] *Slavonic Studies at Macquarie, 1983.* Brochure with course descriptions, Macquarie University, 1983.

[6] Students could not, however, gain credit from both language units towards an undergraduate degree in Slavonic Studies.

was not regarded as a community language (on the later introduction of Russian, see below). The representatives of the community organisations, in particular Croatian, regarded the two South Slavonic languages as separate languages and the academic staff in charge of the program shared this view. This was contested by the Yugoslav government, which held that Serbian and Croatian form a single language, Serbo-Croatian or Croato-Serbian. Accordingly, the leading Belgrade daily *Politika* in early 1983 criticised Macquarie for allegedly 'splitting' a single language. In response, in March 1983, the University issued a statement, which pointed out, among other things, that:

> The respect for and defence of the cultural autonomy of all ethnic and lingual groups is a basic tenet of government policy in Australia and in many other countries, including the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
> The introduction of separate courses in Croatian and Serbian reflects this policy of the Australian government and was in fact a condition under which Macquarie University received special funds for the foundation of Slavonic Studies at this university.
> The decision to implement separate courses in Croatian and Serbian was thus not primarily linguistic but reflects the concern for the cultural autonomy of those two nations in Australia, the Croats and the Serbs... [7]

In spite of these community language features, the language program in Slavonic Studies in its basic structure did not deviate from the model of main language programs (French, German, Chinese) in the School of Modern Languages: the one-year introductory course for (total) beginners was followed by post-secondary school courses of three years' duration, focusing on theoretical grammar as well as grammatical and comprehension skills. In addition, in each language stream there was a vacation reading course. Like the French or German programs, each language program had a three-year set of courses on literature, based on the canonical literary texts and only occasionally using translations in English. No language unit was specifically designed as a remedial language course for students who learned their Slavonic

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[7] Memo of 24 August 1983 to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Professor Mansfield, from Dr Peter Hill, head of the Slavonic Studies section, proposing the above text. The memo suggests that the full statement (not reproduced here) was drafted by Dr Peter Hill and the Slavonic Studies staff.

language from their family in Australia or overseas, in spite of the fact that the great majority of students came from this group. Although no statistics were compiled, one can safely guess that, during the initial years at least, a high proportion of the students in each program had some knowledge either of the language or of the culture which they were studying.

Like the French and German programs, the Slavonic one also offered general courses on the cultures of the individual language areas. But unlike the other language programs in the School of Modern Languages, the program offered courses in comparative linguistics (of Slavonic languages) and on politics or history of individual (Slavonic) countries. The first courses of the latter kind were entitled *Poland in the Twentieth Century* and *Solidarity and Contemporary Poland*. This reflected the interests of the foundation heads of the Slavonic section, John Besemeres (PhD, ANU), who specialised in Polish and East European politics and Peter Hill (PhD, Hamburg), Professor of Slavic languages from the University of Hamburg, whose speciality was comparative South Slavonic linguistics as well as Macedonian. The two lecturers (appointed in 1982 to set up the program) initially convened all language streams (except for Ukrainian, which had its own two full-time staff), but were assisted in teaching by full time and casual tutors who were all native speakers and members of Sydney Slavic migrant communities.[8]

Until the introduction of Russian in 1988, Polish led in the number of enrolments, followed by Croatian, Ukrainian, Serbian and Macedonian.[9]

**Expansions and contractions: 1986-1992**

In response to the large enrolment numbers and after lobbying from Drs Besemeres and Hill, in 1984 the University started to appoint lecturers to convene each language stream. Thus its initial policy, which required a single lecturer to convene several language streams, was abandoned in the period of 1984 to 1987. In 1984 Edward Ronowicz (PhD Warsaw) and Luka Budak (MA Waterloo, appointed in 1983 as a tutor) were appointed as lecturers in Polish

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[8] Only convenors of language streams are mentioned by name in this article. For a full list of academic staff, see the relevant University Handbooks.

[9] Memo from Slavonic Studies (signed Peter Hill and John Besemeres) re: Slavonic Studies Staffing of 23 November 1985, Attachment E, Slavonic Studies file.

and Croatian respectively, and Natalia Pazuniak (PhD University of Pennsylvania) as the lecturer in Ukrainian. As the appointment of lecturers was not extended to Serbian (and Macedonian), the Serbian community in Sydney protested against what they saw as an unequal treatment of their language, submitting, in addition to several strongly worded letters to the University, a petition with several hundred signatures, requesting the appointment of a lecturer in Serbian. In 1986 Tadeusz Gasinski (PhD Stanford) was appointed to convene South Slavonic studies (previously convened by Dr Hill) and only in 1987, Aleksandar Pavković (DrSci Belgrade) and Ilija Čašule (PhD Skopje) were appointed to convene, respectively, Serbian and Macedonian.[10] In 1987 Halyna Koscharsky (MA, PhD Macquarie, 1994), who had been tutor in Ukrainian since 1984, was appointed as lecturer, to convene the Ukrainian stream. All of the above appointees were native speakers of at least one Slavonic language but several had no academic training or research interests in the area of Slavonic linguistics and/or literature. All, except Halyna Koscharsky, were educated abroad. As before, the newly appointed lecturers were supported by a number of contract or casual tutors, members of the Sydney Slav migrant communities. Only the Ukrainian stream now employed two lecturers.

Following those appointments, each language stream introduced one or more courses on the history or the civilisation of the national group speaking the language, prompting the Modern History discipline in the School of History, Philosophy and Politics to raise a few anxious questions about this practice. In spite of this, courses in Serbian, Croatian and Macedonian history as well as Ukrainian civilisation, offered mostly in English, initially had significant enrolments. Courses in *Croatian Drama and Theatre*, *Croatian Folk Culture*, *Slavonic Interpreting and Translating*, and *Contemporary Soviet and East European Societies* did not, however, appear to encroach on the area

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[10] The University was initially unable to find in Australia qualified staff to teach Macedonian. See Memo, in note 9 above, attachment D. Čašule was originally appointed as a senior tutor but at his request, supported by the Slavonic Studies section, his post was soon upgraded to that of lecturer. Because of their disapproval of the 'division' into two languages, the Belgrade authorities actively discouraged any academic from Yugoslavia from applying for the post in Serbian (Academician Pavle Ivić from Belgrade, in communication to Aleksandar Pavković, 1990).

of any other academic discipline in the University. While these new courses were allegedly responding to the demands from the migrant community students, the introduction of the Russian language stream in 1988 signalled a significant departure from the community languages model.

Already in 1983 Drs Besemeres and Hill proposed to introduce first year courses in Russian language and literature, partly on the grounds that the Russian language program at the University of New South Wales was at the time moribund. Their proposal did not find sufficient support with the University administration.[11] However, Dr Gasinski, previously Professor of Russian at the University of Pretoria in South Africa, convinced the University administration that there was a widespread interest in Russian among Macquarie students and as a result, under his convenorship, Russian language courses were introduced in 1988. He convened the Russian language stream until 1991, when it was taken over by a native Russian speaker, Nonna Ryan (PhD Macquarie, 1999), who had only a few years previously completed a BA in Slavonic Studies at Macquarie.

In 1989 the Slovenian language stream was also added to the Slavonic program and its first half-time lecturer/convenor, Aleksandra Bizjak (BA, Ljubljana) recruited from Slovenia. The position was fully funded by the Slovenian community in Australia and the government of the Republic of Slovenia.

Upon the departure in 1985 of Drs Besemeres and Hill,[12] the foundation heads of the Section (renamed a Department in 1992), Slavonic Studies was headed by Dr Gasinski (1986-87), Dr Pavković (1987-1989), Dr Koscharsky (1990-98) and Associate Professor Čašule (1998), all of whom were elected to the post.

The annual enrolment for Slavonic Studies increased from 543 in 1984 to 604 in 1986, decreasing to 362 in its final year as a separate body, in 1998. From 1986 programs started admitting postgraduate students in MA by

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[11] Memo from Peter Hill and John Besemeres re: Russian and Slavonic Studies at Macquarie, undated, but comments on the margin dated 1 March 1983, Slavonic Studies file.

[12] Upon the expiry of their contracts, Dr Besemeres returned to the Commonwealth public service and Dr Hill to a professorship at the University of Hamburg, Germany.

research and PhD programs. From 1989, agreements for academic exchange were signed between Macquarie and the Universities of Belgrade, Kiev, Moscow, Odessa, St Petersburg, Skopje, Warsaw and Zagreb.

## Macquarie's 'cordial relations' with the Slav migrant communities[13]

From the very inception of the program, the Macquarie University administration expected that Slav migrant communities would contribute to the funding of the program. For this purpose community-based charity foundations corresponding to each of the language streams (except Russian) were established, modelled, in part, on the pioneer Ukrainian Studies Foundation (*Fundatsia Ukrainoznavchykh Studii v Avstralii*). The latter had already been established in 1974, with the mission to 'promote and encourage the education of members of the public in Ukrainian Studies'. The Croatian Studies Foundation (*Hrvatska znanstvena zaklada za Australiju i Novi Zeland*) was established in 1984[14], the Polish Studies Foundation (*Fundacja Studiow Polskich*) in 1984, the Serbian Studies Foundation (*Zadužbina za srpske studije*) in 1986 and the Macedonian Studies Foundation (*Fondacija za Makedonskite Studi*) in 1988.[15]  The first major test for the newly established foundations came in 1988 with the University's announcement of its plan to close down the Slavonic Studies program. In spite of its considerable undergraduate enrolments (484 student enrolments), the University claimed that the program was not self-sustaining without the special Commonwealth

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[13] In order to gather information for this section, Dr Koscharsky approached all the community-based foundations involved in the funding of the Slavonic program for information about their activities in this period. The authors are grateful to the foundations and their representatives who responded with very useful information. In addition, the authors consulted the *Macquarie University Annual Reports*, as well as *Macquarie News* for the period of 1983-1999, which also contained information about the foundations' activities.

[14] Luka Budak, 'Dva desetljeća Hrvatskog Studija na Sveučilištu Macquarie u Sydneyju', *Croatian Studies Review,* Vol. 2, 2002/2003, 373.

[15] Elizabeth Kolupaceva-Stewart, 'The Macedonian Studies Foundation', *Panorama: a journal of discussion of issues relating to Macedonian history, culture, politics, education and community affairs, with particular relevance to the interests of Macedonians in Australia,* Vol. 2, No. 1, 1996, 70-75, at 71.

funding. In response, each of the foundations, assisted by the academic staff in their respective language streams, organised a series of public meetings, petitions and letter-writing campaigns in their respective migrant communities, which culminated in a public debate broadcast in October of that year on the *Vox Populi* television program of SBS, presented by Vladimir Lušić, an ethnic Croat. In the public debate, members of the three South Slavonic and the Ukrainian communities condemned the University's plans and demanded, in the name of fairness and multiculturalism, the maintenance of the Slavonic studies program.

The University, in response to the campaign, suggested the community foundations take over in part the funding of the teaching of their respective languages and cultures. As this appeared to be the only way to maintain the Slavonic program, in 1989 the Croatian, Macedonian, Polish and Serbian foundations agreed to cover the administrative, teaching and distance delivery costs of their respective language streams, except for the costs of the salary of the full time lecturer-convenor of each stream which the University continued to cover from its own operating budget. The community funding in this way, in part, replaced the special Commonwealth grant, which expired in 1984/85. Ukrainian and Slovenian, which were not covered by the special Commonwealth grant, were fully funded from the time of their introduction at Macquarie by their respective foundations (the funding of Slovenian was taken over by the government of Slovenia in 1990). The Ukrainian Studies Foundation also funded the Ukrainian Studies Centre from 1984 until 1992. The Croatian Foundation funded the establishment, in 1994, of the Croatian Studies Centre in the School of Modern Languages; the Centre was officially opened in 1998, at the time when financial support was granted by the government of Croatia.[16] The Croatian Studies Foundation funded an additional full time associate lectureship in Croatian from 1992. In 1997 the government of Croatia assumed responsibility for a third of the total cost of the two positions in Croatian and the Centre.[17] The University funded the University Centre for Slavonic and East European Studies in the School of Modern Languages from 1992 to 1997.

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[16] Luka Budak, op. cit. 373.
[17] Boris Škvorc, email to H. Koscharsky, 21 February, 2005.

Partly in order to raise funds, the foundations proceeded to organise conferences, literature recitals, theatre performances as well as donation-raising banquets, raffles and community radio programs. Well-known artists, writers and scholars as well as politicians from the respective countries were invited to participate in these events and to meet members of the respective communities. For example, the Croatian stream organised a total of three symposia and conferences, in the years 1988, 1993, 1997; the Macedonian stream two seminars, in 1991 and 1992; the Ukrainian stream three conferences, in 1988, 1992 and 1998; the Serbian stream five conferences, in 1989, 1990, 1991, 1995, 1996; the Russian stream a Festival of Russian Art and Culture in 1995. Most of the conferences or seminars involved invited participants from abroad and were organised together with the relevant foundations. In this way these foundations not only successfully raised the required funds but also became important foci of the cultural life of their respective communities.

In addition, the foundations funded the publication of a significant number of conference proceedings, monographs on languages and cultures of their respective communities as well as teaching aids used in the language and literature courses. The Macedonian Studies Foundation, for example, funded the publication of a translation of Marko Cepenkov's *19th Century Macedonian Folk Tales* (1991) and *An Island on Land: An Anthology of Contemporary Macedonian Poetry* (1999).[18] The Serbian Studies Foundation published the proceedings of its conferences – the *Conference on the Battle of Kosovo* (1989) the *Conference on Serbian Migrations 1690-1990* (1990), *The Serbs in World War II* (1991), *Draza Mihailovic (1893-1946): fifty years after his death* (1996), while the Ukrainian Studies Foundation published *Ukrainian Settlement in Australia* (conference proceedings, 1989).

The full-time academic staff, by the terms of their contracts, were obliged to maintain, on behalf of their employer, 'cordial relations' with their respective communities. As part of the maintenance of these cordial relations, lecturers and tutors participated in and often presided over their respective foundations' fund-raising functions, organised and spoke at various cultural

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[18] *The Macedonian Studies Foundation: What are our Achievements,* a fact sheet issued by its President, Novica Angelovski, 2004.

and social events for their foundations and edited or wrote for the foundation-funded publications. The foundations thus provided the staff with the foci for their obligatory community-oriented work, as well as occasional outlets for their scholarly communications. However, some members of the staff were concerned about the impact of their close association with community organisations, particularly in fundraising activities, on their academic independence.

At a conservative estimate, from 1983 to 1993 the foundations had contributed to the University towards the running of Slavonic Studies a total of over \$1,392,000.[19] This sum does not include student fees, whether non-award, undergraduate (including cross-institution) or postgraduate, raised by the University from the relevant courses.

## Slavonic staff research: an unplanned bonus?

The research 'output' of the Slavonic academic staff from 1986 to 1998 does not, however, appear to have been affected by their considerable and obligatory involvement in community work. The output figures, by language stream, were as follows:

|  | Books (authored) | Books (edited) | Chapters | Articles:[20] |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Croatian | - | 3 | 1 | 13 |
| Macedonian | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| Polish | - | - | - | 13 |
| Serbian | 5 | 3 | 5 | 19 |
| Slovenian | 1 (revised) | - | - | - |
| Ukrainian | 1 | 4 | 2 | 17 |
| Russian | - | - | - | 4 |

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[19] Memorandum concerning restructuring of Slavonic Studies from H.Koscharsky to Slavonic staff, dated 21 October 1993.

[20] These include both refereed and unrefereed, since the University Research Report made no distinction between the two categories of publication until 1993.

A significant number of these publications were in international refereed journals and some were published by international academic or commercial publishers. In this respect too, the publications of the Slavonic Studies staff favourably compared with the publications of other staff in the School of Modern Languages. They included Tad Gasinski's 'The Question of Dominant Language and Dominant Nation in a Multi-ethnic Society, on the Example of the USSR, Yugoslavia and South Africa', *SA Journal of Linguistics. Language Planning in South Africa, Occasional Papers No.* 2, 1985; Aleksandar Pavković's *Slobodan Jovanović: An Unsentimental Approach to Politics*, published by East European Monographs/Columbia University Press, New York, 1993; Halyna Koscharsky's *Tvorchist' Liny Kostenko z pohliadu poetyky ekspresyvnosti*, KM Academia Publishing House, Kiev, 1994; Eddie Ronowicz's 'Identifying problems in intercultural communication', *Neophilological Quarterly* 1, XLI, Warsaw, 1994; Metka Čuk's *Za začetek (3rd edition)*, Filozofska Fakulteta, Ljubljana, 1994; Ilija Čašule's *Basic Burushanski Etymologies – The Indo-European and Paleo-Balkanic Affinities of Burushanski*, Lincom Europa, Munich – Newcastle, 1998; Boris Škvorc's 'Miroslav Krleža's Discursive Tactics: The Questions of Central Europe and Balkans', *New Zealand Slavonic Journal*, 1998.

Most of the research projects of the staff were funded through Macquarie University Research grants, while only in a small number of cases the community foundations provided additional funds for research.

**Contraction and dissolution: 1995-98**

From 1992 the Russian program started to attract a continuously growing number of students from English-speaking backgrounds. Unlike other language streams, from its introduction Russian was primarily targeting these students. This led to its rapid expansion to include in-country language study in Moscow, and several courses on Russian literature and culture. By 1997, the Russian language stream reached the highest undergraduate enrolment of all language streams in the programme – 154, a position it has kept until the present, even though its enrolments have been uneven in the last few years.

In contrast, after 1992 interest in the study of other ('community') Slavonic languages at Macquarie started to decrease among the students from respective Slavic communities. By 1991-2, the collapse of the communist

systems in East Europe and the proclamations of the independence of Croatia, Slovenia, Macedonia and Ukraine enabled the members of Australian migrant communities to travel freely and study in their countries of origin. For many, this seemed a more exciting alternative than the study, by distance education delivery, at Macquarie. The decrease in interest did not however immediately show itself in a sharp drop in enrolments. The rise of the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS) fees from 1990 onwards led to a continuing decrease in student enrolments, which in some language streams such as Ukrainian led to a halving of the number of enrolled students. A significant portion of students in non-Russian courses were non-degree (or non-award) students who enrolled in individual courses and not in degree programs. As a result of the HECS rise, the university doubled the non-degree course fees, making their cost prohibitive to the potential non-degree students, usually of mature age and of migrant background, who generally took these individual units out of personal interest.

The drop in non-degree student enrolments particularly affected non-language courses which were not part of the obligatory degree program. As a result, the courses in politics and various aspects of culture introduced in the late 1980s were the first to be deleted from the programs of individual language streams. As the number of students from migrant background from the Sydney area who could attend university classes declined, most of the non-Russian courses had also been restricted to distance education delivery.

In 1998 the Macquarie University administration, responding to the Coalition government's cuts in the federal funding of universities, initiated a University-wide restructuring of its schools and departments, offering at the same time general redundancy and early retirement options to its academic staff. As the School of Modern Languages was split into the Departments of European Languages and Asian Languages, the Department of Slavonic studies was, without any consultation with its staff, summarily dissolved and Slavonic language streams were allocated as separate language programs to the new European Languages Department. Dr Gasinski retired, and Drs Čašule, Ronowicz and Pavković were transferred, respectively, to the Departments of

Linguistics and Politics;[21] Dr Koscharsky was seconded, half-time, to the Office of the Vice-Chancellor. By 2000 all non-Russian languages except Croatian, were being convened by either casual or half-time staff. Having thus substantially cut the cost of teaching these languages, the university administration, through a new set of agreements, transferred full funding of these language streams to the existing community foundations (in the case of Croatian, partially to the Croatian government), requiring the foundations to pay retroactively the costs of the Slavonic staff salaries prior to 1998. As the government of Slovenia stopped its funding, by the end of 1998 the Slovenian language stream was being phased out of the university program. The disagreements concerning these new funding arrangements with the Serbian Studies Foundation led the University to terminate its agreement with that foundation and to begin, in 2003, to phase out the Serbian language stream. At the time of writing, in February 2005, apart from Russian, Macquarie University offered full BA degree programs as well as higher degrees in Croatian, Macedonian, Polish and Ukrainian.

From the inception of the Slavonic Studies program until the present, the University's policy was to minimise its own costs. Although actual figures are not available, our impression is that the University has succeeded extremely well. It had secured financial assistance from the foundations, which replaced the initial assistance from the Federal Government. The income from student fees and government operating grants was an added bonus for the University; it is not possible to establish whether the contribution of the foundations created a surplus, which the University could then direct to other activities, for example, the teaching of other languages. However, the post-1998 contracts with the foundations suggest that the University is intent on using the contributions for such additional income.

**Cultural maintenance and more**

The aim of the initial Commonwealth funding of Slavonic Studies was to maintain and promote the languages and cultures of large Slav migrant communities in Australia through a tertiary program of study delivered in

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[21] Dr Ronowicz and Dr Pavković had from the early 1990s taught various courses outside the Slavonic Studies programme.

distance education mode. The Slavonic Studies program no doubt fulfilled that aim: it has provided an opportunity to students of all age groups, from all over Australia, to study at tertiary level the standard language, literature and history or culture of several Slav national groups, an opportunity which they did not have previously (unless they happened to reside in Melbourne where Monash University in 1983 was offering language and literature courses in Serbo-Croat, Polish and Ukrainian). The program offered a basic training for potential teachers as well as translators and interpreters in these languages. But the program achieved more than this core aim: it also attracted several scholars - both as visiting lecturers and as continuing staff - whose research work has gained international recognition and whose engagement with the migrant communities in Sydney during the existence of the Slavonic Studies program revitalised and, in some cases, redirected their cultural life. And, contrary to its initial aims, this program also provided a framework for the establishment and development of Russian. As Russian was (and still is) taught at the University of New South Wales, it is unlikely that in the 1980s Macquarie would have introduced Russian as a separate language outside a Slavonic Studies program. Thus, a program that was initially planned only as a migrant languages/cultures maintenance program, turned out to be much more than that.[22]

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[22] The authors wish to thank all those who gave information and suggestions, mostly by email: Nic Angelovski, John Besemeres, Luka Budak, Peter Hill, Eddie Ronowicz, Boris Škvorc.